

Scottish Parliament debates ending institutional racism in sport

Kaukab Stewart MSP secured a debate at Holyrood on Wednesday inviting discussion on the report into institutional racism in Cricket Scotland.

The debate, with an attentive audience in the public gallery, focused on the published review which found the body was institutionally racist, citing 448 examples, and noted that racism might not be restricted to the body. One recommendation from the report was to improve the diversity of the Cricket Scotland board, in the hope that this would improve diversity at all levels of decision making. Ms Stewart also moved that the parliament “looks forward to the day when zero tolerance for any processes, attitudes and behaviour that amount to racial discrimination through the exclusion of minority ethnic people from participation and talent development opportunities, becomes a reality in Scottish sport”.

You may watch the whole debate [here](#) on Scottish Parliament TV.

Gillian Mackay MSP thanked Ms Stewart for her passionate speech in introducing the motion. She said: “Like so many colleagues across the chamber I express my deep concern about the findings of this report and solidarity to those who experienced this insitutional abuse. No-one should be made to feel unsafe, unwelcome or abused in sport.

“The Scottish Greens share the view that genuinely impactful equalities and anti-racist strategies should be central to organisations that receive government funding.”



Foyso Choudhury MBE MSP

Another of the MSPs who took the opportunity to speak in the debate was Lothians MSP, Foyso Choudhury who became the first politician of Bangladeshi origin elected to The Scottish Parliament when he became an MSP in 2021. Mr Choudhury told The Edinburgh Reporter that he is very aware that racism still exists in Scottish society.

He said: “Here we go again. Another investigation, another organisation found to be Institutional Racist and a long list of actions to be taken!

“Twenty-three years after the 1999 Macpherson report, racism is still present across society.

“Since then, positive moves towards equality have been taken, and I applaud the work of campaigns such as Show Racism the

Red Card and Kick it Out, which encourage the end of racism within sport.

“Institutions that receive Government funding must be held to account and must promote anti-racist equality practices.

“Institutions and their boards must not be given awards whilst failing to uphold standards of fairness, equality and accountability for those they serve.

“It is unacceptable that Cricket Scotland was winning diversity awards whilst 448 cases of institutional racism were happening.

“I commend those who shared their lived experiences of racism within the sport, including former Scotland internationals Majid Haq and Qasim Sheikh.

“Doing so has helped to expose the realities that racism does still exist in Scotland and that something needs to be done, now!

“I hope that in the future, it will be easier for other victims of racism to share their experience and be supported in doing so.

“The Plan4Sport report, whilst shocking and extremely disappointing, is a wake-up call about the reality of racism in sport and in Scotland today.

“I am a cricket lover, and have played the game myself. Sport should be an exciting, enjoyable pursuit for children and adults alike, and we should not be allowing a culture where people feel that they cannot succeed in, or enjoy, sport because of institutional barriers against their skin colour, religion or cultural background.

“I want to see strict laws, monitoring and methods to ensure change.

“Racism in Scotland has gone on long enough. Now is the time to deliver change.”