

Subject: RE: M/s Equidem mail dated 24th October 2022
Date: Sunday, October 30, 2022 at 17:27:51 Nepal Time
From: Saic Landscape
To: Equidem
CC: Rameshwar Nepal, Mustafa Qadri, Namrata Raju
Attachments: image005.png, image006.png, image007.png, image008.png, image009.png, image010.png, image011.png, image012.png, image013.png, image014.jpg, image015.jpg, image016.jpg, image017.jpg

Dear Sir,

We kindly acknowledge receipt of your mail dated 24th October 2022 and please find below SAIC response related.

1. Exposure to COVID-19

A Bangladeshi worker who maintains turf grass at Al Janoub Stadium—employed by the contractor, Al Sulaiteen Agricultural and Industrial Complex (SAIC)—described reporting to work during the pandemic lockdowns despite exposure to COVID-19.

The Qatar government enforced a lockdown all over the country during the pandemic, beginning in May 2020. At that time, our company sent us to work. We were told that this is a FIFA World Cup 2022 project and we have to finish the work as soon as possible. During the pandemic it was hard to work at Al Janoub stadium. Some companies followed the lockdown rules, but not SAIC. They sent us to the site for daily work. It was really scary for all of us doing our duty during the pandemic, but we were helpless. We have a total of 30 workers for gardening, and five to seven of us fell sick.

<u>SAIC Response</u>
A. SAIC accommodation was not located on the government lockdown area.
B. SAIC during lockdown period and even through covid pandemic periods and until now has abide and fully implemented all Qatar government and Supreme Committee welfare regulation and standards. During all covid phases whether in the workers accommodation, during limitation of workers buses transportation capacities, workers welfare was implemented. Meantime, official working duties regulations was fully respected by SAIC and implemented including restricted working days and numbers of workers allowed to go to work. All this was done under strict supervision and surveillance of all related official authorities and Supreme Committee for Legacy, (SC).

2. Health risks at labour camp

A Bangladeshi worker employed as a gardener at Al Janoub Stadium, hired by Al Sulaiteen Agricultural and Industrial Complex (SAIC), described living in crowded living conditions:

Living conditions were not good during the pandemic, and even now. We live with eight people in each small room. There was no social distancing possible,

even though the company did provide masks and sanitizers.

<u>SAIC Response</u>
<p>A. <i>During the pandemic period and up to now workers welfare and living conditions are always according to welfare regulations and standards including but not limited to 4 workers/ room, random covid test done on SAIC expenses, isolation rooms created for infected workers, permanent nurse present at accommodation.</i></p> <p>B. <i>Social distancing was implemented.</i></p> <p>C. <i>Signage in all languages was installed at workers accommodation showing precaution and prevention measures to be respected.</i></p> <p>D. <i>Company provided sanitation, masks and local company was hired to spray the accommodation facilities.</i></p>

3. **Lack of health insurance**

A Bangladeshi worker employed as a gardener at Al Janoub Stadium, hired by Al Sulaiteen Agricultural and Industrial Complex (SAIC), reported that he was not provided with health insurance even though he worked daily during the pandemic:

We have a health card for a medical check-up, but we do not have health insurance.

<u>SAIC Response</u>
<p>A. <i>According to Qatar labour law, SAIC provided health cards to all its workers which allow them to get all kind of treatments, medication and surgery if needed free of charge in the government health centres, clinics and hospitals.</i></p> <p>B. <i>All SAIC workers are covered within worker's compensation policy schedule which protects workers from any accident or personal injury or body injuries.</i></p> <p>C. <i>Official workers health insurance scheme is under study by the official authorities.</i></p>

4. **Recruitment fees**

Workers employed in turf maintenance through contractor, Al Sulaiteen Agricultural and Industrial Complex (SAIC), reported being charged recruitment fees of 10,000 BDT (USD 99).

SAIC Response

- A. SAIC recruit its workers only through overseas manpower agencies approved by the Ministry of Labour (MOL).
- B. SAIC proceed on recruitment online through overseas Qatar visa centre (QVC) and settle all QVC payment online (visa fees, medical check, etc...).

SAIC has always abided and committed to the implementation of all worker's welfare standards, regulations enforced by Ministry of Labour (MOL) and Supreme Committee for Legacy, (SC) related to SAIC workers employed at FIFA World Cup 2022 stadiums in Qatar and all its other projects.

In addition to above, all SAIC workers are receiving their salaries through the official worker's protection system (WPS), which allows workers to withdraw their monthly salaries from any ATM in Qatar.

Although we understand your concerns, we disapproved all the allegations mentioned in M/s Equidem findings report and reconfirm our continuous commitment and implementation of Worker's Welfare as per (MOL) and (SC) standards and regulations.

We would like to underline also that all SAIC landscaping and turf projects and services are related to government departments and authorities and therefore SAIC is under their permanent supervision workwise and welfare-wise.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for any matter related to our worker's welfare.

Best Regards,

Jahangir Kabir
Workers' Welfare Officer



[Redacted signature]

[Redacted contact information]



From: Equidem [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, October 24, 2022 9:56 AM
To: Saic Landscape [REDACTED]
Cc: Rameshwar Nepal [REDACTED]; Mustafa Qadri [REDACTED];
Namrata Raju [REDACTED]
Subject: Violations of Migrant Workers' Labour and Human Rights at Al Sulaiteen Agricultural and Industrial Complex (SAIC)

Dear Mr. Abdullah Salem Sulaiteen,

I am writing to you on behalf of Equidem, a human rights and labour rights charity that monitors labour rights globally, including in the Arab Gulf countries. Between September 2020 and October 2022, Equidem conducted an investigation into working conditions for migrant workers employed on FIFA World Cup 2022 stadiums in Qatar. During our research, we came across workers employed by your company that we believe are being subjected to labour exploitation. We wish to share our findings with you and seek further information about the cases we have documented and rights protections for migrant workers in your company. Where relevant and appropriate, Equidem would like to publish information provided by the company in a public report to be published later this month.

We would appreciate receiving any information you are willing to provide by Monday, October 31st so that we can incorporate your responses in the report. We would also be happy to discuss our findings and your responses and may be contacted on [REDACTED]

Best,
Deepika Thapaliya
Research Project Manager
Equidem