

Phone-hacking payments were not my responsibility

Says Rebekah Brooks before MPs

GUARDIAN ONLINE

The former News International chief executive, Rebekah Brooks, has deflected British MPs' questions about the News of the World's payments to private investigators, saying they were the responsibility of the paper's managing editor.

Brooks admitted using private investigators during her time as editor of the now-defunct tabloid, which she edited between 2000 and 2003, but said it was for "purely legitimate" purposes, such as finding out the whereabouts of convicted paedophiles.

But she said she had never heard of Glenn Mulcaire, the private detective formerly paid by the News of the World to hack into people's mobile phones, saying the first time she had heard his name was in 2006 when he was arrested

PHONE HACKING SCANDAL

In other developments:

- Murdocks rejects blame, says questioning by MPs "the most humble day of my life"
- The Conservative Party says former NoW journalist Neil Wallis may have provided "informal advice" to Andy Coulson, David Cameron's ex-press chief, before the last election
- A post-mortem examination is being carried out on the body of former NoW reporter Sean Hoare who was found dead on Monday
- The Met Police's public affairs director Dick Fedorico tells MPs 10 out of 45 members of his department had once worked for the News of the World
- Police are examining a laptop and paperwork found in a bin near the London home of Mrs Brooks, items believed to belong to her husband
- David Cameron is returning to the UK - cutting short a trip to Africa - to prepare for a Commons

for this activity.

"The News of the World employed private detectives like most papers in Fleet Street," said Brooks, appearing before MPs on the Commons culture, media and sport select committee to answer questions about the News of the World phone-hacking scandal.

Asked if she had approved payments for the controversial use of private detectives, Brooks said: "That's not how it works."

Brooks explained that at News International "the editor's job is to acquire an overall budget from management" and then give this to the managing editor, who allocates it to a paper's department heads.

Brooks, who resigned from News International on Friday and was arrested and questioned by police for several hours on Sunday.



A screen grab image taken in London yesterday shows News Corporation Chief Rupert Murdoch (Front R) touching his son James' arm as they give evidence to a Parliamentary Select Committee on the phone hacking scandal.

Murdoch's websites hacked

AFP, London

Websites owned by Rupert Murdoch's News International were down yesterday after the Lulz Security hacker group replaced The Sun's online version with a fake story pronouncing the mogul's death.

The British tabloid quickly took down reports that the 80-year-old had been found dead in his garden after ingesting palladium but visitors to the site were redirected to LulzSec's Twitter feed, which celebrated the high-profile attack.

News International, Murdoch's British newspaper arm, is believed to have swiftly pulled all of its websites as a precautionary measure.

Rupert Murdoch: The last press baron

CNN ONLINE

Rupert Murdoch is the last of a dying breed: An old-fashioned press baron, a tough businessman with ink running through his veins, a hefty checkbook, and a hunger for the next big story.

Now aged 80, he has spent the past half century turning a business that began with one local Australian newspaper into a massive multimedia empire which spans the globe and includes TV, online, film and print interests.

But the phone-hacking scandal that has already forced him to close the British tabloid that was once his pride and joy, News of the World, now threatens all he has worked for.

The newspaper business is in Murdoch's blood. Born in Melbourne, Australia, in 1931, he was one of four children -- the only son -- of a celebrated journalist and his debutante-turned-philanthropist wife.

His father, Keith Murdoch, was a reporter who exposed the horrific conditions experienced by Anzac troops fighting at Gallipoli in World War I, and went on to manage a large newspaper company.

His mother, Elisabeth, was inspired to devote her life to "good works" as a school-girl. Now aged 102, she remains a supporter of more than 100 charities, and enjoys an almost regal status in Australia.

Murdoch was studying at Oxford when his father died in 1952.

Mentored -- like his father -- by press baron Lord Beaverbrook, he learned his trade as a reporter in Birmingham, England and as a £10-a-week sub-editor at Beaverbrook's Daily Express in London before returning home to take charge of the family business.

Despite his youth, the new boss of the Adelaide News took to the job like a duck to water, quickly getting embroiled in a newspaper war -- the first of many -- with local rival the Adelaide Advertiser.

"It cost a great deal," he said. "But it taught me that with good editors and a loyal readership, you can challenge better-heeled and more established rivals -- and succeed."

He was soon looking to expand the company: After buying up other local papers across the country, in 1964, he set up Australia's first national newspaper,

The Australian, and in 1969, moved overseas to purchase his first UK paper, News of the World, shortly followed by the Sun.

The sensationalism and sex on the pages of some of his papers provoked shock and anger among his competitors on Fleet Street, and earned Murdoch a number of less than complimentary nicknames.

As Ian Hislop, editor of British satirical magazine Private Eye, told CNN: "[We have] referred to Murdoch as the Dirty Digger throughout his long career, and it's not an accident; he does dig up dirt and then puts it in papers and sells it."

His hunger for the latest scoops -- and his willingness to pay for them -- have ensured massive sales figures, but have also caused controversy over the years.

That desire to be first with the big news has led some to question his methods -- even before the phone-hacking scandal.

"He ran close to what might be considered journalistic ethics," said Lou Colasuonno, former editor-in-chief of the New York Post, which Murdoch took over in 1976.

Those profits were plowed into Murdoch's growing Fox network of TV and film interests in the United States, helping

to create the corporate behemoth that is News Corp, which now also owns the influential Wall Street Journal, America's largest circulation daily.

In a 1968 television interview, Murdoch admitted that he enjoyed the power his position gave him, but -- in remarks that now seem more relevant than ever -- insisted: "We have more responsibility than power, I think."

"A newspaper can create great controversies, stir up arguments within the community... can throw light on injustices, just as it can do the opposite, can hide things and be a great power for evil."

But even those who may be considered his enemies recognize Murdoch's business acumen.

"He's a dealmaker, he's a brilliant businessman, he's a great strategic mind," Michael White, of the UK's Guardian newspaper, which broke the hacking story, told CNN.

"Heaven knows whether he's going to come back to try and buy BSKYB again, but if anybody's got the nerve to try, it's Rupert Murdoch... He's a tough guy," White said

Iran upgrades nuclear centrifuges

BBC ONLINE

Iran said yesterday it is installing centrifuges with "better quality and speed" to improve the uranium enrichment process at its nuclear plants.

The foreign ministry statement comes despite international demands for Iran to halt its nuclear activities.

It said the UN atomic watchdog had "full supervision" of the centrifuges.

The US, UK and other Western nations have long believed Iran's nuclear programme is aimed at developing atomic weapons - a claim rejected by Tehran.

Tehran says it is refining uranium for electricity generation and medical applications.

NEWS IN brief

Somali children recruited for combat by Islamists

AFP, Nairobi

Children in drought-struck Somalia are suffering from a range of war crimes including systematic recruitment by Islamist insurgents, Amnesty International said today.

The London-based rights group urged international action to protect the rights of children in war-torn Somalia, where tens of thousands are fleeing extreme drought.

Children are being "recruited as child soldiers, denied access to education and killed or injured in

Clash in China's Xinjiang kills 20

AFP, Beijing

Twenty protesters from China's minority Uighur community were killed in a clash with police in the ethnically tense northwestern region of Xinjiang, a Uighur exile group said yesterday.

State media quoted an official in the region calling Monday's clash a "terrorist" attack and said four people including a police officer were killed when a crowd set up a police station in the remote city of Hotan.

But Uighur activists called it an outburst of anger by ordinary members of the mainly Muslim ethnic minority, and accused authorities of attempting to block information on the deadly incident.

The Germany-based World Uyghur Congress, citing sources in Xinjiang, said security forces beat 14 people to death and shot dead six others during the

Ex-Croat PM behind bars suspected of corruption

AFP, Zagreb

Croatia's former prime minister Ivo Sanader was behind bars in a Zagreb prison yesterday after being extradited from Austria as corruption probes involving him threaten to further damage the ruling HDZ party.

The 58-year-old Sanader, who led the government as HDZ leader from 2003 until 2009, was detained in Austria in early December on a Croatian warrant.

He fled there just hours after his parliamentary immunity was officially lifted, enabling an in-depth probe of allegations that he was involved in a string of multi-million-euro (dollar) corruption affairs.

US meets with Gaddafi representatives

AFP, Washington

US envoys held a rare meeting with representatives of Muammar Gaddafi's regime over the weekend and urged the Libyan strongman to cede power, a US official said Monday.

The one-off meeting on Saturday came a day after the United States and other Western and regional powers recognized the rebel Transitional National Council as Libya's legitimate authority.

US officials "met with regime representatives to deliver a clear and firm message that the only way to move forward is for Gaddafi to step down," the US official said in Washington on condition of anonymity.

"This was not a negotiation. It was the delivery of a message," the official said. "We have no plans to meet again, because the message has been delivered," she said.

The official would not say who was on Gaddafi's side or where the meeting took place, other than that it was outside of Libya.

But Mussa Ibrahim, a spokesman for Gaddafi's regime in Tripoli, told CNN that the talks took place in Tunisia and characterized the session as the start of a diplomatic process.

"It was a first step in dialogue," he told the network.

The United States spoke with the rebels before speaking to Gaddafi's regime.

The US official in Washington said that the United States wanted to express major powers' views "directly and unequivocally" in the aftermath of the talks in Istanbul.

Meanwhile, Libyan Foreign Minister Abdelati al-Obeidi is to visit Moscow for talks with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov, reports said yesterday.

EU tightens nuke waste disposal rules

AFP, Brussels

The European Union yesterday tightened rules on the disposal of radioactive waste with strict conditions on exporting it outside EU borders, but the move did not please environmentalists.

The new legislation requires EU governments to present by 2015 plans to dispose of waste produced by nuclear reactors as well as other sources including electricity production, medicine, research, industry and agriculture.

Governments will have to present a timetable for the construction of disposal facilities, which most states do not have today. Two or more countries can otherwise agree to use a single facility located in one of them.

Information on spent fuel and radioactive waste management must be made available to the public and local populations near the facilities must be allowed to participate in the decision-making process.

The export of radioactive waste is still authorised but under much stricter rules.

Yingluck approved by vote body

Moves closer to become Thai PM

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand's prime minister-in-waiting Yingluck Shinawatra was yesterday approved to enter parliament, election officials said, paving the way for her to become the country's first female premier.

Yingluck, the sister of ousted former leader Thaksin Shinawatra, was given the go-ahead by Thailand's Election Commission (EC), after it delayed ratifying her over campaign irregularity claims last week.

The vote body dismissed the allegations against Yingluck, whose Puea Thai Party won a thumping majority at the July 3 election.

"The committee has investigated the facts and cannot find any violations of electoral law," EC secretary-general Suthipon Thaveechaiyagarn told reporters after a commission meeting.

Outgoing premier Abhisit Vejjajiva was also among the 12 parliamentary candidates endorsed yesterday to become members of the 500-seat lower house.

Although 370 candidates have now been approved by the EC, another 105 must be ratified for parliament to convene, as required, within 30 days of the election.

The vote body's delayed endorsement had raised questions over her appointment and fears of fresh instability in the politically divided country.

In the most extreme scenario, the electoral commission can issue a "red card" to a candidate, which would mean a one-year ban from politics.

Any move to disqualify Yingluck would have risked further ruptures in Thailand's already fractured political landscape and enraged the opposition "Red Shirt" protest movement, whose rallies in Bangkok last year turned deadly.



Yingluck Shinawatra

Forces kill 13 civilians in Syria

AFP, Nicosia

Syrian security forces shot dead 13 civilians on Monday and yesterday in the central protest hub city of Homs, rights activist Rami Abdel Rahman told AFP.

Several coaches packed with security force personnel entered the Khalidiyeh neighbourhood of Homs and afterwards gunfire was heard, said Abdel Karim Rihawi.

Activists have said the violence in Homs could spark a new and dangerous turning point in more than four months of pro-democracy protests.

Pakistan's first woman foreign minister sworn in

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan's first woman foreign minister -- and also its youngest -- was sworn in yesterday, ending a five-month job vacancy a week before crucial peace talks in India.

Hina Rabbani Khar, aged 34, is also expected to meet US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on the sidelines of the regional ASEAN forum in Indonesia this week.

"On the advice of Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani, the president of Pakistan has decided to elevate Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar as federal minister for foreign affairs," her ministry said.

"Khar has the distinction of being the youngest and first woman foreign minister of Pakistan."

Although the assassinated Benazir Bhutto was twice prime minister of Pakistan, senior government positions are usually held by men.



Hina Rabbani Khar

VACANCY

North South University (NSU) invites application for the following positions:

Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Financial Affairs

Job description: Check financial/accounting aspects of programs and projects; verify/authenticate bills, estimates and purchases submitted for recommendation or approval of the vice chancellor and brief him on the merit; follow-up activities on the Finance Committee decisions. Other tasks assigned by the Vice Chancellor.

Qualifications: Masters preferably in Accounting or Finance from a reputable University; accounting & financial expertise with good knowledge of auditing, innate sense of numbers, fluent in English, good in writing reports, superior computer skills.

Experience: 8 years in relevant work (experience abroad is added qualification)

Age: 35 - 45 years.

Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Administrative Affairs

Job description: Write reports to NSU Trustee Board, UGC/Education Ministry and elsewhere; draft speeches, messages, office orders, internal correspondence and letters/memos for Vice Chancellor; focus on compliance of private university act; implementation of decisions of Board of Trustees, Syndicate and Academic Council; related and other functions assigned by the Vice-chancellor

Qualifications: Masters in English/Arts/Social Sciences from a reputable University, outstanding command of English and Bangla, excellent writing skill and ability to translate from English to Bangla (and vice versa), experience in operating Bangla word processing; superior computer proficiency.

Experience: 8 years in relevant work (experience abroad is added qualification)

Age: 35 - 45 years.

Salary & benefits for both: Gross monthly salary of over Tk. 50,000 includes basic pay, house rent, transport and medical allowances; benefits include provident fund, gratuity, two festival bonuses, group insurance, medical and transport allowance; higher initial salary for highly qualified candidates will be considered.

The position sought must be clearly stated on the envelope. Please apply with a cover letter and detailed CV, a passport size photograph, copies of all certificates and names of at least two referees by August 15, 2011 to:



The Vice Chancellor
North South University

Plot # 15, Block # B, Bashundhara, Dhaka- 1229
Ph-02-8852000, Ext.1056 & 1069. Fax: 8852016

E-mail: hgasa@northsouth.edu; Website: www.northsouth.edu