

Pokemon Go mania sweeps Turkey, but some want it banned

July 14 2016, by Raziye Akkoc



The union for imams in Turkey called for a ban of Pokemon Go on the grounds that it it insulted Islam

As Pokemon Go users try to "catch 'em all" in Turkey, some want to see the hit mobile app banned in the country, accusing it of undermining Islam.

Since July 5, the popular game developed by Niantic Labs has created a frenzy of users around the world, walking around to find the cartoon

"pocket monsters", once popular in the late 1990s.

Players can join the app for free and look for 250 of the creatures, which first began life in the game for Nintendo's Game Boy.

However, the union for imams in Turkey called for a ban of the game, which overlays play on the real world, on the grounds that it it insulted Islam.

Head of the Diyanet-Sen union of imams Mehmet Bayraktutar was quoted by Haberturk daily as saying the game "undermines the significance and value of places where people worship" as users try to find Pokemon even in mosques.

Bayraktutar even went as far as to suggest the game was a western plot against Islam. "I condemn this, I want it to be banned in Turkey."

His comments come a day after the Auschwitz museum asked the [game's](#) makers to block players at the former Nazi death camp out of respect for the dead.

The Turkish health ministry also issued a warning on Wednesday against searching for Pokemon creatures in the afternoon.

"Don't go outside unless you have to in the afternoon hours when the sun is at its strongest," it wrote on Facebook.

Yusuf Bayramli, a user on the social media website, replied: "Does this mean we can't go outside to search for Pokemon?"

The ministry replied: "We do not recommend searching for Pokemon between 11:00 am and 16:00 pm when the sun's rays hit at a direct angle. We also advise making sure you keep your eyes on the road and not on

your mobile phone's screen, especially when crossing the road."

Such is the popularity of the [app](#) in the country, a correspondent for Haberturk channel went around the national parliament block looking for Pokemon in the capital Ankara on Thursday.

Mehmet Karaca searched for Pokemon with no luck until he arrived near the prime minister's office and caught one.

He even failed to find one in the main chamber but as luck would have it, he found and caught a Pokemon by the far-right Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) leader Devlet Bahçeli's office, just below his name plaque.

In total, Karaca caught three.

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Citation: Pokemon Go mania sweeps Turkey, but some want it banned (2016, July 14) retrieved 11 August 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2016-07-pokemon-mania-turkey.html>

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