

Sports

Hungary fans clash with police during England World Cup qualifier

Southgate brands incident 'unacceptable'; Rossi refuses to comment

LONDON: Hungary supporters clashed with police at Wembley as a fan was arrested for racist abuse of a steward during Tuesday's World Cup qualifier against England. England manager Gareth Southgate branded the ugly clashes "unacceptable", while England defender Tyrone Mings called for harsher punishments for racism in football.

Just moments after kick-off, trouble flared among the pocket of around 1,000 Hungarians in one corner of Wembley. Dozens of Hungary supporters charged at stewards, who were forced to retreat before police wielding batons arrived. The fighting continued for several minutes before riot police finally restored order in the stands and the stadium concourse. The incident occurred when police moved in to arrest one Hungary fan for a racist comment to a steward.

Hungary's supporters also booed when England players took the knee before kick-off and held up a banner protesting against the anti-racism gesture. "I was aware of a disturbance. It sounds like it was not acceptable but I haven't seen the detail," Southgate said. Mings added: "Every time we speak on racial abuse the punishments that follow never seem in line with what has happened. I sincerely hope that if that is the case, the punishments fall in line with what happened this time."

Hungary manager Marco Rossi refused to condemn the fans, saying: "I don't want to comment about this situation. It is not my task. Everything I could say could be interpreted in a different way, so I prefer no comment."

The Metropolitan Police confirmed the arrest on

their Twitter account. "Shortly after the start of tonight's match at Wembley, officers entered the stand to arrest a spectator for a racially aggravated public order offence following comments made towards a steward," a statement said. "As the officers made the arrest, minor disorder broke out involving other spectators. Order was quickly restored and there have been no further incidents at this stage."

The English Football Association said they would report the incident to FIFA and launch an investigation of their own. "We will be investigating and will



Fan arrested for racist abuse

report the incident to FIFA," an FA statement said. It was not the first time Hungary fans had caused problems during their meetings with England in the qualifying campaign. England's 4-0 win in Budapest in September was marred by racist chants from Hungarians aimed at Raheem Sterling and Jude Bellingham. Missiles were also thrown at England's players at the Puskas Arena.

Hungary were ordered to play two home FIFA



LONDON: England's midfielder Raheem Sterling (left) and defender John Stones take the knee in support of the No Room For Racism campaign, ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2022 qualifying match between England and Hungary at Wembley Stadium in London on Tuesday. — AFP

competition matches behind closed doors, one suspended for two years, following the racist behavior. UEFA had already told Hungary to play one game behind closed doors following racist abuse from supporters and homophobic banners in the stands during their Euro 2020 matches in Budapest.

Wembley had also been the scene of crowd disorder

just months ago when England's defeat against Italy in the final of Euro 2020 was marred by ticketless fans storming the gates to gain entry. Thousands of fans managed to break through Wembley's understaffed security cordon before the final, while drunken supporters caused havoc outside the stadium hours before kick-off. — AFP

Denmark's 2022 World Cup berth completes 'almost perfect' year

COPENHAGEN: With their qualification for the 2022 World Cup, Denmark not only showed their remarkable resilience in the wake of Christian Eriksen's near-fatal cardiac arrest but served warning of their ambitions in Qatar. A 1-0 win over Austria at a sold-out Parken Stadium on Tuesday clinched Denmark's place at next year's finals, a day after Germany became the first country to qualify.

"The almost perfect year for the national team has had an almost perfect end," wrote Danish daily Politiken, as Denmark made it eight wins from eight in Group F. Few could have predicted

Denmark's sharp rise four months ago when Eriksen, the team's playmaker, collapsed on the same Copenhagen pitch, with medics rushing to administer life-saving treatment.

The traumatic incident strengthened Denmark's resolve, a nation united behind its football team that rode a wave of emotion to the semi-finals of Euro 2020, narrowly losing out to England at Wembley. "It's as if Denmark and the national team have fallen in love again," Andreas Kraul, commentator for public broadcaster DR, told AFP.

Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen offered her congratulations on Instagram, posting a photo of herself and the sports minister dressed in red and white from inside the stadium. Denmark coach Kasper Hjulmand, who would not have been in charge at Euro 2020 if not for the delay caused by the pandemic, will have a year to prepare his team for the World Cup.

"You can only dream about things like this," said midfielder Pierre-Emile



COPENHAGEN: Danish fans cheer during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 qualification Group F football match between Denmark and Austria in Copenhagen on Tuesday. — AFP

Højbjerg. "It's crazy. This is huge for me, it's huge for the team, for Danish football and for Denmark. With the age and quality we have, we will only keep growing. It's about staying humble and keeping

our minds in the right place."

Denmark overcame stubborn resistance from Austria to maintain the only 100 percent record in European qualifying. Joakim Maehle's second-half goal

made it 27 without reply for the Danes in their group, giving them an unassailable seven-point lead over Scotland with two games to play. "It means a lot," Maehle told Danish television. "It's one of the best nights in Parken in a very long time. It's amazing."

'More than just a team'

Players again dedicated their victory to Eriksen, whose close friend Simon Kjær received widespread praise for his handling of the harrowing events on June 12. For Kraul, "the incident was clearly constitutive for the group, which has become more than just a team." "It made them grow up," he added. A disputed penalty ended Denmark's Euro dreams, but rather than linger on what could have been, the team has its sights set on a deep run in Qatar. "The last time, we were in the semi-finals (at the Euro). I want more, we want more. Now we're going to play at the World Cup and we want more," said Denmark captain Kjær, among the 30 nominees for the Ballon d'Or. — AFP

Red Bull Neymar Jr's Five returns to Kuwait

KUWAIT: Red Bull Neymar Jr's Five, the global sensation, has returned to cities worldwide in 2021. Several major countries have recently concluded their finals, and this month Kuwait will undergo its qualifiers and finals as well.

Red Bull Neymar Jr's Five is a cross-continent five-a-side football tournament. Participating countries conclude with a country final, where the winners qualify for the Red Bull Neymar Jr's World Final appearance. This is their chance to win the tournament proper and bring back the championship trophy to their home country.

The global tournament will return to

Kuwait in October 2021. Both fans and players have been eagerly awaiting the opportunity to show the world what they have to offer. The Red Bull Neymar Jr's Five 2021 Kuwait Qualifiers will take place over two sets of three-day events. The first will be on October 18, and 19. The Kuwait qualifiers second round will be the following week of October, on 25, 26.

These will lead up to the Red Bull Neymar Jr's Five Kuwait Country Final, which will be on November 4, 2021. The best of Kuwait will go on to the World Final. This year, and for the first time ever, the Red Bull Neymar Jr's Final will be hosted by the Gulf country of Qatar. More information regarding the World Finals will arrive at a later date.

The event in Kuwait is held in partnership with Puma Middle East, Acqua Eva and Kuwait Times.

Registration is currency open for all teams looking to sign up in Kuwait.

Interested athletes are kindly directed to the official country website: redbull.com/mea-en/events/red-bull-neyymar-jrs-five-kuwait-2021.

The rules of the game are unchanged from previous years. They are as follows:

- Players must be aged 16 and over at the time of the tournament
- Seven player teams
- Five players per team on the pitch
- No goalkeepers
- Stepping inside the box results in a penalty for the other team
- When you score a goal, the other side loses a player for the duration of the match
- The match lasts 10 minutes or until a team runs out of players
- Any games ending in a draw will result in a 1-on-1 battle

The simplicity of the rules belies the intensity of the matches. At 10 minutes, they are extremely satisfying to watch



and play. There is no time to waste, and teams must go into their matchups with a strategy that's been practiced to achieve any success. Every goal scored places the other team in a precarious position, which further fuels their team to take chances to score and even out the playing field.

More than 30 countries are participating in this year's tournament, and as pre-

viously stated, many have concluded their country finals, like the United Kingdom, and the United Arab Emirates. This month, the focus will be on the Kuwait tournament, which has always proven to be competitive and memorable. All interested teams are encouraged to sign up today and look forward to a superb return of Red Bull Neymar Jr's Five.

Classifieds

Hospitals & Clinics

Sabah Hospital	24812000	Kaifan	24849807
Amiri Hospital	22450005	Shamiya	24848913
Maternity Hospital	24843100	Shuwaikh	24814507
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700	Abdullah Salem	22549134
Chest Hospital	24849400	Nuzha	22526804
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010	Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Adan Hospital	23940620	Qadsia	22515088
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300	Dasmah	
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000		
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9	22532265	
		Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
		Shaab	22518752
		Qibla	22459381
		Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
		Mirqab	22456536
		Sharq	22465401
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