

British caver sues Elon Musk over 'pedo' remark

AFP, Washington

A British caver who helped in the dramatic rescue of 12 boys trapped in Thailand earlier this year sued Tesla founder Elon Musk on Monday for calling him a "pedo guy" and a "child rapist."

The defamation suit filed in Los Angeles by Vernon Unsworth, a Briton involves in several cave rescues, follows a highly public spat between the two after Musk traveled to Thailand and offered to assist in rescue efforts.

The dispute made headlines in July, when Unsworth called Musk's effort to build a mini-submarine for the rescue a "PR stunt" and Musk responded on Twitter by calling Unsworth a "pedo guy," or pedophile.

Musk, a tech entrepreneur who also founded the private space firm SpaceX, apologized days later but not before his comments were widely condemned, raising concerns over his leadership abilities.

But he reignited the dispute in August with an email to BuzzFeed News accusing Unsworth of being a "child rapist," marrying a 12-year-old and engaging in child sex trafficking, the lawsuit alleges.

Musk made the series of false statements "with actual malice, that is, with actual knowledge of falsity or a reckless disregard for truth or falsity," according to the complaint.

Instead of apologising for his comments, Musk responded with an expletive-laden statement saying, "I hope he... sues me," according to the lawsuit.

Unsworth is seeking unspecified damages "for the worldwide damage he has suffered to his reputation," according to the lawsuit, which noted that a separate complaint was being readied in the High Court of London.

The suit also seeks an injunction barring Musk from making further slanderous comments, according to Unsworth's lawyer L. Lin Wood.

Unsworth, who lives part of the year in Thailand, took part in the gargantuan 18-day effort to retrieve the boys and their coach, a mission that ended on July 10, when the last five members were extracted.

Musk has been the focus of increased scrutiny in recent weeks over erratic behavior including an online interview in which he was smoking marijuana.

Tesla shares have faced pressure amid concerns over Musk's stability as the company seeks to ramp up production of its mass-market electric car.

Delhi

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Majumder, Secretary General, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society
Feroz Salauddin and Joint Secretary (BM), Indian Ministry of External Affairs Vikram Doraiswami were also present.

In the last one year or so, Bangladesh has hosted close to one million Rohingyas from the Rakhine State of Myanmar.

This humanitarian gesture has been appreciated by India and all concerned.

"As a neighbour, friend and partner of Bangladesh, India has responded promptly to support the government of Bangladesh in meeting the relief requirements posed by this large influx of displaced persons," said the High Commissioner.

The High Commissioner, who also visited Rohingya camps, handed over third phase of relief assistance of over 1 million litres of Super Kerosene Oil and 20,000 kerosene stoves.

The first tranche of relief material consisting of 4.5 lakh food packs of rice, lentils, milk, etc was delivered in September 2017.

In May 2018, the second tranche of relief material consisting of 373 metric tons of dry fish, milk powder, baby food, rain coats and gum boots to cater to the rainy season was handed over.

Shringla said India has also started construction of pre-fabricated houses in the Rakhine State.

"I am happy to inform that we are building 250 houses which are nearing completion. Foundation work has already started for 50 houses at a village called Kyein Chaung in Maungdaw district of Myanmar. These dwellings are intended to facilitate the return of displaced persons from Bangladesh," he said.

India, earlier, underscored the need for three Ss - safe, speedy and sustainable return of the displaced persons to Rakhine State.

The High Commissioner aid India reiterated India's commitment to help in the return of displaced people to their homes in Myanmar.

"India has always stood by Bangladesh in times of need. Ours is a relationship based on trust, friendship and shared martyrdom that goes beyond strategic partnership," he said.

Shringla said, "It is in this spirit of friendship that we have come forward to share their burden and will continue to do so."

Restore Rohingya

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A summary of the report was issued on August 27.

The Fact-Finding Mission recommended the Myanmar government remove from Rakhine all divisions, battalions and units of security forces responsible for perpetrating violations of international law before starting the repatriation of refugees, and not allowing them any role in the repatriation process or security to the returnees.

The UN investigators said the Myanmar army should be removed from politics and reiterated their call for top generals to be prosecuted for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes against the Rohingya Muslims.

Over 720,000 Rohingyas have fled to Bangladesh since August 25 last year escaping a brutal military crackdown in Rakhine.

The report said the Myanmar government should act without delay to restructure the Tatmadaw (the armed forces of Myanmar) and transform its role. "That should begin with replacing the current leadership of the Tatmadaw. Through a constitutional amendment process, the Government should further pursue the removal of the Tatmadaw from Myanmar's political life."

It also provided new details about the investigators' concerns about the how the UN reacted during that spasm of violence. The investigators pointed out the only statement from the UN resident coordinator's office "was to condemn the ARSA [militant group] attacks and losses suffered by the Myanmar security forces".

The report's critique of the UN focused not only on its response to the Rohingya crisis, but its efforts across Myanmar.

The investigators pointed to failings of the UN office in Myanmar, alleging that "quiet diplomacy" was prioritised. For example, the investigators noted that the UN had rolled out a Human Rights Up Front Action Plan in Myanmar, but said its "human rights driven" approach was rarely, if ever, pursued.

The UN experts said they regretted that some UN entities and staffers showed a lack of cooperation with their work, and appeared to view it as a threat, rather than a means to address the most deep rooted human rights challenges facing Myanmar. "This attitude and approach must change."

The investigators did acknowledge that some people in the country had faced "intimidation and reprisals" for their engagement with the United Nations.

"As a matter of urgency, there must be a comprehensive, independent inquiry into the United Nation's involvement in Myanmar since 2011, with a view to establishing whether everything possible to prevent or mitigate the unfolding crises was done; identifying lessons learned and good practice; making recommendations as appropriate, including on accountability; and enabling more effective work in future," the experts said.

Drawing on 875 detailed interviews

conducted in locations in five countries, the report illustrates, in graphic detail, the violent modus operandi that is the hallmark of Myanmar military, known locally as the Tatmadaw operations against its own people. The Mission was struck by how similar the Tatmadaw operations and conduct were in all three states -- Rakhine, Kachin and Shan.

"During their operations the Tatmadaw has systematically targeted civilians, including women and children, committed sexual violence, voiced and promoted exclusionary and discriminatory rhetoric against minorities, and established a climate of impunity for its soldiers," said Marzuki Darusman, chair of the Fact-Finding Mission.

"We insist that the perpetrators of the gross human rights violations and international crimes, committed in Rakhine, Kachin and Shan states must not go unpunished," he insisted.

The report sets out in extensive detail its findings on the extreme violence perpetrated against the Rohingyas in Rakhine since August 25 last year, in what the Tatmadaw referred to as "clearance operations" in 54 locations, and received first-hand accounts of additional operations in a further 22 locations.

The report includes satellite images, setting out detailed analysis that corroborates information provided by victims and witnesses. The images show the transformation of much of northern Rakhine over the past year, with at least Rohingya 392 villages razed to the ground, providing irrefutable documentation of the scale of destruction perpetrated.

"The horrors inflicted on Rohingya men, women and children during the August 2017 operations, including their indiscriminate killing, rise to the level of both war crimes and crimes against humanity", said Radhika Coomaraswamy, another member of the Mission.

"Addressing situations like that in Myanmar touches on the very purpose of the United Nations," the experts said, calling upon all competent organs and the UN agencies to step up to the task, and act with urgency.

"The international community has failed. Let us now resolve not to fail the people of Myanmar again."

MYANMAR REJECTS REPORT
Myanmar yesterday rejected the UN report, terming it "one-sided".

Kyaw Moe Tun, Myanmar representative to the UN in Geneva, told the UN Human Rights Council that the report "lacked balance, impartiality and fairness", criticising its reliance on refugee testimony and the reports of NGOs -- though the Myanmar government did not grant the UN mission access to the country.

"Not only is this report detrimental to social cohesion in Rakhine state, it also undermines the government's efforts to bring peace, national reconciliation and development to the entire nation," he said.

US accuses China

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especially sensitive issue given the political maelstrom over alleged Russian meddling in the real estate tycoon's surprise 2016 presidential victory.

"China has openly stated that they are actively trying to impact and change our election by attacking our farmers, ranchers and industrial workers because of their loyalty to me," Trump wrote.

"China has been taking advantage of the United States on Trade for many years. They also know that I am the one that knows how to stop it," he added.

"There will be great and fast economic retaliation against China if our farmers, ranchers and/or industrial workers are targeted!"

It was not clear what open statements by China -- if any -- Trump was referring to.

However, Beijing's previous tariffs did target major US agricultural products like pork and soybeans. That hurt soybean powerhouse states like Illinois, Kansas and Minnesota, which are all toss ups in the November House races.

Recent NBC News/Marist polls have also found that the trade war -- a pillar

of Trump's presidency -- is unpopular in six politically important states: Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Texas.

Trump believes that his tearing up of the international trade rulebook is long overdue. His promise to end what he says are grossly skewed Chinese trade relations was a key plank of his election.

"For months, we have urged China to change these unfair practices and give fair and reciprocal treatment to American companies," Trump said in a statement on Monday.

"These practices plainly constitute a grave threat to the long-term health and prosperity of the United States economy," he said.

"But, so far, China has been unwilling to change its practices," including theft and forced transfer of technology.

Once the new round of tariffs takes effect on September 24, punitive duties will be in place on \$250 billion in goods the US buys from China -- its largest source of imports.

This latest round of imports will face 10 percent tariffs through the end of the year, and then the rate will jump to 25 percent.

Trump warned that "if China takes retaliatory action... we will immediately pursue phase three, which is tariffs on approximately \$267 billion of additional imports."

Habibun Nabi

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around 7:30pm, said Shamsuddin Dider, a staff of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's press wing.

He was taken to the office of Detective Branch of police on Minto road, police said.

UNB adds: BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi at an emergency press briefing at the party's Nayapaltn central office alleged that the government arrested Sohel as part of continuous arrest of BNP leaders and activists in different cases.

He alleged that around 70-80 cases were filed against Sohel over the last eight months. "We strongly condemn and protest his arrest."

The BNP leader demanded that the government release Sohel immediately after withdrawing all the "false" cases filed against him.

Tk 3,825cr EVM

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Commissioner Mahbub Talukder strongly opposed it, saying, "It alone might plunge the polls into controversy."

The prime minister also said the machines should not be imposed hurriedly.

Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda soon afterwards said the use of EVMs in the upcoming election would depend on enactment of law, training of officials and acceptance among stakeholders.

"If the government enacts necessary laws and a congenial atmosphere is created, then the EC will think about using EVMs in some constituencies," he said at the time.

The BNP and many other political parties are also against the use of EVMs in the parliamentary polls. They alleged the government would use the machines for vote rigging.

However, the EC is planning to amend the RPO incorporating the provision to use EVMs.

Five suspected

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An outlaw, Kurban Ali, 30, was killed in a "shootout" with police in Koujuri village of Pabna's Atgharia upazila, said the law enforcers.

Kurban was accused in a number of cases, including for murder and robbery, police said.

Masud Rana, officer-in-charge of Ataikula Police Station, said the "gun-fight" ensued around 1:30am as the law enforcers carried out a raid on information that several outlaws were holding a secret meeting in the village.

Kurban was shot after the criminals opened fire at police, forcing them to retaliate. Doctors declared him dead as he was rushed to a local health complex, he said.

The OC claimed that four policemen were also injured in the incident. [Our correspondents in Cox's Bazar and Pabna contributed to this report]

A joy

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[heydey], you knew this car and knew how much it meant to him." wrote Jake on Facebook, September 2. "Well I was blessed enough to find her again after 10+ years without her and was able to come to an agreement with previous owner."

In his post, Jake shared photos of Wesley's Ford Mustang as well as his Wesley's emotional reaction upon seeing the car. In one of his videos, Wesley can be seen sitting on the curb as a car delivering the Mustang drove up to him. It didn't take long for him to burst out in tears as he was reunited once again with his favourite car in the world.

"Coming home surprising my pops was a feeling and moment I'll never forget," said Jake. "To see his face and emotion made it all worth it."

Jake continued to share that he and his sister Jeni grew up in the car since they were practically in diapers. "Many memories growing up with it with a dream to have it as my own one day."

Their mom, however, was diagnosed with ovarian cancer, compelling their dad to sell his beloved car so he can pay the bills.

"As life goes, my mom was diagnosed with ovarian cancer, (13 years cancer free now) and being the man he is, someone who has always supported each and one [of] us through thick and thin, my pops had to sell it for financial reasons for our family," Jake explained.

Selling the car, Jake said, was one of the hardest decisions his dad had to make for them. He recalled, "I know how much it broke him in half seeing that car drive away from him. A day I'll never forget."

Only good tears were shed, as Jake and his family are now ready to create new memories with their father's old, trusty Mustang.

"Well... She's back home pops and here to stay this time," said Jake. "Looking forward to building this car with you this time instead of being in a booster seat looking out the window."

5 South Asia

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Bahadur Basnet said, "South Asia is home to the largest glaciated area outside the poles, and the region shares many common challenges related to climate change and glacier melting."

"Greater cooperation with our South Asian neighbours will bring the solutions we need to keep our Himalayan glaciers healthy, boost our mountain economies, and make our communities more resilient to climate change."

According to climate scientists, during the past century, most of the Himalayan glaciers have been shrinking, and between 2003 and 2009, the range lost an estimated 174 giga tonnes of water each year at a rate faster than the global average.

These countries and the whole region is highly dependent on water provided by Himalayan glaciers and increased snowmelt in the HKH region, triggered by the rising temperature, has made the region highly vulnerable to climate change impacts.

Free Shahidul

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has the constitutional right to get justice. "But it is a matter of grief that an exceptional and bad instance has been created by depriving him of bail, a minimum right, which has shocked and worried us," the citizens said in the statement.

In a democratic country and society, any citizen can criticise the government and it is protected by the constitution.

"But we're observing that criticism of the government is being considered to be anti-state activity. Freedom of citizens and their rights are being trampled using state-run organisations and misusing section 57 of the ICT Act."

"We believe the citizens, who have expressed solidarity and supported the student movement on quota reforms and road safety, and criticised the use of state force against the protesters, have not done anything wrong ... it is not appropriate to consider such criticism anti-state or anti-government."

The 52 eminent citizens include Professor Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury, Prof Ajoy Roy, Hameeda Hossain, Sultana Kamal, Shaheen Anam, Meghna Guhathakurta, Shamsul Huda, Prof AN Rasheda, Prof Anu Muhammad and Associate Prof Tanjim Uddin Khan.

Earlier, many notable personalities, including Nobel laureate Amartya Sen and 11 other Nobel prize winners, have called for immediate release of Shahidul.

SHAHIDUL AGAIN SEEKS BAIL

Shahidul again filed a petition with the High Court yesterday seeking bail in a case for "spreading propaganda against the government".

Shahidul, 63, now in Dhaka Central Jail in the case lodged under the con-

troversial section 57 of the ICT act, submitted the application to the HC through his lawyers, saying he is ill and he will not leave the country if he is granted bail.

In the petition, he also said the allegations brought against him in the case do not fall under section 57.

Jyotirmoy Barua, a lawyer for Shahidul, told this newspaper that the HC may hear the bail petition today.

On September 10, Shahidul's lawyers moved another petition before the HC for his bail in the case filed by the police with Ramna Police Station on August 6.

After hearing the appeal, the HC bench of Justice Md Rezaul Haque and Justice Abu Taher Md Saifur Rahman the same day directed the lower court concerned to dispose of the bail application by September 11.

The court concerned rejected the petition on September 11.

Shahidul, also founder of Drik Picture Library, was picked up by plain-clothes men from his home in the capital's Dhanmondi on August 5. Police filed the case against him and produced him before a Dhaka court the following day. He was then placed on a seven-day remand.

In court, Shahidul said he was tortured in custody. Police denied the allegation.

On completion of his remand, Shahidul was denied bail and sent to jail by a Dhaka court on August 13.

On September 4, a judge of another HC bench felt "embarrassed" to hear Shahidul's bail petition in the case, and the bench forwarded the appeal to the chief justice for a decision. The bench, however, did not disclose any reason for it.

Trump summit

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cheers from nearly 100,000 North Koreans who waved flowers and chanted "Motherland! Unification!"

Kim greeted Moon with hugs and handshakes as the South Korean leader landed in the North's capital with a mission to rekindle momentum in faltering talks between Washington and Pyongyang over denuclearisation and a formal end to the 1950-53 Korean War.

As Kim escorted Moon to the Paekhwawon State Guest House, where Moon will stay during his three-day visit, Kim said he wanted to produce a "bigger outcome at a faster pace" than the two leaders have achieved so far.

Moon, himself the offspring of a family displaced by the war, has met Kim twice this year at the border village of Panmunjom.

Trump has asked Moon to be "chief negotiator" between himself and Kim, according to Moon's aides, after Trump cancelled a trip to Pyongyang by his secretary of state last month.

Washington wants to see concrete action toward denuclearisation by

North Korea before agreeing to a key goal of Pyongyang - declaring an end to the 1950-53 Korean War.

The conflict ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty, leaving US-led UN forces including South Korea technically still at war with the North.

South Korea is pinning high hopes on Kim's remarks to Moon's special envoys earlier this month that he wants to achieve denuclearisation within Trump's first term in office ending in early 2021.

"If North Korea-US dialogue is restarted after this visit, it would have much significance in itself," Moon said before his departure.

Underscoring the challenges ahead, North Korea's official Rodong Sinmun yesterday said "the responsibility falls squarely on the United States" for the stalled nuclear discussions.

Today, Moon and Kim plan to hold a second day of official talks after which they are expected to unveil a joint statement, and a separate military pact designed to defuse tensions and prevent armed clashes. Moon will return home early Thursday.

Pakistan and India

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thumped India by 180 runs in the final of the Champions Trophy at The Oval in June last year.

Rival captains Sarfraz Ahmed and Rohit Sharma played down the hype surrounding the much-awaited India-Pakistan today's clash in Dubai, insisting that the Asia Cup is much more than a contest between the arch-rivals.

But despite their claims, there will be no shortage of fire as the two teams are facing each other for the first time in the United Arab Emirates since 2006, the last of their regular matches which were also held in Sharjah between 1984-2000.

Sarfraz, who led Pakistan in that memorable Champions Trophy triumph, denied that his team will have a psychological advantage.

"We will not take that Champions Trophy win in our minds. That was a different atmosphere (in London) and conditions. It was a year ago so that's history so we will enter the ground with a new strategy and passion" said Sarfraz.

India's regular captain and world-class batsman Virat Kohli has been rested for the competition to help his

aching back after a gruelling tour of England but Pakistan skipper refused to accept Kohli's absence will make much difference.

"No doubt he (Kohli) is their captain and a world-class batsman but I think they (India) have a good team even without Kohli. They have good players who have done well for India. So, I don't think it will make much difference to India. Their batting is very strong so I can say that it will be a good match."

Sarfraz also has told his players just to enjoy the occasion.

India have won the event -- which started in 1984 -- six times, while Pakistan have been champions twice.

India skipper Sharma said his team will be looking beyond Pakistan.

"It's always exciting to play Pakistan, but it's not about one team as well. There are other teams also eyeing the title," said Sharma, who has the rare record of scoring three one-day international double hundreds.

Searing UAE heat has become a big concern for the teams but Sharma said: "It's game time, so we have to focus on the game rather than the conditions."

ICC launches

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Rohingya because Bangladesh is a member.

"I have decided to proceed to the next phase of the process and to carry out a full-fledged preliminary examination of the situation at hand," Bensouda said in a statement.

Bensouda said the initial probe "may take into account a number of alleged coercive acts having resulted in the forced displacement of the Rohingya people, including deprivation of fundamental rights, killing, sexual violence, enforced disappearance, destruction and looting."

She said she would also consider whether other crimes would apply to the plight of the Rohingya "such as the crimes of persecution and other inhumane acts."

A preliminary examination can lead to a formal investigation by the ICC -- which was set up in 2002 to investigate war crimes and crimes against humanity -- and then possible indictments.

The ICC announcement came on the same day as UN investigators said

that Myanmar's army had used "hard to fathom" levels of violence against the Rohingya and should be prosecuted for genocide.

The UN fact-finding mission also repeated suggestions that crimes against the Rohingya be referred to the ICC.

Rights group Amnesty International said it was "great that the International Criminal Court has opened this important avenue to justice for the Rohingya."

"Keep the momentum going -- the UN Security Council needs to refer the situation in Myanmar to the ICC to ensure it can investigate all crimes under international law," the group said on Twitter.

Myanmar's army has denied nearly all wrongdoing, insisting its campaign was justified to root out Rohingya insurgents who staged deadly raids on border posts in August 2017.

It has also "resolutely" rejected the ICC's assertion that it has jurisdiction over the crime, saying that the decision was in "manifest bad faith" and was of "dubious legal merit".