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UK PHONE HACKING 'Humbled' Murdoch rejects blame

BBC ONLINE

Rupert Murdoch said yesterday that he cannot be held responsible for the scandal at the News of the World, saying he was let down by "people I trusted".

The News Corp boss said he was not aware of the extent of phone hacking there and had "clearly" been misled by some of his staff.

His son, James, apologised to victims, saying hacking was "inexcusable".

Two hours into the hearing, a man tried to throw a foam pie at Rupert Murdoch and proceedings were briefly suspended.

The protester appeared to lunge towards the News Corp chairman and chief executive but was fought off by a group of people, including Mr Murdoch's wife, Wendi.

A man has reportedly been detained by police.

Rupert Murdoch's appearance before the Commons media committee is the first time he has faced direct scrutiny by MPs during his 40-year UK media career.

He said he was "humbled" to have to explain his firm's conduct to MPs.

Faced with a series of questions from Labour MP Tom Watson, Murdoch paused extensively and his son James made several attempts to intervene.

However, Watson made clear that he wanted to hear answers from the father and not the son.

Rupert Murdoch said his questioning by MPs - who are investigating alleged criminal behaviour at the News of the World - was "a great honour".

SEE PAGE 19 COL 3



Vehicles plough through water stagnant on the main thoroughfare of Dhaka, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, yesterday. Torrential rain over the last two days left many city streets submerged revealing the poor state of storm-water drainage system in the capital. The current spell of monsoon sweeping across the country is likely to subside tomorrow, but it might trigger landslides in Teknaf, Cox's Bazar and adjoining hilly regions, warned a Met office forecast yesterday. Places like Cox's Bazar, Sandwip, Khepupara and Bhola experienced over 100mm of rainfall yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Schoolgirl commits suicide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A schoolgirl killed herself by hanging at Motijheel AGB colony in the capital last night.

Dead Sumaiya Akhter, 12, was a class six student at Motijheel Model High School, family members said.

Abdul Awal Kamrul, her maternal uncle, alleged that a youth named Selim of Arambagh had been teasing her for quite some time on her way to and from school. Her mother rebuked her over the matter just last evening, he added.

"She hanged herself from a ceiling fan with her

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

BRICK FALL FROM HIGHRISE Student hurt in Chittagong

HC asks Dhaka developer to stop construction, appear before court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Yet another student sustained injury as a brick from an under-construction structure fell on his head at Muradpur in Chittagong yesterday.

The injured was identified as Usha-e-Marma, 20, son of Aung Shui Marma of Rangamati. He is a fourth-semester student of Chittagong Technical College.

On July 6, Habibur Rahman Munna, an HSC examinee from Tejgaon College, died of a similar incident at a roadside construction site of Sagufta Group on Panthapath in the capital. The brick fell on him from 10th floor.

He was returning home on foot after attending his ailing mother at Shamarita Hospital in Panthapath area.

In a suo moto order, a High Court bench yesterday summoned the chairman and managing director of

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Risky construction goes unwatched

Police, Rajuk say no arrangement in place for monitoring

M RAHMAN

There are visibly no authorities in the construction sector to enforce rules preventing occupational hazards, although several hundred people die in and around building sites every year.

Had the authorities concerned compelled the owner of 15-storey under-construction Sagupta De Khan to take safety measures, HSC examinee Habibur Rahman Munna, 18, would not die on Saturday in the capital. Like Munna, 59 others died between January and April this year because of the construction authorities' callous disregard for human life.

Both police and Rajdhani Unnayan

Kartripakkha (Rajuk) say they have no arrangements to monitor the huge construction sector to ensure security of both workers and the public.

They however say they carry out investigations following such accidents in the construction sites.

Sheikh Abdul Mannan, joint secretary and member (planning) of Rajuk, said, "We have no staffs or wing to monitor safety measures at construction sites. We can only monitor whether construction is going on as per the approved architectural plans.

"However, if we receive any compliant regarding safety measures, we definitely

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5

World's 'largest' uranium deposit found in India

AFP, New Delhi

A new mine in south India could contain the largest reserves of uranium in the world, a government official said in remarks reported yesterday, signalling a major boost for the energy-hungry nation.

The Tumalapalli mine in Andhra Pradesh state could provide up to 150,000 tonnes of uranium, Srikumar Banerjee, secretary of the Department of Atomic Energy, told reporters after a four-year survey of the site was completed.

"It's confirmed that the mine has 49,000 tonnes of ore, and there are indications that the total quantity could be three times that amount," Banerjee was quoted as saying in The Times of India.

"If that be the case, it will become the largest uranium mine in the world," he said.

Previous estimates suggested that only about 15,000 tonnes of uranium would be produced at the mine, which is due to start operating by the end of the year.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 2

Poachers held with venison

A CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Police recovered four deer heads and 60 kilograms of venison and arrested three poachers in Rampal upazila of Bagerhat early yesterday.

An engine boat, which carried the poachers and the deer remains to Darogabari canal in Rampal Sadar union, was also seized.

Of the arrested, Farid Gazi, 25, and Md Saiful Gazi, 24, are of Belai village and Md Nasir Uddin Sheikh, 48, is of Pipul Bunia village in the upazila.

Under interrogation, they confessed to trading tiger skin alongside poaching deer.

After a tip-off, police ambushed the poachers near the canal when the boat anchored there, said Abdul Karim, an assistant sub-inspector of Rampal Police Station.

The poachers went to the upazila

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



PHOTO: STAR

Law enforcers arrest two poachers with four chital deer heads and around 60kg of venison at Rampal of Bagerhat yesterday. The photo was taken in front of the office of Bagerhat superintendent of police.

Last chance for BNP

EC won't press it for electoral reform talks if tomorrow's fixture goes unattended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission wants the cabinet division and three ministries concerned to do the administrative job ahead of the parliamentary polls in consultation with it.

Talking to reporters yesterday, Election Commissioner M Sakhawat Hussain said the EC has already suggested incorporating a provision in the Representation of People Order to that end.

"We have proposed that the cabinet division and home, LGRD and public administration ministries consult the commission while discharging administrative duties," Sakhawat added.

Often, he noted, their decisions affect the conduct of the polls. The EC wants to work closely with them so that they do not take such decisions.

Meanwhile, Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda yesterday said BNP will get no more chances to participate in the EC's ongoing dialogue on electoral reforms if it skips the talks tomorrow.

The main opposition party was invited three times to the dialogue, which the EC has been holding with the registered political parties since June 7. But it refused to join, terming the commission "controversial". It did not even reply to the commission's third letter sent on July 6 requesting the party to sit tomorrow.

"We've given them [BNP] enough time. But they didn't join the talks. We cannot wait any longer for them

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

The Daily Star

Integral Energy Limited

ONLINE POLL

Do you agree with BNP that the government is hatching a conspiracy to get Tarique Rahman convicted and keep away from next general elections?

Yes

No

No Comments

(68.2%)

(30.0%)

(1.8%)

TOTAL VOTES: 614

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with eminent citizens that 15th amendment to the constitution was a bad move and government should resolve the situation by forming a people's commission?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT

www.thedailystar.net

PRAYER TIMING

July 20

Fajr 4-15 4-50

Zohr 12-45 1-15

Asr 5-00 5-15

Maghrib 6-54 6-58

Esha 8-15 8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation