

[Transcript] Global News Podcast / China claims it's uncovered a CIA spy in its network

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I'm Valerie Sanderson and at 13 hours GMT on Friday the 11th of August these are our main China says it's uncovered a spy working for the US intelligence agency the CIA.

We have a special report on the effect of the military coup in Niger.

The world's scout Jamboree plagued with problems including a heat wave winds up with a pop concert.

Also this podcast takes a lot of mental power physical power and emotional power to even make it to this world stage. You have to be the best.

Pokemon's coming home to Japan as the world championships get underway.

We begin the podcast with the tale of espionage. China says it's uncovered a spy recruited by the US intelligence service the CIA. The state security ministry said the Chinese national known only by the surname Zung was employed at a military organization and was taken on by the Americans during a work trip to Italy. Our Asia Pacific editor Will Leonardo is with me in the studio. Tell us more about what China is saying about this agent.

So yes this is a statement from the Chinese security ministry. It says this man called Zung in his 50s who worked for what's described as a military industrial group was sent to Italy and there he was alleged to have met a US embassy official by the name of Seth.

It appears they lived it up together in Italy. They went to dinner parties and went on outings and went to the opera together and there's some interesting wording in the statement that says that Zung became psychologically dependent and succumbed to Western values. Seth is then said to have offered Zung a large sum of money and immigration to the US for himself and his family and Zung signed an espionage agreement to provide sensitive material about Chinese military once back in China. Once back in the country he met up with CIA agents as alleged multiple times to provide what's been described as a large amount of core intelligence. There's no word on what that is. The ministry said it was taking compulsory measures against Zung and would be handed to prosecution services soon and there's but there's been no independent confirmation and no word from the US authorities although it's unlikely that they'll be speaking a lot on this topic. And what is the state of play between China and the US when it comes to espionage?

Well this seems to be a rare detailed disclosure from China even though Beijing has long claimed foreign forces are trying to undermine the country. It recently expanded its definition of espionage, made it slightly more vague to include things in the private sector including US firms and that sort of thing. And it comes as you say amid heightened tensions between the two great powers over trade, over military. We've had those restrictions of chips to China by the US authorities and it's also the latest accusation of espionage from either side. So last week we had two US Navy sailors arrested in California for allegedly providing material to Chinese authorities and also it comes a few months after the CIA director Bill Burns said the agency was trying to expand its Chinese network after a catastrophic exposure event in which several spies were lost. Thanks Will. Will Leonardo. The authorities in Hawaii's island of Maui say it will take many years and billions of dollars to repair the damage caused by devastating wildfires. 55 people are now known to have died. T-Dang was visiting from Kansas City in the United States. Once our car started exploding, we had at least 50 cars there, like a line of right behind us and each car is just pop, pop, pop, pop. It started shooting debris to us, we had to move even more down. This time

we're in the water. Water's hitting harder and harder so it hit us, it kept pushing us back and forth. I got a big scrape from my bottom all the way down to my calves and the rocks was really hard so the nurse told me that was kind of like basically I got scratched and burned at the same time. T-Dang in Maui. The military coup in Niger has caused huge concern resulting in West African heads of state meeting in Abuja to discuss the situation. The group, comprising the regional bloc, Ekoas, has agreed to assemble a standby force to intervene if necessary. International partners have cut aid to the country and some have imposed sanctions to try to convince the army leaders in Niger to step down. But the junta appears to have popular support because it's opposing the influence of France, Niger's former colonial ruler. Some people are even calling for closer ties with Russia instead. Our Africa correspondent, Catherine Birahanga, has this report on how the coup is affecting daily life in Niger. Zaraqada stares a pot of food at her small outdoor restaurant in Niame, the capital of Niger. A few customers seated on wooden benches wait to be served. She and other ordinary people are beginning to feel the impact of the fallouts from Niger's coup. Sanctions have cut off imports causing the prices of popular staples to go up and major cities are facing rolling electricity blackouts. The price of rice has increased but also that of cooking oil, an increase of four US dollars in just one week. This causes us problems because if I prepare the rice I can't sell it. No profit on the losses. Since the military took power we no longer have electricity. When I tried to find out I was told that it was Nigeria that cut the electricity to denounce the coup that had taken place in our country. Niger's soldiers seized power two weeks ago. A series of rallies including at the national stadium have been attended by thousands of people suggesting widespread backing for the coup that's ousted the democratically elected government. Isufu Umaru is one of the supporters. We like our army now you are free now we don't need the France we don't need anything we like Russia we like our country. The militia takeover has unleashed already present anti-french sentiments that have seen protesters stream the streets in support of the coup. They have held stones and set parts of the French embassy on fire. Some protesters carried Russian flags calling on Moscow to step in as their preferred international ally. Russian propaganda networks promote it as a fairer partner for African countries. It has built close relationships with Niger's neighbours Mali and Burkina Faso which are also led by military regimes. Ibrahim Suleiman who is a tailor in Niame says Russian flags have been on demand since the military took over. It was with advent of the Tiani coup that I started seeing flags especially for Russia. People come to buy a lot of them because they use them to support our soldiers who have taken power. People buy them because we are in conflict with France. For years France has only caused us problems and the military wants to put an end to it. There's a worry France and western countries are losing influence to Russia in this region. But there are other Nigerians who support the deposed president Mohammed Bazoum. African countries and international allies have called for him to be released from military detention and to be reinstated. Ibrahim Mahzaki says the coup is not justified. I condemn this coup because currently we have no problem in the country. Not only are services working well in security has decreased a lot. There aren't labour strikes like before and financially there is no crisis so we have no worries in the country frankly. Someone can't just come up and stage a coup for their own personal interests. France Niger's former colonial ruler has some 1500 troops stationed in the country.

It sees Niger as a close ally in the fight against a growing Islamist insurgency in this part of Africa. But the former colonial power is accused of unfairly benefiting from Niger's natural resources

and wielding undue influence over the country's economy and politics.

Similar anti-French sentiments are widespread across its former colonies on the continent.

Six countries from Guinea in West Africa to Sudan in the Horn of Africa have experienced coups since 2020. Five of them are former French colonies. Marie Rocher Billois is a West Africa political analyst. Unlike other colonial masters who managed to take more distance with their colonies after independence, France has had a very hard time accepting to lose grip on those countries. So very conveniently the Putschist and the elite in the Sahel traditionally tend to scapegoat the French for their own failures like corruption or mismanagement. And France has now its own scapegoat which is Russia and the Vatican militia. It used to stir the anti-French resentment. The worry is that should another coup in Africa succeed,

it will encourage other ambitious soldiers. Catherine Bjarahanga. South Africa's former president Jacob Zuma was supposed to be serving an 11-month jail sentence for contempt of court. He reported to his local prison but an hour later the authorities released him.

A correspondent in South Africa, Nomsa Maseko, has more on what led to that decision.

The former president came in at six o'clock and he left after seven o'clock and he left after...

The commissioner of prisons, Mahoti Tobakhale, held a press conference earlier today in which he said

that the former president was released under a special remission process which means now that he's under correctional supervision and he's one of 9,400 other prisoners who were sentenced for nonviolent or low-risk crimes. And the government is saying that the reason why they've done this is to try and tackle overcrowding in South African prisons. So we do also know that the president, Cyril Ramaphosa, is the one who actually signed into law that low-risk prisoners should be released and he did this back in April but today is actually the first day that the first group of the more than 9,000 offenders are actually being released. Now Jacob Zuma, the former president,

has been in and out of jail hasn't he? Tell us about his case and why this is also controversial in South Africa. Well this is very controversial in South Africa because Jacob Zuma was sentenced to 15 months in jail for refusing to testify at a judicial commission of inquiry that was investigating government corruption during his nine-year term in office and that is why he got that prison sentence. However, back in 2021 on the day that he was taken into custody there were riots that were sparked, very violent riots. In fact, one of the worst that South Africa has seen in a democratic dispensation in which more than 350 people died and hundreds of businesses were looted and burned. Nomsa Maseko and now to South Korea.

Where the World Scout Jamboree has closed with a pop concert at the World Cup Stadium in Seoul. The jamboree was plagued with problems including bug infested fields, dirty lavatories and a heatwave before a looming typhoon forced everyone to leave the campsite. More than 40,000 people from 155 countries, many of them teenagers aged between 14 to 17 years old, were at the event, the first global gathering of scouts since the pandemic. Speaking at the closing ceremony the Secretary General of the World Organization of the Scout Movement, Ahmad Alandawi acknowledged the

difficulties. I know this wasn't easy on you, no other event has faced this many challenges

and extreme weather conditions but also no other jamboree in history showed the determination, creativity and the resilience you have shown. A correspondent in South Korea is Gene McKenzie. The pop concert started at seven o'clock this evening that came after a bit of a closing ceremony so this is it the jamboree officially drawing to an end which I think honestly organisers and scout leaders will be breathing a slight sigh of relief over because as you say it's been absolutely plagued by problems from the start. They are going out with the bang though the South

Koreans organisers have kind of pulled out all the stops at this k-pop concert this evening hoping I think that the tens of thousands of teenagers who've gathered here from around the world will at least end with happy memories so they're seeing some of South Korea's most famous k-pop groups including new genes but some of those problems that you mentioned there I mean the head of the world scout organisation described this event to me earlier this week as the unluckiest jamboree in their hundred year history because as you say it's had a heat wave earlier in the week we had some flooding and then of course the whole thing had to be evacuated because of

this incoming typhoon and the UK scouts along with others like the US and the Singaporean teams actually pulled out even earlier than that because they were so concerned about hygiene and safety on

the side. Gene McKenzie still to come in this podcast. Boys shouldn't only be able to play football girls should also get to play football my team is really good who says girls can't play football. The growing popularity of women's football across Asia.

Spain and Sweden are through to next week's semi-finals in the women's world cup having beaten the Netherlands and Japan respectively earlier today. Despite losing at the quarter-final stage this year women's football in Japan is thriving and doing better than their male counterparts.

It's a situation replicated across Asia. Nick Marsh watched the next generation of young female players at the Singapore Football Club to try to find out why. Asia loves football World Cup, Premier League, you name it people here love it but the football teams in this part of the world the men's football teams in this part of the world rather are not so successful and that's putting it mildly. The last time a country from Southeast Asia qualified for the World Cup was Indonesia nearly a hundred years ago in fact the idea of the likes of Vietnam or the Philippines even China qualifying for the men's tournament well that's pretty far-fetched and yet here they are representing themselves admirably at this year's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand.

So why is this?

Football across the board is actually pretty inclusive in this part of the world.

It's common to find young female fans at stadiums in Japan's J League for example 40% of those at men's games are women and it's this enthusiasm that's got elite clubs and sponsors investing in training, education and talent spotting in Asia. For us to see that women's teams in Asia are getting on to the main stage to the world's biggest tournament it's a credit to the countries, to the investment into football. Shannon Maloney is an ex-player who now works for Tottenham Hotspur as their global development coach backed by Tottenham's main sponsor she runs football camps in places like Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia and Singapore. I feel like being a role model to young girls when they see me they can be me we're seeing so many young girls getting involved in football and for us it's about how do we embed that into the community how do we make that normal. And Singapore football club striker 11 year old Lulu Lane certainly agrees. Boy

shouldn't

only be able to play football girls should also get to play football my team is really good who says girls can't play football. Good point and in other football news Argentina has announced measures to punish foreign football fans who burn or tear banknotes as a way of taunting local supporters they'll now face prison sentences of up to 30 days. Our America's regional editor Leonardo Rosha reports. The burning and ripping up of money has become common among fans who travel

to Argentina to watch their clubs in South American club competitions particularly Brazilians and Chileans. They tease their rivals about Argentina's economic crisis and the low value of the local currency the Peso. Argentina has one of the world's highest annual inflation rate is currently more than a hundred percent. The local football authorities said such behavior was highly offensive and could incite violence. Fans will be detained and the clubs they support may also be punished if the problem persists. Leonardo Rosha. The list of weather related crises is growing every day including the wildfires in Hawaii in Italy Greece and Portugal the floods in China and record levels of melting of the Antarctic ice sheet. Scientists are now assessing if there's a common thread linking these events across the world. Professor Catherine Hayhoe is chief scientist of the Nature Conservancy a global environmental nonprofit charity. Within our lifetime actually right even now we are already starting to see individual days where it is really too hot for humans to be outside. I'm speaking to you from Texas right now where almost four hundred high temperature records have been broken across the state of Texas this summer alone. It has been over a hundred degrees Fahrenheit which is a nice round number but you know thirty eight degrees Celsius. It's been over that for almost every single day since the end of June and it is just really really difficult and unpleasant to spend time outdoors in that weather. Well that's the bad news and we've heard again about what needs to be done to combat the threat on a global level. But Professor Hayhoe

also has ideas about how we can cope in our urban environments. There are already early warning heat systems in a number of major cities and they have been shown to significantly reduce the health risks and even the deaths associated with these heat waves. There are also ways to reduce the urban heat island effect. So many large cities are quite a bit warmer than their surrounding areas. So if we can increase the green content of the city trees grasses it increases evaporation which cools the city down. If we can increase the reflectivity of the city instead of having black top and black roofs have light colored surfaces that reflect the sun's energy back to space instead of soaking it up we can actually lower the temperature of our cities just as climate change is pushing it up. You still need to invest in communities to make sure there's you know buddy systems where people call people especially elderly people and check up on them and ask if they're okay. We need all of these resilient strategies but we also have to reduce our emissions as much as possible soon as possible. Professor Catherine Hayhoe chief scientist of the Nature Conservancy and finally the Pokemon World Championships are taking place in the southern city of Yokohama in Japan. It's the first time it's been held in the country where the game was invented. If you're not familiar with the phenomenon Pokemon is a game involving

little virtual creatures inhabiting a mythical universe shared with humans and it first became popular about 20 years ago. YouTube streamed more than nine hours of coverage from the opening day.

It's going to be the water main to move first with the dazzling gleam and Urshifu is also there just to touch faster naturally so the close combat into the golden go just to be able to clean it up and that is going to be the match going to Kentaro Matsumoto. Well James Kopnell spoke to content creator Glitch who's attending the championship tournament. The atmosphere at the

Pokemon World Championships here in Yokohama has been electrifying and that's kind of understating it a bit because the energy that has been just spreading around especially since the opening ceremony has just been like incredible. This is my fifth world championship but first time in Japan so this means a lot to me to actually be here be back with the fans after after a year apart globally and it's just been so exciting to be here. Yeah I can hear it in your voice so it feels like for many in Japan a homecoming does it the Pokemon has come home.

Oh yes definitely that's what it feels like and the opening ceremony this morning felt like a very welcoming type of welcome party because they were very excited to share their culture with the world

and they share that through Pokemon and I think that's just incredible. How does a championship work because high level competition is often just that competition it's aggressive sometimes. Is it like that in Pokemon or is there more of a sharing spirit? It's a little bit of both so when you think of Pokemon you think about it with chess but it's very very you know colorful fun chess and available to everybody of all ages and just the way to get the championship it takes a lot of mental power physical power and emotional power to even make it to this world stage you have to be

the best like no one ever was and the road to become a champion is a very tough and grueling process for all ages because it's not just adults at play it's also kids of all ages as well so you have different divisions and you have different age divisions excuse me and they go through multiple challenges throughout the year just to get to this stage. What are you expecting them from the next few days? I'm expecting a lot of surprises actually because there are four titles being showcased here at Pokemon Worlds here in Yokohama and I'm from North America from the United States.

I'm used to seeing the Pokemon that is being played there we call this the meta the meta game but it is different for each region that is competing at world so it's going to be very interesting seeing you know North American teams go up against the APEC teams or up against the European teams because they all play differently and so it's going to be really interesting to see that come together and see how we match up against each other globally. Pokemon content creator

Glitch and that's it from us for now but before we go here's Jackie with news of the next happy pot. Yes in this edition we'll be checking in on the baby girl born beneath the rubble of her family home who became a symbol of hope after the devastation of the earthquake that hit Syria and Turkey six months ago. We'll be meeting the teenager who has made it his mission in life to get us all to recycle batteries. The wonder of gazing back at earth from the edge of space we will hear from the mother and daughter from Antigua and the British man with Parkinson's who have just made that trip. Also and I promise you will love this the world dog surfing championships have just taken place in California we will hear from one of the competitors well his human friend. All in the happy pot available from Saturday August the 12th. And the dog too I hope Jackie if you want to comment on this podcast or the topics covered in it sends an email. The address is

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