

Early Bird 24 – 31 August 2012

## **SECURITY/SAFETY**

### **World War II Bomb detonated in the heart of Munich (Aug. 29)**

Late on Tuesday evening in Munich, authorities detonated a bomb leftover from World War II that had been discovered at a construction site in the center of the city. The explosion took place after thousands of residents had been evacuated and had to spend the night in emergency shelters set up by the Bavarian Red Cross. Furthermore several streets and subway stations were closed. Officials evacuated buildings in a radius of one kilometer from the site. Nobody was injured in the blast. The blast could be heard across the city and windows in the neighborhood were shattered. By Wednesday morning, most residents had been allowed to return to their homes, though officials were still checking for damage to nearby buildings. Initially, officials tried to defuse the bomb, an American model used sparingly in World War II. But its detonator, a chemical delay-action trigger, did not work. A controlled explosion proved to be the only solution.

### **Smoke detectors soon a must in German houses (Aug. 28 Aug, 2012)**

In most northern German states smoke detectors are mandatory but not in Bavaria and Baden Württemberg. However; in Bavaria it is already in the legislative phase and if everything goes according to plan, Bavaria will have a stricter law which means that smoke detectors must be installed not only in bed rooms and children's rooms but also in living rooms and hallways. Every year there are approximately 200,000 fires Germany wide and approximately 600 peoples die. 70 per cent of the victims die in their sleep or wake up when it is too late to escape. Therefore the Bavarian government is stepping up to the plate.

## **LEADERS&POLITICS**

### **Gas stations are not supposed to become “night time” supermarkets (Aug. 31)**

As of 1 June gas stations in Bavaria which do not have a gastronomy license can sell food items, alcohol and tobacco only to travelers i.e. people driving a car. People who walk there or ride their bikes are not considered travelers and cannot shop there after 8 p.m. the regular closing time for supermarkets. Also the quantity of alcohol a consumer can purchase is limited to 2 liters of beer, 1 liter of wine or 0.1 liter of vodka. The consumers are more than upset. The Young Liberals are planning to have flash mobs gathering at selected gas stations Bavarian wide on Saturday at 8 p.m. (regular closing time for super markets). They want to make clear that in such a situation the gas station attendant will not be able to decide who is a “traveler” and who is not. Not only the consumers are furious, the Vice President of the German-Austrian gas station association, Frank Kämpfe feels that this new regulation is an absolute patronization. He stated: “The government is hurting us – the gasoline does not make the sales – the extra income from the shop does.” According to a spokeswoman of the Bavarian Department of Employment and Social Affairs stated: “The rule is not new, it has been in effect since 1996 in Germany. New is only the definition of “travelers” and the limitations on purchasing alcohol.”

### **Black box in cars? (Aug. 28)**

In case of a plane crash the black box provides important data as to the cause of the accident. The black box could also be installed in cars. The German Bundestag made positive remarks in regards to having the accident data storage device installed in every car, as a standard. According to a newspaper report the European Union (EU) has already plans to make this happen.

Promoters of the black box hope for more clarity, as to who was at fault, in case of an accident. The ADAC; however; warns of curtailing the rights of the car drivers. According to the German Road Safety Council, the EU could dictate mandatory installation of the black box in all cars. The Federal Department of Transportation is reluctant with its remarks. "Before it will be mandatory to have such equipment installed, as a standard, first of all the technical questions and the cost have to be cleared and most important the questions how it would affect the data privacy law" stated a spokesman on Monday. The Federal Government will wait for proposals made by the EU commission.

### **Siberian Tiger kills zoo keeper (Aug. 27)**

In the zoo in Cologne a tiger attacked a zoo keeper, bit her in the neck and killed her. The zoo director, Theo Pagel, shot the four-year old Siberian tiger. However; he could not save the life of the 43-year old female zoo keeper. There was no danger for the zoo visitors at any time since the tiger was not able to leave its enclosed compound. Also the visitors were not able to see the place of the accident – an outbuilding adjacent to the enclosed compound. The police are investigating the cause and the exact course of the accident. The accident occurred Saturday night while cleaning the compound. Apparently the zoo keeper had forgotten to lock the tiger in and it probably attacked her from the back. After the deadly bite the tiger let go of his victim. Police investigations continue.

### **A long march to Brussels for good food (Aug. 25)**

They protest against waste of food and for "good, clean and fair food, against further industrialization and internationalization of food products and for more "ecological and more social European agriculture politics". They are doing it in a spectacular manner: With a 26-day long march from Munich to Brussels the activists of "Slow Food Germany" together with organic farmers, nature protection and church organizations - development work - want to voice their concerns and demands before the European Union will create new precedents in European agriculture politics this fall. The event which will start in Munich on Saturday under the theme "Good Food March" (even though it will not actually be a march, since the demonstrators will be riding bicycles or driving tractors) will include a number of events along the route. The list of concerns of the 40 organizations participating in the campaign "my agriculture" is long. During a kick-off press conference in Munich on Sunday, the President of "Slow Food Germany" Ursula Hudson pointed out the gigantic waste of food. As an average, 40 per cent of the groceries end up in the trash. She stated: "This is not only an ecological problem but, in our opinion, first of all an ethical problem. Main cause is "lack of appreciation" of food as well as the method of production. "Over production and waste are part of the entire system" said Hudson. Slow Food counters this development with another philosophy: "Our food is of central significance for our culture, society, economy and environment – much more than just a product."

The Head of the Bavarian Nature Protection Association, Richard Mergner, summarized the demands which the activists would like to bring forward to the European Parliament in Brussels on 19 September: "The future agriculture shall not be reduced to delivery of cheap crude materials for agro-industrial production of food and energy but should be done across the whole

European Union and protect intact cultivated landscapes, create jobs and take animal rights issues as seriously as global development, fair trade and climate protection issues.

## **ECONOMY**

### **Lufthansa airline is facing a strike (Aug. 29)**

Passengers of Lufthansa airline can expect delays because of a strike of flight attendants in the next few weeks. Nicoley Baublies, Chief of Labor union UFO stated in Frankfurt on Tuesday “as of today we are facing a labor conflict.” Exact dates and times of the strikes will not be announced for tactical reasons. However; the labor union is preparing for strikes all over Germany. The approximately 19,000 flight attendants working for Lufthansa have never been on strike before, except for a few small warning strikes in 2009. Europe’s largest airline is forced to implement drastic saving measures because of strong competition and upcoming major investments. An important factor in the 1.5 billion savings program “Score” are the high personnel cost. Lufthansa already announced to reduction of 3,500 admin positions.

### **New Gas Power Station in Grafenrheinfeld? (Aug. 25)**

As answer to a concept of the Bavarian State Government in regards to future locations of conventional gas power plants in Lower Franconia, county Commissioner Harald Leitherer stated: “All signs clearly point to Grafenrheinfeld . In the list for locations in Unterfranken only Dettelbach was listed not Grafenrheinfeld, where a nuclear power plant will be shut down by the end of 2015. In April the region Mainfranken GmbH and its president, Lord Mayor Georg Rosenthal of Würzburg, had unanimously agreed on Grafenrheinfeld. According to Leitherer also the Bavarian Department of Trade and Industry supports the efforts to use the infra structure available in Grafenrheinfeld for a gas power plant. Leitherer stated that in the beginning of August there were preliminary talks with a potential investor.

### **Study shows electricity too expensive. (Aug. 25)**

According to a study energy suppliers are collecting up to three billion Euros too much from German consumers this year. In spite of this, another increase of up to five percent for electricity can be expected according to Federal Environmental Minister Peter Altmaier. Gunnar Harms, energy expert of the “Green” Party stated that the purchase price of electricity has decreased from to 10 to 20 per cent in spite the shutdown of eight nuclear power plants. He emphasized that the energy turn-around did not cause the feared price increases. If these effects would be completely relayed to the consumer, the price should be two cents cheaper per kilowatt hour – a total of three billion Euros this year. During the past five years it showed that the increased purchase prices were immediately relayed to the end consumer, decreases; however; were not – at least not to individual or household consumers. However; the prices for industrial consumers decreased by three per cent in the past years while at the same time private end consumers had 20 per cent increases since 2008. For weeks the “Green” Party has been criticizing that there are too many exceptions for energy-intensive companies in regards to power grid charges and the charge for promotion of renewable energies, therefore the small consumers have to bear considerable extra cost for electricity.

## **SPORT**

**Schweinfurt Soccer Club FC 05 sneaks up to the top (Aug. 27)**

After a confident 2:0 victory against the SV Memmelsdorf the FC 05 Schweinfurt reached second place in the Bavarian soccer league. On 7 September the team will play against the Bavarian league leader the FC Amberg. Coach Gerd Klaus is very optimistic. After four victories the FC 05 team has confidence. He stated: "Now we are where we want to be, on a wave of euphoria which we were lacking during the last season."