

News in brief

◆ **The owner of the UK tabloid Daily Mail struck a £500 million (\$654 million) deal with US-Emirati consortium RedBird IMI for the purchase of The Telegraph newspaper, The Daily Mail and General Trust said yesterday.** "DMGT has signed an agreement with Redbird IMI over the acquisition of the Telegraph Media Group at a valuation of £500 million", DMGT said in a press release sent to AFP. The DMGT's potential purchase of its rival 170-year-old newspaper could make it one of the biggest right-leaning media groups in the UK and conclude the protracted sale marked by government intervention. It comes a week after US investment group RedBird Capital Partners abruptly abandoned its takeover, reigniting uncertainty over the paper's future. DMGT, which also owns national newspapers Metro and The i Paper, said it would enter a period of exclusivity to finalise the terms of the transaction, which the parties "expect to happen quickly".



Daily Mail owner DMGT says signed £500 mn deal to acquire The Telegraph

Gunmen seize 315 in latest Nigerian mass school kidnapping

◆ **Gunmen have kidnapped more than 300 students and teachers in one of the largest mass kidnappings in Nigeria, a Christian group said yesterday, as security fears mounted in Africa's most populous nation.** The early Friday raid on St Mary's co-education school in Niger state in central Nigeria came after gunmen on Monday stormed a secondary school in neighbouring Kebbi state, abducting 25 girls. The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) had earlier reported 227 people seized, but the new number came "after a verification exercise" following the early Friday mass kidnapping, and added that "The total number of victims abducted ... is now 303 students and 12 teachers". The number of boys and girls kidnapped from St Mary's is almost half of the school's student population of 629. The Nigerian government has not commented on the number of students and teachers abducted.

◆ **President Cyril Ramaphosa will not hand the next presidency of the G20 to a US embassy representative after President Donald Trump refused to attend this weekend's summit, the South African government said yesterday.** The Trump administration has boycotted the Johannesburg meeting that wraps up on Sunday and said it would send the charge d'affaires of its US embassy in South Africa for the handover, with Washington assuming the 2026 presidency of the group of leading economies. Ramaphosa "will not be handing over to the charge d'affaires from the US," Foreign Minister Ronald Lamola told journalists. "The United States is a member of the G20, and if they want to be represented, they can still send anyone at the right level," he said. This would be the head of state, minister or a "special envoy appointed by the president", Lamola said. Otherwise, a handover could take place at government offices between officials of the same ranking, he said.

S.Africa says president will not hand G20 to US embassy official



SPOTLIGHT

First saplings from felled UK tree to be planted



Police officers stand on duty at the edge of a cordon around the felled Sycamore Gap tree, along Hadrian's Wall, near Hexham, northern England

AFP | London, United Kingdom

The first five saplings grown from one of the UK's most iconic trees after it was deliberately felled will be planted yesterday, organisers said. Until September 2023, the tree had stood for nearly 200 years in a dramatic dip next to Hadrian's Wall, a Roman-era UNESCO World Heritage site in northern England. Known as the Sycamore Gap tree, it was so striking it featured in the 1991 Hollywood film "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves". Two men were jailed for more than four years in July for felling it. Now some 49 saplings grown from the tree will be planted, including half next

week during UK National Tree Week, the National Trust conservation charity which protects historic places said. Director General Hilary McGrady praised "quick thinking" Trust conservationists who took cuttings in the wake of the vandalism that had "allowed the Sycamore Gap tree to live on". "The team has cared for these 49 hopeful saplings beautifully and they're now ready to be given to communities," she said. McGrady said each tree would "become a source of inspiration, a place to reflect, a home for nature or simply a reminder that there are always good things worth fighting for, even after something so senseless".

Aftershocks rock Bangladesh as quake death toll rises to 10

AFP | Dhaka, Bangladesh

Two minor tremors hit Bangladesh yesterday, a day after a powerful earthquake struck outside the capital Dhaka and killed at least 10 people.

A 3.3-magnitude jolt was recorded in Narshingdi district, east of Dhaka, in the morning, followed by a 4.3-magnitude quake that struck the capital around 6:00 pm (1200 GMT), according to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department.

Dhaka resident Tasnuba Sharmin Sharna, 32, said her children started screaming as the furniture in their apartment began shaking.

"We are praying to God for mercy," Sharna told AFP.

Friday's deadly earthquake was felt in Dhaka and neighbouring districts, causing widespread destruction.

Updating earlier tolls from the 5.5-magnitude quake, disaster



A doctor attends an injured man at a hospital following an earthquake in Dhaka

management official Ishtiaque Ahmed told AFP that "the number of casualties has reached 10, while a few hundreds were injured".

There were no immediate reports of casualties on Saturday, but the aftershocks -- which are common after major earthquakes -- have added to fears of an even

greater disaster.

"I don't feel safe yet, as there was another jolt this morning... Maybe we are next," said Shahnaj Parvin, 44, who lives near the epicentre of Friday's earthquake and told AFP she had never experienced such a tremor.

Cracks have developed in dozens of houses in her area, she

said. "I was hanging my children's clothes on the washing line when the tremor struck," added Parvin.

"I held onto a mahogany tree, and when I returned home, I found my glassware broken."

The government has activated Bangladesh's emergency operation centre to assess the scale of the damage and to coordinate relief and rescue operations.

Rubayet Kabir of the Meteorological Department's Earthquake Observation and Research Center said Bangladesh's geography makes the country of 170 million people prone to quakes.

"That's why we experience earthquakes quite frequently, though they are not as strong as the one" on Friday, he told AFP.

"Some small tremors are expected after any major earthquake," Kabir said.

"There has been no massive earthquake in the last 100 years or more, but Bangladesh has been vulnerable for quite some time."

Climate activists dye Venice's Grand Canal green

AFP | Rome, Italy

Climate activists dyed Venice's Grand Canal green Saturday, as countries at a UN climate conference in Brazil struggled to agree on the crucial issue of phasing out of fossil fuels.

Extinction Rebellion said its activists released an environmentally harmless dye into canals, rivers, lakes and fountains in a total of 10 Italian cities to highlight "the massive effects of climate collapse".

Greta Thunberg was present at the "Stop Ecocide" protest in Venice, where demonstrators dressed entirely in red with veils over their faces walked slowly through curious crowds of tour-



A general view of the Grand Canal in Venice with its waters dyed green during the "Stop Ecocide" demonstration organized by Extinction Rebellion.

ists, images showed.

The green dye was also poured into the Po river in Turin, the Reno river in Bologna, the Tara

river in Taranto, as well as fountains in Padova and Genoa, the activist group said.

Negotiations at key UN climate

talks in Brazil ran into overtime on Saturday with no agreement struck and delegates still locked in a bitter fight over whether to mention fossil fuels in the final text. At stake at the Belem talks is securing a deal that paves the way for faster cuts to planet-warming emissions that are driving ever more extreme weather.

"The most important global summit to define international political agreements aimed at countering climate and social collapse is drawing to a close, and once again this year, Italy has been among the countries blocking the most ambitious proposals," said activist Paola as quoted by Extinction Rebellion, whose surname was not provided.

Brazil's Bolsonaro jailed over alleged bid to break ankle bracelet and flee

AFP | Brasília, Brazil

Brazil's former president Jair Bolsonaro was taken from house arrest into police custody yesterday after the Supreme Court accused him of trying to break his ankle bracelet and plot an escape.

The far-right firebrand was sentenced to 27 years in prison over a scheme to stop leftist Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva from taking office after the 2022 elections -- a ruling he is still appealing.

Supreme Court judge Alexandre de Moraes said Bolsonaro's arrest was a preventive measure as he is a "high flight risk," and not the execution of his sentence.

Bolsonaro, who governed Brazil from 2019 to 2022, was placed under house arrest in August and has been confined to an upscale condominium in the capital Brasília.



Former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro

In his ruling, Moraes said that a planned vigil outside the condominium called by the former leader's son Flavio Bolsonaro on Saturday could cause turmoil that would "create an environ-

ment conducive to his escape." Flavio urged supporters to "fight for your country" in a video calling for the vigil.

The judge said there had been an "attempt to break" Bolsona-

ro's ankle bracelet early Saturday as part of a plan to "ensure the success of his escape, facilitated by the confusion caused by the demonstration called by his son."

Moraes also highlighted the proximity of Bolsonaro's home to the US embassy, adding the far-right leader had previously planned to flee to the Argentine embassy to request political asylum.

Bolsonaro is an ally of US President Donald Trump, who said his trial was a "witch hunt" and imposed punitive tariffs and sanctions against Brazil in retaliation. In a statement, Bolsonaro's defense team said his detention caused "deep perplexity" as it was based on a "prayer vigil."

They said they would appeal the detention which "could put his life at risk" due to his alleged frail health.