

[Transcript] Global News Podcast / Freed Hamas hostage talks about her ordeal

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I'm Valerie Sanderson and at 1,300 GMT on Tuesday the 24th of October, these are our main stories. An 85-year-old Israeli woman who was freed after being taken hostage by Hamas has spoken about her ordeal. Israel has kept up its bombardment of the Gaza Strip, we hear from our reporter in the south of the territory. A dispute between rival mining unions in South Africa has kept hundreds of workers underground since Sunday.

Also in this podcast, just three years ago, one in 25 cars sold were electric and now that is one in five which is staggering. A new report suggests the world is on an unstoppable shift towards renewable energy and a cautionary tale about fame, family and betrayal, Britney Spears publishes her autobiography.

One of the two elderly women released by Hamas after being abducted and kept hostage in Gaza for 16 days has been speaking to the media in Tel Aviv. Yokeved Lyftschitz was handed over alongside Nuret Cooper but their husbands and more than 200 other people remain in Gaza. The elderly women had both been taken from their homes in a kibbutz close to the Gaza border. Many of their neighbours and friends were murdered in the attack more than two weeks ago. Yokeved Lyftschitz spoke of her ordeal in Hebrew to a crowded news conference describing first how she was kidnapped. Her daughter Sharon translated for her.

My mum is saying that she was taken on the back of a motorbike with her legs on one side and a head on another side. That she was taken through the cloud fields with the men in front on one side and a man behind her and that while she was being taken she was hit by sticks by shabab until they reached the tunnels. There they walked for a few kilometres on the wet ground. There are a huge network of tunnels underneath. It looks like a spider web.

Yokeved Lyftschitz also described how they were treated by their hostage takers.

They were given medicine that the people were friendly that they kept the place very clean.

They were very concerned about them. I heard more details from our correspondent in Jerusalem Yolanael. This was quite a remarkable news conference by Yokeved Lyftschitz. She's been undergoing medical checks and seeing her family at a hospital in Tel Aviv and she was accompanied by her daughter Sharon who'd just flown in from the UK. She's British Israeli.

Sharon had said earlier that her mother was very sharp and keen to share information and we did see that. She talked about how she was taken into Gaza by her mass government on the back of a motorbike. She said that she had been beaten. That was quite an ordeal as she went in.

But at the same time she said that once she arrived she'd had her watch and her jewellery taken but she was treated then very well. She said that it was clear there had been a lot of preparations for the hostages. She said this actually reflects on some of the concerns of families of the hostages of people I spoke to even from her own kibbutz and she said there were clean toilets. She said that they were given food, cheese and cucumber sandwiches. Each of the hostages

had a guard. She spoke of her hope that all hostages will be freed. Unfortunately she didn't have news of her own husband who remains along with the husband of the other woman that she was

released with in Gaza among those more than 200 people still being held. Earlier we had Sharon

Lipschitz saying to us that he was very involved in rights for Palestinians working towards peace with our neighbours. She introduced both of her parents and we saw that in this news conference as real sort of peace activists. Did any details emerge from what Yockeved Lipschitz was saying about where exactly she was held? I mean was she held in tunnels underground? Any evidence of that?

Yes she talked about how they were taken into the tunnels quite early on of course then it was disorienting. She hasn't really got a clue of exactly where she was held within the Gaza Strip but she did describe being taken to a large hall before the group was split up. So it gives you an idea of just the sophistication in this tunnel network that exists underneath Gaza that the Israeli military has been talking about so much as saying that this is used as a command and control centre by the armed factions in the Gaza Strip that leaders of Hamas and Islamic Jihad are believed to be hiding in these locations and these tunnels have also been extremely important for these groups as they have carried out these attacks against Israeli civilians and soldiers. Another point of Yockeved Lipschitz said she did receive some medical care while she was being held but really now it's not clear what happens to the other hostages especially with this very intense Israeli bombardment that has been continuing in the Gaza Strip. There's a lot of concern from families of the hostages when we've spoken to them of course about their safety during that bombardment as well of course as the safety of Palestinians themselves. Yolannel well for those desperate for news the release of two more hostages may have provided a glimmer of hope. Ahal Basori's sister Yonator and her husband and two of their children aged 12 and 15 were abducted from Kibbutz Berry. Mr Basori a British lawyer learned his sister had been killed but believes the others are in Gaza. Sarah Montague asked about his reaction to news of the released hostages. It's very difficult you know it's uh you know I cannot stop thinking maybe this is some sort of psychological game by Hamas you know with our feelings and with our fears but yes it's true that there is some hope that you know if they release them maybe they would be inclined to release at least the uh uninvolved people you know the children the women um yeah so it does give some hope but um qualified one if I may say so. I mean you had the news the sad news that your sister was killed have you had any information about her husband and that their three children? No so uh someone saw the whole family being pulled out by Hamas terrorists out of the home on Saturday morning then we so we assumed they were kidnapped then you know my sister's phone was traced to Gaza so this maybe gave us another hope that you know they're all in Gaza I had to look through all the Hamas horrible videos you know on the various channels you know just to try and trace or see if I can get a glimpse of any of them which I couldn't but I saw enormous amount of atrocities and evilness and you know it's just it's just beyond beyond imagination so apart from the fact from these two facts you know we have no other confirmation but they are considered hostages by the Israeli authorities. Hamas talks about civilians and there seems to be a suggestion that the civilians are more likely to be released than soldiers was your sister's husband draw was he in the army? He was in the army everybody in Israel at one stage is in the army but he's not a soldier you know he's a civilian once you finish your military service you go and you know go back to your civilian life and there's no involvement with the military or anything of this nature so yeah they can make this distinction but you know it's very artificial he was not in uniforms or or a soldier as such when he was captured. And the it's such a it's a hard question but you must have imagined how they are coping

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with with this. You know so I to be honest with you I don't run scenarios in my head of this sort you know because really it's at the end of the day it's only in my head and what it does it just gets me into very dark places which I refuse to go into you know so I rather stay on the side of hope I had you know believed that they are okay and looked after and hopefully will be released. One of the women who was released overnight we saw extraordinary images of her turning back to hold the hand of one of her captors and she describes that they were treated well I just wondered when you heard when you saw that and when you heard what she said how you felt. You know it's mixed feelings you know because I saw you know I'm originally from Kibbutz berry I was born there and was raised up there so you know I saw the atrocities you know really horrible scenes you know and stories that emerged from what her master is did in berry so you know I take this with such scenes with a grain of salt and I think to myself it's some sort of a vicious propaganda you know to try to masquerade you know the atrocious thing so you know I'm I think it's nice and I think it's beautiful to see humanity in all this but I cannot get out of my head the images of the atrocities I just can't. Ahal Basore whose family are abducted from a Kibbutz by Hamas speaking there to Sarah Montague.

Meanwhile Israel has kept up its bombardment of Gaza. Hamas health officials say an estimated 700 people have been killed by Israeli airstrikes in the past 24 hours. Rashid Abu Alouf is in the city of Canunis in the south of the Gaza Strip where he relocated with his family from Gaza City. After like four hours pause and announced ceasefire last night after midnight Israel intensified airstrikes here in the south area in so-called safe areas this morning I've been to the funeral of that family about 13 members of the same family was very angry mood sadness people screaming crying I saw injured woman coming to pay a tribute to her son who was killed

in the airstrike last night. That anger that you're seeing is of course going to be directed at those who are striking Gaza at the moment at Israel is there any of that anger quietly in private against Hamas for getting them into this situation well to be honest yes there is but people are too traumatized even to think of what's going on around them people are trying to survive you know when you when you don't have water and you don't have food your priority is to find a little water your kids are not dying from thirst you know but yes there is a level of anger I saw a woman in the hospital yesterday she was screaming following the death of her family she was blaming Hamas she

said why you have done that but all the people shouting in funeral against Israel death to Israel they blame the arab as well most of the people who have been speaking to asking where is the Arab why the Arab are normalizing relation with Israel rush the Abu aloof speaking to Nick Robinson Ukraine says Russian forces are making concerted efforts to cut off a vital supply road to a strategically important town in the next region the Ukrainians say Avdivka is under almost incessant bombardment last night president Zelensky picked out the defenders of Avdivka for special praise describing their resilience as a strength for the whole country a correspondent Jenny Hill has been speaking to some of those trying to survive in a town on the frontline I can't sleep at night missiles are flying every night all day and night there aren't many people left in Avdivka everyone feels fear that's why Marina wants to get out to the towns under near constant attack by Russian forces she spoke to us by phone from a shelter around 1500 people are still here they

live here most of them are old they stay here because some of them are ill they are old where can they go Moscow wants Avdivka badly it's close to the city of Donetsk which Russia and its proxy forces have occupied since 2014 seizing Avdivka would make it much harder for Ukraine to take it back the situation in the town in nearest villages has changed a lot in the last few weeks Hanadi Yudin is part of a police unit known as the white angels they get people to safety but it's getting more dangerous

there are constant attacks on town and villages launched from either artillery multiple rocket launchers or aviation guided area bombs missiles they attack where people live over the past week we evacuated 50 people not everyone wants to leave not everyone can we spoke to Hannah who's desperate

to escape but our elderly mother refuses to go I cannot leave her she's over 70 and has problems with her legs if she stays alone she cannot get water or wood for heating

she said she wouldn't go anywhere and that she wanted to sleep in her own bed

windows and doors are broken everywhere it's difficult to fix them with daily attacks because they get broken again every day there are no shops left anymore the last one got hit today the people we spoke to in Avdivka described the most appalling of living conditions

but they recalled for us too how life used to be before war devastated their town his marina again there was a park a boulevard there were a lot of shops we planted trees it was very beautiful here we had a culture center a lot of festivals and celebrations she hopes one day to return

but fears there'll be nothing left to come back to there is no Avdivka anymore

a resident of Avdivka marina ending that report from Jenny Hill in Ukraine

still to come on the podcast a deadly pile-up caused by a so-called super fog in the US state of Louisiana she calls me mama they they've had a bad wreck and we're in it but we're okay

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in South Africa more than 500 mine workers are still underground

more than a day after they expect to emerge from a shift which began on Sunday night some reports suggest an illegal sit-in but it's unclear if everyone is involved or some are being prevented from leaving the one gold modern east mine in springs east of Johannesburg outside the mine people have brought food and water to send to the men underground the cause appears to be a dispute

between two unions as our correspondent Nomsa Meseco explains there is currently a meeting underway by the mine bosses and representatives of the national union of mine workers and the

association of mine workers and construction union from what we can understand it is alleged

that the mine is only willing to recognize the national union of mine workers which has the

minority of mine workers who are the members however the association of mine workers and

construction union claims that more than 1700 employees of the mine belong to them and that

the the mine itself is refusing to recognize the union which is why we are seeing this current

situation at the moment it appears that it is not a hostage situation per se but that the majority

of the night shift workers who were underground had planned this sit-in however not all of them who are underground belong to the one union which is why there are claims that those who want to come

out

you know to the surface are being held against they will. Nomsa Meseco a study of former rugby players brains has produced fresh evidence of the effect that repeated head injuries can have on players of high impact contact sports our health reporter Philippa Roxby told me more. It's a small study of the brains of 31 dead players who donated their brains to medical research and it was led by the University of Glasgow and they analyzed those brains these were all regular rugby players some were professional but most were club players and they had an average of 18 years playing the game and they found that two-thirds of those brains showed signs of something called CTE it's a brain condition called chronic traumatic encephalopathy and it's linked to repeated head injuries you know it's something you don't get with one head injury but it's repeated over years and years and years and so this is a sign that they found in other contact sports as well like American football in players brains and they also discovered that the longer though that person's career went on for the more likely they were to have this in their brain so a real indication that it's those repeated injuries over many many years that can cause this brain damage and this looked specifically at rugby players interesting isn't it that the Rugby World Cup is going on and you can see how actually brutal it is when you watch it yeah it's not just about rugby is it no I mean there's many other sports that are implicated now that are being looked into even football looking at cases of potential dementia linked with the heading of the ball American football was was one of the first sports to to find signs of CTE in in former players brains and also boxing has long been researched as a cause of of brain damage and so there are calls for for all these contact sports to try and reduce head impacts and brain impacts the researcher on this study actually compared the brain to a spinning ball of porridge with the brain the porridge and when the the head gets hit in a in a terrible impact then the the ball spins around and the porridge in it also spins and that is that's causing these tiny little impacts which over time build up into this into this degenerative brain condition and that's what they believe happens the world is on an unstoppable shift towards renewable energy but needs faster action to phase out fossil fuels if it's to halt the slide to a critical 1.5 degree rise in temperatures that's the gist of a new report from the international energy agency which predicts that by 2030 renewables will be providing half of the world's electricity our climate reporter Esme Stallard gave me the details it says there's been a phenomenal rising in clean energy and there's one statistic in the report that really stuck out to me which kind of summarizes this hope and progress we've made just three years ago one in 25 cars sold or electric and now that is one in five which is staggering and that's just from current policies there are also many targets the governments have committed to which the international energy agency the IEA thinks will only accelerate this further in fact Fatihl Birrell who is the executive director of the agency said the transition to clean energy is not a question of if but how soon and I think that sums up quite nicely the essence of this report but there are serious challenges to be faced aren't there I mean emissions are still too high yeah the report points out that whilst renewable energy is continuing to grow the investment of fossil fuels is still too high it's about double where it should be if we want to achieve that goal of net zero emissions the report looks at the climate commitments made by countries and says if all of those implemented the world is still on track for temperatures to rise by about 2.4 degrees above pre-industrial times and we've spoken before in this program that countries pledged back in 2015 at that Paris climate

summit to try and keep temperature rise to below 1.5 to avoid the very worst impacts of climate change so we're still some way off from that target at the moment and does it criticize governments it praises some other policies that are in place but there is sort of a thinly veiled criticism I would say of countries that are still opening new oil fields on the basis of energy security the report says that doesn't actually offer energy security at all and that argument is quite weak really if anything investing in renewable energy is going to provide that stability and it's also warning isn't it about the effect of geopolitics and warning about the threat of something we've been covering on the program of course the conflict in the Middle East they're saying it's not yet clear how and to what extent these geopolitical tensions could influence world energy markets but they've drawn parallels with the 1973 oil crisis so when a group of Arab nations took the decision to place an embargo on oil exports to certain countries like the US, Canada and the UK after they provided support to Israel in the Yom Kippur war against Arab states led by Egypt and Syria and that resulted in fuel prices skyrocketing and also rampant inflation but the report also pointed out the world is now better prepared for those disruption to supplies because of how embedded renewable energy now is and if we just continue to expand that clean energy it will help us protect against this volatility that we do get when political tensions rise up as is the case with the Middle East or as we saw previously and ongoing with the Russian invasion of Ukraine seven people have been killed in the US state of Louisiana after what's known as a super fog led to a huge pile up involving 158 cars others are injured and locals are being asked to donate to blood banks as Charlotte Gallagher reports videos from the scene in New Orleans show burnt out mangled cars piled on top of each other at least one vehicle careered off the road landing in a lake beneath the highway a fire broke out after the crash and a tanker which was carrying hazardous liquid was removed seven people are known to have died but police say that figure may rise as the area is still being searched 25 people are injured some critically state police are urging anyone with a missing family member or friend to contact them this woman told CBS News

her daughter had been involved in the pile up she calls me mama they they've had a bad wreck and we're in it but we're okay a super fog had descended on the highway before the crash reducing visibility to less than three meters according to the US national weather service super fogs occur when a mixture of smoke and moisture released from damp smoldering organic material such as leaves and trees mixes with cooler nearly saturated air the weather phenomenon has caused car pile ups in the past charlotte gallagher and finally to what is being described as a cautionary tale about fame family and betrayal it's the newly published autobiography of one of the most famous women in the pop world britney spears just a few years ago it would have been impossible for the singer to do that as she lived under a conservatorship that stripped her of some basic human rights that court imposed order overseen by her father was lifted back in 2021 when a judge ruled that britney spears could again make her own decisions our music correspondent mark savage has read her new book in 2008 as we all know there was the incident where she shaved her head she was suffering she says in the book from postpartum depression and ant who was very close to her had died there was a custody battle with her first husband her second husband actually kevin federline over those two young sons sean and jaden and i think she was in some respects not coping well and there was in the first instance potentially a justification for removing some element of control from her life just to get her back on the tracks it's very unusual as we heard when the conservatorship ended for it to last 13 years and she in the book is incredibly angry

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about that she is adamant that she will never see her family again she has not shown them the book in advance and her father in particular who was the one that for most of that period was in charge of her finances her personal life all decisions about who she could date or where she went out or what concert she did she reserves the most vitriol for him she calls him reckless cruel she accuses him of being an alcoholic a failed businessman and has cut him out of her life completely yet through all this she was still making music and performing yes a four year last vegas residency and one of the things that comes across there was a point where she was in rehearsals for that and she wanted to change a dance step there was something in there that she felt was too complicated that she could have done when she was younger and they pulled her aside she says and accused her of

being difficult and put her on lithium tablets which of course is an incredibly strong antidepressant and that terrified her because as she says in the book one of her grandmothers had been put on lithium and ended up committing suicide and so the echoes of that coarsed through her she was scared by the by the science of it for a lot of that time mark savage on britney spears and that's it from us for now but there'll be a new edition of the global news podcast later if you want to comment on this podcast or the topics covered in it send us an email the address is global podcast at bbc.co.uk you can also find us on x formerly known as twitter at global news pod this edition was mixed by charlotte togzimska the producer was marion strawne the editor is ever is caron martin i'm valerii samderson until next time bye bye