

The Human Cost

Even by Qatar's standards, the new facility⁸⁵ and infrastructure development for the 2022 World Cup has been impressive. As well as seven brand new⁸⁶ stadiums, there are swanky⁸⁷ hotels, restaurants and road networks, all needing sewers⁸⁸, drainage⁸⁹, plumbing⁹⁰, electricity, air conditioning etc. From a positive perspective, that is a lot of employment opportunities with the lion's share⁹¹ of the work being undertaken⁹² by migrant workers (that constitute⁹³ 94 percent of the workforce) from the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. However, it is alleged that as many as 6,500 workers have died during the construction of facilities for the competition⁹⁴, with scant⁹⁵ legal consequences, let alone⁹⁶ redress⁹⁷. In fact, until pressure to introduce legal reforms in 2020, Qatar operated the kafala system [See Box], which effectively meant employees could not leave until the employer permitted⁹⁸ them to do so.

The human rights⁹⁹ non-governmental organisation (NGO)¹⁰⁰ Amnesty International reports that despite¹⁰¹ some relaxing of the kafala system, the odds are still heavily stacked against¹⁰² migrant workers, who are barred from¹⁰³ joining trade unions¹⁰⁴ and often struggle to be paid the money owed to them.

Women's rights leave much to be desired¹⁰⁵. They are subject to the 'guardian'¹⁰⁶ system,' in which they remain, throughout their lives, subject to¹⁰⁷ the guardianship¹⁰⁸ of a male (typically, grandfather, father, uncle, brother or husband). Women in Qatar need their male guardian's permission¹⁰⁹ to marry, study, travel and work. Divorce¹¹⁰ is difficult for women and on limited grounds¹¹¹. But if it is successful, women are often required to return to their previous guardian. In contrast¹¹², men can divorce unilaterally¹¹³ without notice¹¹⁴ or explanation.

Equality¹¹⁵ based on sexuality¹¹⁶ does not fare¹¹⁷ any better. Homosexuality is criminalised¹¹⁸ and punishable¹¹⁹ by imprisonment¹²⁰ for up to seven years. There is no discrimination protection and the few gay people who dare to¹²¹ speak out¹²², report of police harassment¹²³.

⁸⁵ facility 'fə'sɪləti zakład, obiekt (np. sportowy)

⁸⁶ brand new 'brænd nju: nowiutki

⁸⁷ swanky 'swæŋki elegancki, modny

⁸⁸ sewers 'sju:əz kanalizacja

⁸⁹ drainage 'dreɪnɪdʒ system kanalizacyjny

⁹⁰ plumbing 'plʌmɪŋ hydraulika, rury

⁹¹ the lion's share ðə 'laɪənz feə(r) lwia dola

⁹² to undertake sth tu ,ʌndə'teɪk 'sʌmθɪŋ podjąć się czegoś

⁹³ to constitute X tə 'kɒnstɪtju:t stanowić X, wynosić X

⁹⁴ competition ,kɒmpə'tɪʃn zawody

⁹⁵ scant skænt niewielki, skąpy

⁹⁶ let alone X let ə'ləʊn a już na pewno (nie) X

⁹⁷ redress rɪ'dres zadośćuczynienie

⁹⁸ to permit tə pə'mɪt pozwolić

⁹⁹ human rights 'hju:mən raɪts prawa człowieka

¹⁰⁰ non-governmental organization (NGO) nən,gəvənməntəl ,ɔ:ɡənə'zeɪʃn ,en dʒɪ: 'əʊ organizacja pozarządowa

¹⁰¹ despite dɪ'spaɪt pomimo

¹⁰² the odds are stacked against sb ði ɒdz ə stækt ə'ɡenst 'sʌmbədi wszystko gra na czyjaś niekorzyść, ktoś jest bez szans

¹⁰³ barred from doing sth bɑ:d frəm 'du:ɪŋ 'sʌmθɪŋ któremu zakazano robienia czegoś

¹⁰⁴ trade union treɪd 'ju:nɪən związek zawodowy

¹⁰⁵ to leave much to be desired tə li:v mʌtʃ tə bi dɪ'zʌəd pozostawiać wiele do życzenia

¹⁰⁶ guardian 'ɡɑ:dɪən opiekun, obrońca

¹⁰⁷ subject to sth 'sʌbdʒɪkt tə 'sʌmθɪŋ podlegający czemuś, ulegający; będący pod wpływem czegoś

¹⁰⁸ guardianship 'ɡɑ:dɪənʃɪp kuratela, opieka

¹⁰⁹ permission pə'mɪʃn zgoda, zezwolenie

¹¹⁰ divorce dɪ'vɔ:s rozwód

¹¹¹ on limited grounds ɒn 'lɪmɪtəd ɡraʊndz na ograniczonych podstawach

¹¹² in contrast ɪn 'kɒntrəst odwrotnie, przeciwnie

¹¹³ unilaterally ju:nɪ'lætrəli jednostronnie, unilateralnie

¹¹⁴ without notice wɪð'aʊt 'nəʊtɪs bez zapowiedzi; bez uprzedniego powiadomienia

¹¹⁵ equality ɪ'kwələti równość

¹¹⁶ sexuality ,seksʃə'ælɪti seksualność

¹¹⁷ to fare X tə feə(r) radzić sobie X (dobrze/źle)

¹¹⁸ criminalised 'krɪmɪnəlaɪzd karalny, uznawany za przestępstwo

¹¹⁹ punishable 'pʌnɪʃəbəl karalny

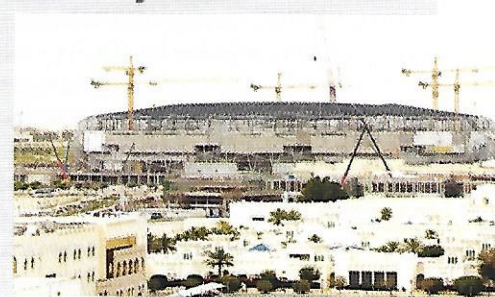
¹²⁰ imprisonment ɪm'prɪznmənt kara więzienia

¹²¹ to dare to do sth tə deə(r) tə du 'sʌmθɪŋ odważyć się na zrobienie czegoś

¹²² to speak out tə spi:k aʊt (publicznie) wypowiedzieć się (w jakiejś kwestii)

¹²³ harassment 'hærəsmənt nękanie, ataki

Kafala System



The kafala system is practiced in Lebanon, Jordan and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC): Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman. It is a legal framework¹ to manage foreign labour². It requires all foreign workers to gain sponsorship³ permits from a local employer, who provides not only (typically, very poor) wages, but accommodation⁴. The worker has no employment legislation or residency rights⁵ and only the sponsor has the authority⁶ to extend⁷ the duration of stay⁸ or grant an exit permit to leave. The arrangement⁹ is used not only for men in construction but women in domestic service. It has been widely criticised by, among others, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the United Nation's International Labour Organization, as at best, potentially exploitative¹⁰ and at worst, tantamount to¹¹ modern-day¹² slavery.

¹ legal framework 'li:ɡl 'fri:mwɜ:k system prawny

² labour 'leɪbə(r) siła robocza (UK)

³ sponsorship 'sponsəʃɪp umowa sponsorska

⁴ accommodation ə,kɒmə'deɪʃn zakwaterowanie, kwatera

⁵ residency rights 'rezɪdənsi raɪts prawa do pobytu

⁶ authority ɔ:'θɒrəti władza, zwierzchnictwo

⁷ to extend sth tu ɪk'stend 'sʌmθɪŋ przedłużyć coś, wydłużyć

⁸ duration of stay dju'reɪʃn əv steɪ okres pobytu

⁹ arrangement ə'reɪndʒmənt układ

¹⁰ exploitative ɪk'splɔɪtətv ekspluatujący, wyzyskujący

¹¹ tantamount to sth 'tæntəmaʊnt tə 'sʌmθɪŋ równoznaczny z czymś

¹² modern-day 'mɒdn deɪ dzisiejszy, współczesny (tylko przed rzeczownikiem)