

China warns of possible 'trade war' with EU

BEIJING, June 21 (Reuters) - Beijing warned on Friday that escalating frictions with the European Union over electric vehicle imports could trigger a trade war, as Germany's economy minister arrived in the Chinese capital with the proposed tariffs high on his agenda.

Robert Habeck's three-day trip to China is the first by a senior European official since Brussels proposed hefty duties on imports of Chinese-made electric vehicles to combat excessive subsidies. That has unleashed countermeasures by China and harsh criticism from Chinese leaders.

In an unexpected twist, Habeck - from the ecologist Greens Party which is a junior partner in Germany's fractious three-way coalition - criticised Berlin's 11-month-old China strategy document as too short-termist and not in sync with the China strategies of other EU countries.

This week alone, Chinese automakers urged Beijing to hike tariffs on imported European gasoline-powered cars and the government launched a dumping probe into EU pork imports in retaliation for the EU Commission's move.

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