

IMMIGRANTS' WORLD CUP



10-12 MIL
OF WHICH 7 MIL

MIGRANT WORKERS (FOREIGN BORN) WORKING IN RUSSIA WITH NO FORMAL RESIDENCE OR EMPLOYMENT PERMIT

There are concerns of forced labour, discrimination, ethnic profiling and police harassment of Russia's migrant worker population.

The average migrant worker in the stadiums' maintenance crews earn about \$15 a day, and have long shifts with no breaks.

Russia's World Cup preparations have largely been on the backs of migrant workers, with unsafe working conditions and long hours, according to Human Rights Watch. 21 people died working on venues.

The exploitative conditions have led to an increasing number of migrant workers being radicalised and convinced to join the "Holy War" in Syria.

"AN AFRICAN NATION WILL WIN THE WORLD CUP BEFORE THE YEAR 2000"

- PELE (BRAZILIAN FOOTBALLER, 1957-1971)

An African nation is yet to go past the quarter-finals in the FIFA World Cup. This year, not a single African nation progressed beyond the group stages. However, Africa is winning elsewhere - in representing other nations in the run to the 2018 World Cup final. It's being called the migrants' World Cup, with an unprecedented number of migrants playing for their adopted nations. They're not just Africans either - most of the squads are made up of a diverse range of ethnicities. Off the field, though, migrants are still suffering from restrictive policies and govt. attitudes.

FRANCE



A major portion of the French football squad is made up of African origin players, with another majority in the number of Muslims. The French govt. has restrictive policies against public displays of faith such as the Islamic head scarf, which is considered by many to be anti-immigrant.

78.3%

PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS IN THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL SQUAD

6.8%

PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS IN THE TOTAL POPULATION

56.6%

FOREIGN-BORN EMPLOYMENT RATE (AGES 15-64)

A recent anti-immigration policy targets asylum seekers, who now have to file their case faster than before (90 days instead of 120) and only two weeks to appeal against a rejection instead of a month.

Under the same bill, the max length of stay in administrative detention was increased from 45 to 115 days.

In 2016, France authorised 33,000 immigrants out of a total of 227,500 to stay in France, an increase of 41% from 2015. There was also a drop in the number of expulsions of illegal immigrants by nearly 16.3% from 2015.

In 2014, almost 50,000 immigrants were in a detention center, 9% more than 2013. France was then the state with the most number of detained migrants, 5 times more than in Spain, 10 times more than in Germany and 18 times higher than in the UK.

ENGLAND



An estimated 220,000 citizens from other EU countries immigrated to the UK in the year to September 2017, and about 130,000 emigrated abroad. EU net migration was around 90,000—the lowest level recorded since 2012.

The UK has the fifth-largest immigrant population in the world, at 8.5 million. Between 1990 and 2015, the UK's immigrant population more than doubled, from 3.7 million. As of 2015, about 13% of the UK's resident population was foreign-born.

As of 2015, the UK's immigrant population has one of the most diverse groups of origin countries in the world, tying Denmark for the highest diversity score, which measures the distribution of immigrants from different source countries.

English football fans came under fire amid the World Cup chaos when it was revealed that domestic abuse goes up when England loses. They still field one of the most diverse teams of the tournament, with stars like Raheem Sterling and Dele Alli coming from Muslim immigrant families.

47.8%

PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS IN THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL SQUAD

**DATA FOR WHOLE OF UK

72.5%

FOREIGN-BORN EMPLOYMENT RATE (AGES 15-64)

9.2%

PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS IN THE TOTAL POPULATION

BELGIUM



Like England and France, Belgium can trace the roots of its "Golden Generation" back to its colonies. Romelu Lukaku's comments on how he's perceived as a Belgian player of Congolese descent stirred up social media - with chances of Belgium going all the way in the tournament, their squad-full of diversity has been called "important".

48.8%

PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS IN THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL SQUAD

12.1%

PERCENTAGE OF MIGRANTS IN THE TOTAL POPULATION

13.4%

FOREIGN-BORN EMPLOYMENT RATE (AGES 15-64)

Belgium has become a nation of immigrants thanks to its flexible naturalisation policy, which allows for around 30,000 naturalisations, annually. Non-EU nationals tend to naturalize more frequently than EU nationals, surprisingly.

Unlike other European countries such as the Netherlands or France, the Belgian Nationality Code has never stipulated any formal integration conditions.

The high rate of naturalisations has led to a new policy that tightens existing naturalization conditions by introducing formal integration requirements including proof of economic participation and knowledge of language. It also increases the minimum residence to five years and broadens possibilities for loss of citizenship.

36.1% of the 10 European teams in the 2018 World Cup are made up of migrants.

COUNTRIES

SWITZERLAND
GERMANY
PORTUGAL

MIGRANTS IN SQUAD

65.2%
39.1%
30.4%

"When things were going well, I was reading newspaper articles and they were calling me Romelu Lukaku, the Belgian striker. When things weren't going well, they were calling me Romelu Lukaku, the Belgian striker of Congolese descent."

WHILE FOOTBALL AS A SPORT HAS BENEFITTED FROM THE DIVERSITY PROVIDED BY A MARKED RISE IN MIGRANTS, SOCIETY HAS BEEN GENERALLY LESS APPRECIATIVE BEYOND FOOTBALL WIN CELEBRATIONS.



"Ozil and Gundogan, go play for Erdogan!" - a banner raised by German football fans referring to Turkish born German players Mesut Ozil and Ilkay Gundogan.

Sources: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; Migration Policy Institute; Full Fact; Pew Research Center.

INFOGRAPHIC: SHAER REAZ

OPINION

Before she made it to our saris, chunky jewellery, phone cases, and magazine covers, Frida Kahlo was a genius, a socialist, a feminist, and an anti-imperialist nationalist, whose mere presence in history is radical. Her art challenged norms during her time and continues to do so today—if only we are willing to engage with her art on her own terms rather than through our liberal, bourgeois, feminist lens.

Frida was born on July 6, 1907, in Mexico which means that she would have been 111 years. She later chose to celebrate her birthday on July 7, 1910, the year of the Mexican Revolution, making her a 'Child of the Mexican Revolution'.

Frida was undoubtedly ahead of her time. Her self-portraits are jarring, dealing with her disabilities, social disparity, her sexual identity—she openly dated men and women—at a time when it was deeply frowned upon and even unacceptable. She is a non-conformist who painstakingly and purposefully worked to create a persona that was powerful and political. She was a staunch leftist; her political identity was not covert. Part of the Mexican Communist Party, Frida also made no secret of her distaste for American capitalism. She was a trailblazer not just for women, but for LGBTQ people, and people with disabilities. After a tram accident which changed the course of her life, she struggled with and embraced her multiple identities, which can be seen in her self-portraits, making up the bulk of her work.

Frida eschewed trends. At a time when French fashion was at the height in her country, she chose to dress in the traditional huipil tunics, enagua skirts, and headaddresses, exhibiting her love for her Mexican Mestizo identity and heritage. Likewise, the indigenous flowers she wore in her hair and the native jewellery she used to adorn herself with, were also reflections of her nationalist stance. Art-historians look at Frida's choice to wear her traditional clothes as distinctly political and they argue that it allowed the artist to be more in tune with her country's pre-Columbian cultures in post-revolutionary Mexico.

After having spent some time in America, Frida returned to Mexico and painted *Self-Portrait on the Borderline Between Mexico and the United States* (1932), printing Ford's name across the smoke-belching factory chimneys on the US side, showcasing her deep distaste for American capitalists. "I'm more and more convinced it's only through communism that we can become human," she wrote to an American comrade after the trip. Yet to experience her posthumously, raking in financial gains for businesses, boutiques, furthering the capitalist cause feels like a special kind of irony.

But try as she might, Frida cannot escape the cult-hood status she has been exalted to. Far from the West, here in Bangladesh too, she is having a moment. She is on saris being sold at exorbitant prices, on jackets, mugs, earrings, pillow covers, fridge-magnets—you name it, chances are, Frida has been flattened, reproduced, and reprinted hundreds of thousands of times, helping to generate revenues. This adulation of Frida, limited to the superficial, simply celebrating her as a style icon, goes to undermine her ethnicity, her disability and her principles—all of what made Frida Kahlo, the icon that she is today.

The 'sanitised' Frida Kahlo idolatry and the wave of commodification surrounding it, is not completely bad despite the many misgivings I have with it. It does make sense to see a resurgence of Frida Kahlo, a socialist figure, in Bangladesh, a country founded on principles of socialism. Yet, to see a watered-down narrative that is simply limited to trite symbolism leaves the story half-told.

Frida challenged beauty norms, her unibrows and light moustache, a testament to her rejection of the then and present beauty standards. While Frida's radical aesthetics has the potential to challenge Euro-centric beauty standards in Bangladesh, her white-washed representation in our pop culture, with fair skin, moustache-free upper lips, and lightened unibrow, actively reinstates the Eurocentrism and able-bodiedness that she so adamantly resisted. In Bangladesh, Frida is not a radical Mexican feminist, but a cultural icon

imported from white, Western media. She stands for every day, mass-market, feminism targeted towards able-bodied, cis-gendered, privileged women.

Thus, echoing a very timely and hard-hitting article on *Dazed* titled "Frida Kahlo is not your symbol" which says, "This ultimately leaves her inaccessible to minority groups while simultaneously allowing privileged people to embrace her without having to come into conflict with aspects of her that contradict their behaviours."

And, thus leaving Frida's legacy in peril. Will Frida remain simply a face on our t-shirts and saris, palatable as a cool figure? Or will Bangladesh, where feminism too is experiencing a new-found momentum, give Frida a full homage, where we will see her as she would want to have been seen? Complete with her politics, struggles, and sexual identity?

FRIDA IN COLOURS OF CAPITALISM

ABIDA RAHMAN CHOWDHURY



Frida is on saris, on jackets, mugs, earrings, pillow covers, fridge-magnets—she has been flattened, reproduced, and reprinted hundreds of thousands of times, helping to generate revenues.



Beauty products with images of Frida Kahlo.



The controversial Frida Kahlo Barbie doll which was temporarily barred from being sold in Mexico amid dispute.

PHOTOS: COURTESY



Self-portrait on the Borderline Between Mexico and the United States (1932).

PHOTO: COURTESY OF WWW.FRIDAKAHO.ORG

Frida was known to paint her body cast covering with pasted scraps of fabric and drawings of tigers, monkeys, plumed birds, a blood-red hammer and sickle, and streetcars.

PHOTO: BY JUAN GUZMAN
COURTESY COLLECTION GALERIA LÓPEZ QUIROG