

South Africans slow to buy Conf, 2010 tickets

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Although the sale of tickets for the FIFA Confederations Cup and the 2010 FIFA World Cup is strong worldwide, the response from South Africans to purchase tickets is slow.



"Only 20% of FIFA Confederations and 2010 World Cup tickets sold so far have been purchased by South Africans, indicating that about 80% of tickets sold so far had gone to people from other countries," said Local Organising Committee Chairman Irvin Khoza on Tuesday.

He said more than 506,000 worldwide online applications for World Cup tickets had been made since ticket applications opened on 20 February.

A total of 170,000 Confederations Cup tickets had been sold and 646,000 were still available on a first come, first served basis.

"The tremendous response is extremely exciting and gives us a great deal of confidence," Khoza said, encouraging and appealing to South African fans to get out and buy tickets.

Appeal to locals

South Africans need to wake up if they are to be in on the FIFA Confederations Cup and 2010 World Cup action, the committee said.

"We are appealing to South Africans, this is your opportunity to go out there and buy tickets. If you are waiting for a week or a month before the kick-off, you won't be able to watch the games," LOC head Danny Jordaan.

Dr Jordaan urged South Africans to buy tickets so that the stadiums could be filled, for a "wonderful and memorable" World Cup.

"There is only one country that will host this World Cup and that is South Africa. And yet you find countries like Canada, Australia are more enthusiastic it seems than our own South African population," said Dr Jordaan.

The ticket prices range from R490 per ticket when seated at the back, for the opening match, and R6,300 for the final for a seat alongside the pitch.

South Africans could also make hard copy applications at First National Bank branches.

More promotion necessary

Meanwhile, FIFA General Secretary Jerome Valcke said South Africa must do more to promote this year's Confederations Cup and the 2010 World Cup.

He said the Confederations Cup would allow for a rehearsal of operations for the 2010 World Cup.

"Now it's only about delivery. We cannot move the kick-off, we can't say 'sorry, there's going to be a delay,'" Valcke said.

He said he was disappointed at not seeing promotions of the Confederations Cup in and around Johannesburg.

"There's nothing not even at the airport that shows you that this is Confederations Cup host city," he said, adding that they had appointed a signage company to promote it.

Confederation Cup matches involving Italy, Spain, the United States, Brazil, Iraq, New Zealand, Egypt and South Africa will be staged in the cities of Johannesburg, Pretoria, Bloemfontein and Rustenburg.

All four stadiums, the LOC said, Ellis Park, Loftus, the Free State Stadium and the Royal Bafokeng Stadium, would be ready on schedule for the Confederations Cup.

The LOC also assured fans and participating teams that they need not worry about security during both events following the attack on Sri Lankan cricket players in Pakistan on Tuesday.

"Our security will be tight and we do not envisage any problems," said Khoza.

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