

Irish newspaper editor suspended over Kate topless photos

DUBLIN, IRELAND: The editor of the *Irish Daily Star* was suspended on Monday over the publishing of topless photos of Prince William's wife Catherine as the British royals take legal action over the pictures.



The newspaper's joint owners, British group Northern and Shell and Ireland-based Independent News and Media, were quick to condemn the decision to feature the blurry paparazzi images in Saturday's edition.

The company behind the Dublin operation, Independent Star, said on Monday it had suspended editor Michael O'Kane "with immediate effect" pending an internal investigation into the republication of images which first appeared in French magazine *Closer*.

The announcement comes after the royal couple lodged a criminal complaint against *Closer* in Paris earlier on Monday.

The pair also requested an injunction banning the republication or resale of the photos, which their lawyer said were from a "highly intimate moment" and had no place in the public domain.

A court decision on the injunction is expected at 1000 GMT today (1100 South Africa).

Northern and Shell chairman Richard Desmond has threatened to close the *Irish Daily Star* over the publication of the photos showing the former Kate Middleton sunbathing in bikini bottoms on the balcony of a chateaux in France.

Independent News and Media, controlled by media tycoon Denis O'Brien, criticised the "poor editorial decision" but said Desmond's move to close the paper was disproportionate.

Pictures 'highlight a security threat'

O'Kane has strongly defended his decision, saying that he treated Catherine as any other celebrity and claiming that the pictures highlighted a royal security threat.

Earlier Ireland's Justice Minister Alan Shatter pledged to revive previously abandoned proposals for new privacy laws

following the furore.

"It is clear that some sections of the print media are either unable or unwilling in their reportage to distinguish between prurient interest and the public interest," he said.

"It is perceived financial gain as opposed to any principled freedom of expression that for some is the dominant value."

"The publication by the *Irish Daily Star* in Ireland of topless photographs of Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge, is a clear illustration of this."

Meanwhile the Italian magazine splashed the grainy pictures on Monday across a special edition with the front-page headline: "The queen is nude!"

The couple, carrying on with a visit to the Solomon Islands, appeared unperturbed when they were introduced to a group of topless South Pacific women.

Source: *AFP* via I-Net Bridge

For more:

- [Newspaper Boss Anger Over Topless Kate Photos](#)
- [Fears at Irish Daily Star over Richard Desmond closure threat](#)
- [Irish Daily Star could be closed after its 'indecent' decision to print topless Kate pictures](#)

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