



Mexico World Cup opener turns political

Description

default watermark

Mexico scores first goal of 2026 World Cup

The first game of the 2026 World Cup, held in Mexico, was notable for reasons other than Donald Trump's [racist authoritarianism](#). The [vomit-inducing bootlicking](#) and [double standards](#) of FIFA boss Gianni Infantino didn't go unnoticed, and Mexican president Claudia Sheinbaum's [refusal to attend](#) made headlines.

Sheinbaum reportedly gave her ticket to a [young Indigenous woman](#) and watched [Mexico's victory over South Africa](#) at a sports [centre](#) [in the company of the people](#).

 President Sheinbaum TURNED DOWN her World Cup ticket over the ridiculous prices, choosing to gift it away and watch Mexico's victory with the people at a free local screening instead. pic.twitter.com/dGYqGFtQjl

Samuel  (@resisres) [June 11, 2026](#)

Political flashpoints

Beyond the drama of Infantino and Sheinbaum, the tournament quickly became a stage for political flashpoints.

This was a break with the [tradition of national heads of state attending opening matches](#). Moreover, it reflected to some extent the low point the world has reached, amid the [US-Israeli genocide](#) in Gaza. It also showed Donald Trump's [flagrant flouting](#) of [international law](#).

FIFA, meanwhile, is perhaps as blatantly awful as it ever has been too. Because it hasn't just [hypocritically refused to ban Israel](#) despite [banning other countries](#) for lesser crimes than genocide. In fact, it has also stooped to the sickening level of sycophancy that Trump craves. For example, it [shamefully awarded the warmonger a fake peace prize](#)

Academic Ricardo Domínguez told *El Nuevo Herald* that Sheinbaum's actions were [consistent with her government's slogan "primero los pobres"](#). It argues that the poorest people should always be the top priority. This was especially relevant as few Mexicans could easily afford the [stratospheric costs](#) of World Cup tickets.

Sheinbaum also [shut the schools](#) in Mexico City for the event. Additionally, she encouraged employers to allow their employees to work remotely.

Mexico's battle against poverty

Sheinbaum and her predecessor Andrés Manuel López Obrador have overseen a shift away from the capitalist extremism of [neoliberalism](#). Boosting [workers' rights](#), and gender equality, the government has helped. Thus, it has helped to take [millions of people out of poverty](#)

A person earning the minimum wage in Mexico would have needed to [work 20 days in order to buy the cheapest ticket for the opening match](#) in Mexico City. And for perspective, a person on minimum wage would have only needed to work for half a day to attend a match at the 1986 World Cup in Mexico.

Mexican teachers, for example, earn on average somewhere [between \\$260 and \\$650 per month](#). And many of them have taken advantage of the World Cup events in Mexico to [highlight their call for better pay and conditions](#)

Considering [the money the government has invested](#) in World Cup infrastructure, teachers haven't bought the idea that there's not enough money to give them proper pay rises. Having protested against low wages and poor working conditions [since long before](#) Sheinbaum came to power, they now [want her rhetoric to turn into action](#)

Despite [negotiations](#) Sheinbaum's government is [yet to reach an agreement](#) with the striking teachers.

Sheinbaum has made clear statements of her political focus, like giving away her World Cup ticket and celebrating with ordinary fans. But the struggle to get fairer working conditions from her government absolutely continues.

Featured image [via Kevin C. Cox / Getty Images](#)

By [The Canary](#)

[Source link](#)

CATEGORY

1. News

POST TAG

1. cup
2. mexico
3. news
4. opener
5. political
6. turns
7. world

Category

1. News

default watermark