

## [Transcript] Global News Podcast / Gunman kills three in twin Rotterdam shootings

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I'm Nick Miles and in the early hours of Friday, the 29th of September, these are our main stories.

Three people, including a 14-year-old girl, have been shot and killed by a gunman in the Dutch city of Rotterdam. Republicans in the United States are holding their first hearing into whether to impeach Joe Biden, despite failing to show any evidence of wrongdoing by the president. Separatist leaders in the Gono Karabach say they are officially ending independence efforts as people continue to flee after Azerbaijan sees control of the territory.

Also in this podcast. Who would do it for goodness sake? Just a special place. I propose my wife here. It's absolutely devastating. I mean, it's heartbreaking.

Shock in the community as one of Britain's most famous trees that even appeared in a Hollywood movie is felled in the darkness of night.

We begin in the Netherlands. Police say a gunman has killed three people, including a 14-year-old girl in the city of Rotterdam there. He first opened fire at a house before travelling to a nearby university medical centre. One hospital worker described the moment they realised the building was under attack. We heard that the shooter was roaming through the hospital, so we suddenly had to go outside. It's quite bizarre. We practice this regularly, and it's always kind of funny. Now we're suddenly living it for real.

Fires broke out at both locations. Police have arrested a 32-year-old man. I heard more from our correspondent in the Netherlands, Anna Hologen, who was outside the Erasmus University Medical

Centre. An absolutely terrifying day for Rotterdam's student community, especially given that what we

now know from the Justice Department confirmation, the main suspect, the gunman, is a student. He has

been named as Fouad El, a 32-year-old student from Rotterdam. He is suspected of earlier today starting off at an apartment about two kilometres from where I am now outside the Erasmus Medical Centre. There there was a shooting. A 39-year-old woman and her 14-year-old daughter were killed. He then set fire to that apartment and travelled here to the Erasmus Medical Centre, and he stormed

the building. So we've seen images of doctors coming out, pushing patients on stretchers. The whole building was evacuated. Some people were stuck in rooms and they were taping notes to the window

with a note of their room number asking for help. No one knew how many gunmen there were. If the

gunman was still inside, it seems as though he managed to walk through the building. Students have talked about him throwing Molotov cocktails. We've seen pictures of fire, and at the end of this siege, this rampage through the hospital, he was eventually arrested underneath the helipad, and some pictures have been shared on Dutch news websites of manning, camouflage, combat star trousers in handcuffs being detained by police. And the fact that witnesses described seeing, as you say, a man dressed in combat gear wearing a bulletproof vest does suggest a fairly high degree of preparation for this and might have had an impact on how long-lasting this rampage was. Precisely, he clearly had come prepared. Speaking to people around here when I arrived, I spoke to a student, he said everyone was stunned. Everyone had heard the sirens, all of the WhatsApp groups were being filled with messages, photographs, people asking questions, checking everyone else was all right. The chair of the Erasmus Medical Center has said the killings left a scar on the entire student community. So it does seem as though he was prepared, and there was speculation initially that there may have been a terror motive. But what we do know from police is that this man, this 32-year-old suspect from Roshadam, was known to them. He had a conviction a couple of years ago for animal cruelty. He did some community service for that, and there are also reports that the killings may have been more personal vendettas, no suggestion of any kind of terror or political motives in anything that I've seen from the authorities so far. Anna Holligan in The Netherlands. In Sweden, the Prime Minister has said the country is going through a wave of gang-related violence like nothing in its history. Ulf Kristesson was speaking after three people were killed in separate incidents over Wednesday night, raising the total to 11 dead in September alone. Mr Kristesson pledged to help those who were too scared to go to the police. All of you should know that we're on the same side. We must hunt the gangs, we must defeat the gangs. They must be locked up for very long prison terms, and if you are a foreign citizen you must be deported. Serious organized crime and deadly gun violence have increased sharply. They recruit children and train the killers of the future. The Prime Minister of Sweden. In the United States, legal experts have told Congress it is premature to impeach President Biden, although most believe his son Hunter's activities justify further investigation. They were addressing hearings on Thursday that are part of a Republican bid to impeach Mr Biden. The party accuses him of profiting from his son's business ventures while serving as Vice President. The Republican chair of the House Oversight Committee, James Comer, suggests there is a mountain of evidence already to support their inquiry. For years, President Biden has lied to the American people about his knowledge of and participation in his family's corrupt business schemes. At least 10 times Joe Biden lied to the American people that he never spoke to his family about their business dealings. He lied by telling the American people that there was an absolute wall between his official government duties and his personal life. Let's be clear, there wasn't a wall. Democrats say this is an impeachment inquiry in search of the evidence, a stunt designed to distract from the many indictments that Donald Trump is facing. Here's Democratic Congressman Jamie Raskin. We've held hearings and conducted interviews with everybody from Hunter Biden's business partners to a federal agent assigned to that investigation. And still, we found no evidence of wrongdoing by President Biden. If the Republicans had a smoking gun or even a dripping water pistol, they would be presenting it today, but they've got nothing on Joe Biden. I spoke to our Washington correspondent, Gary O'Donoghue, and asked him for more about the case that the Republicans will try to make. They'll try, I think, and they'll have to do this not just by sort of saying it, but issuing

subpoenas, et cetera, to build some proof or some weight of evidence that links Hunter Biden's business activities to his father. And they say that the family has profited hugely, but they've really struggled up till now to prove that Joe Biden made any money effectively. And that's what they would really have to prove. Lying actually wouldn't be enough to get to the sort of level of an impeachment, even if Joe Biden hasn't been accurate about what he said, although you don't want your presidents lying. So it's a big ask for the Republicans. And for months, they've been looking for this stuff, and they haven't produced it so far, but they'll hope, I think, in the coming weeks to get more. You intimated there, Gary, that this would be the first stage of a very long process to any full impeachment, wouldn't it? Yeah, it would. And not least because the Republicans are far from clear at those who are running the inquiry, that they could get the House of Representatives to impeach the president, even though they have a majority. Their majority is very slim, and there are a bunch of Republicans who think this impeachment

inquiry is a bad idea. That's why there hasn't been a vote on the floor to start the inquiry, to authorize the inquiry. It's simply been done by edict from the Speaker Kevin McCarthy. And so they have their own internal problems over this process. Now, the weather could change if they suddenly turn up some decent evidence, but as things stand, it's not really the Democrats they have to worry about. It's some of their own people. And Gary, it's hard to assess this, but to what extent do you think it's going to have any kind of political effect in the run-up to the elections? It could turn off a lot of voters who are tired of impeachments. Yes, it could. I mean, it could backfire on Republicans, in particular, if it's seen as frivolous, if it's seen as sort of particularly at the moment where we've got a looming shutdown of the government coming, potential for millions of federal workers not getting paid. This could seem something that's not in touch with real people's needs and their interests. That's potentially true. There is political capital in kicking up enough sand to create an impression, if you like, of wrongdoing, even if they don't have the evidence. That makes political sense. The difficulty, I think, for them was that sustaining that while at the same time trying to explain away the difficulties that Donald Trump has legally is a tricky one. In some ways, this just draws more attention to what he's doing. Gary O'Donoghue in Washington. A severe drought in Brazil's Amazon region has prompted the authorities in the city of Manaus to declare a 90-day state of emergency. Manaus is the biggest city in the Amazon. Leonardo Rosha reports. The local mayor, David Silva, said the level of the river that crosses the city, the Rio Negro, has been dropping by 30 centimeters a day. It's now close to a record low. Water supplies in Manaus and other cities could be affected. Many tributaries of the Rio Negro, which are used as access routes through the tropical jungle, have dried up for the first time in years. The rainy season is due to start in November. The authorities in Brazil attribute this year's serious drought in the Amazon region to El Niño weather phenomenon and climate change. Leonardo Rosha. It is over. That is, in effect, what the separatist leader of Nagorno-Karabakh has said about a 100-year-long struggle for independence. Sambal Chakramanyan issued a decree saying that at the end of the year, the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh would cease to exist. It came just a week after Azerbaijani forces captured the area. Half the population has now fled into neighboring Armenia, with the prime minister, Nikol Pashinyan, accused Baku of ethnic cleansing. The exodus of Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh as

a result of Azerbaijan's ethnic cleansing policy continues. Analysis of the situation show that in the coming days, there will be no Armenians left in Nagorno-Karabakh. This is an act of ethnic cleansing. A correspondent in the Caucasus, Rehen Dimitri, gave me her assessment of why people in Nagorno-Karabakh have been leaving. There has been so much violence between these two communities, and I'm talking about really, really horrible stuff, you know, beheadings, mutilations. So there's so much hatred that it's unimaginable for Armenians to stay in that land and to accept Azerbaijani rule. They are terrified, and I think that's the main reason why they're leaving. And also, if you want a bit more kind of pictures, you know, to add to it. Now, on social media, we're seeing all sorts of videos appearing, which shows Azerbaijani forces kind of looting the homes of ethnic Armenians, or somehow like expressing their frustration by throwing things around, by breaking photographs, breaking furniture. And Armenians are watching this, and they know that, can you imagine what would have happened to

them if they still remained in their own homes? We heard there from the prime minister of Armenia that he doesn't anticipate there being many ethnic Armenians left in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Well, the latest figures that we have from the Armenian government is more than 70,000 people that have left their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh already, since the exodus began on Sunday.

We know that the official figures about the number of people living in Nagorno-Karabakh from the Armenian authorities has been 120,000 people. So what is going to happen to the remaining 50,000 people? As we understand, the majority of those people are people who worked in the de facto state structures, people who were the fighters, former government officials.

And of course, the big question is what's going to happen to these people.

Now, the admission by the separatist leader of Nagorno-Karabakh that the struggle for independence

is effectively over. That is huge news for ethnic Armenians, but also for Azerbaijanis.

It's a huge moment. I've seen a footage of an Armenian news reader announcing this news, and she was crying. I mean, right now, everybody's in a state of panic because things have been happening so fast. It's a big, big tragic event for ethnic Armenians.

And a significant moment for people in Azerbaijan as well, because they would say this is a vindication of what we've been trying to do, recover our territory.

Of course, it's a matter for celebration because Azerbaijan has been in a state of war with Armenia for so long over this territory. You know, so many thousands people, soldiers have been killed on both sides in Azerbaijan as well. So finally, they have this territory back.

Reyhane Demetri. Elchin Amirbeov is an advisor to the president of Azerbaijan.

James Menendez asked him to respond to those accusations of ethnic cleansing.

Is that what is taking place in Nagorno-Karabakh?

Of course not. And we strongly condemn and reject the statement by Prime Minister Pashinyan.

But you wouldn't deny that the effect of the operation, the military operation last week, is that that it has emptied out Nagorno-Karabakh of ethnic Armenians, or at least at the moment, half of those who were living there? Well, let me tell you that in this regard,

the current departure of Armenian residents is their personal voluntary and individual decision.

Well, it has nothing to do with the forced relocation or with the desire of Azerbaijan for them to leave. No, no, but I wasn't saying I was just saying that the impact of what has happened in the last few days is that ethnic Armenians feel they're not safe or not welcome

in Azerbaijan now that the military operation is complete and they feel they have no choice but to leave. Well, I think that they do have choice. And that's what I was trying to say, because if you look at what Azerbaijani authorities have been doing in the last four or five days, we have already established electricity 24 hours a day. Tomorrow in a couple of the gas will be delivered. It's true that while we do all those steps, it's very hard for us to prevent them from leaving, because if we would try to do that, we would be accused of holding them hostage. Elchin Amirbeov, advisor to the president of Azerbaijan.

In Germany, a campaign is underway to change a law that sees thousands of people sent to prison every year for traveling on public transport without a ticket. It's a law that dates from when the Nazis came to power in the early 1930s. The man behind the campaign has come up with an ingenious

way to attract public attention, as Tim Mansell reports.

What is the ticket cost? So I got to get a ticket, both for me and for my bike. So it's 320 and then for my bike, it's another 220. So that's 540.

Anna Zensrot, a journalist and activist, usually cycles around Berlin, but today is agreed to take the train. Anna is the founder of the Freedom Fund, an eye-catching initiative that helps people sent to jail for not buying a train ticket. We actually pay the fines for people who are imprisoned, and in that moment, when we pay it, people can actually walk free. This began at the end of 2021. Anna arrived at one of Berlin's prisons with 20,000 euros in cash in his pocket. 12 people walked free that day. Since then, he's received donations of around 800,000 euros and paid for more than 850 people to get out of jail. We believe that the law that criminalizes people for riding without a ticket is deeply unjust and it discriminates heavily against people who don't have money, against people who don't have housing, against people who are already in a crisis. It's estimated that 7,000 people are in prison in Germany for not paying a fare. These are melts, a recovering heroin addict, served a four-month sentence after being caught twice without a ticket.

I was on methadone, the drug they give you instead of heroin, and you have to go to the clinic every day to take it. I didn't have a ticket, but I had to get there before I started to get withdrawal symptoms. It was just four stops, and for four stops you have to pay three euros and ten cents. It was the end of the month and I didn't have any money left. Most people who end up in prison for fare dodging do so because they fail to pay the fine imposed by the court. Some, like Giza, are sent straight to prison. In these cases, the Freedom Fund can't help.

If you're caught without a ticket on most German transport systems, you'll be asked to pay an immediate 60 euro penalty fare. It's usually serial offenders who are then referred for prosecution. Lars Wagner of VDV, an organisation representing hundreds of German public transport companies, says they lose 300 million euros a year to fare dodgers. The six euros seems not to be enough, so we have to do more to get these people scared of being caught again. Do you think if people were no longer prosecuted, it would lead to an epidemic of people traveling without a ticket? I don't know. But your organisation is clear that the existence of this law is an effective deterrent? Yes, for sure. Anna Zemsrott says the irony of his campaign is that the people who ask most frequently for financial help are the prisons themselves. The Freedom Fund application form is often given to prisoners as they arrive to start their sentence. On one point, the state criminalises people,

and then on the other side, the same state comes to a civil society organisation and is asking them for help to correct this, which really shows you the absurdity of it all. Anna Zemsrott ending that report from Tim Manson. Still to come. I've actually never talked about this in any other interview. This is the first time I'm talking about this. The Japanese-British singer and actress Rina Sawayama reveals the inspiration behind her popular album. Oh wow, oh my god, I'm so excited. Thank you. That's the sound of Casey getting a random act of helpfulness. We just told him the helpful SoCal Honda dealers will be replacing his old manual wheelchair with a brand new power wheelchair, and we paid him for sharing that story on the radio. And we can help you too with a great deal on a reliable award-winning Honda, like the 2023 Accord. To find the helpful SoCal Honda dealer near you, and to submit a random act of helpfulness for someone you know, visit [SoCalHondaDealers.com](https://SoCalHondaDealers.com). Suddenly my quilt is ripped off me, and then my room is full of white men, and I thought I'm done for. These are fascists. They found where I live. Life's Less Ordinary is the podcast from the BBC World Service, bringing you extraordinary personal stories from around the globe. Betrayal. It runs through my life and runs through my story. I was just all alone in this vast broken system. I never gave up my dream. Search for Life's Less Ordinary wherever you get your BBC podcasts. Welcome back to the Global News Podcast. The island of Corsica sits in the Mediterranean. It is close to Italy, but actually part of France, this despite the efforts of Corsica nationalists who want independence. Well, it seems the French President Emmanuel Macron may be about to deliver some of what they want. I spoke to our Europe regional editor Paul Moss and asked him for more on the background of Corsica. Back in the mid-18th century, France and the Kingdom of Genoa and what is now Italy were fighting over this island, and people there got tired of basically being a pawn in other people's games and set up their own republic. But France then conquered this in 1767, didn't only took over, but Corsica then managed to produce perhaps the most famous French leader that country's ever had. Nick, I'm going to give you a quiz. Who is the most famous Corsican? I think I know this one, Napoleon Bonaparte. Napoleon Bonaparte, indeed, who then went to conquer half of Europe, and he certainly kept control over Corsica. But that independence struggle never went away. It ebbed and flowed. It got very violent in the 1970s with lots of different groups involved. I went to Corsica to report on the nationalist struggle, and you know, I'm not going to pretend it's very confusing. There was the ARC, the FPCL, the FLNC, and a lot of these groups were fighting each other. They seemed to spend more time killing their rivals rather than attacking the French state. Also, politics there has always been mixed up with organized crime. Some people use these armed groups as really nothing more than highly efficient gangsters, but the demands of independence never went away, and President Macron is now offering a solution. So why is he speaking about this now? It's something the president offered when he was standing for reelection last year. What happened was that one of the major nationalist leaders, a man called Ivan Colonna, was in prison, and he was murdered there. Now, that set off very angry protest marches. It really looked like the situation in Corsica could spiral out of control again. So what President Macron said is, if you reelect me, I will come up with a compromise deal. And on Thursday, he went to the Corsican Regional Assembly and said, look,

we can find some kind of compromise where we will recognize this island's unique culture, its unique identity, give it more autonomy, but within the French constitution. And he said, I'm going to give you six months to come up with a model of autonomy that's acceptable to all sides. So what would a deal on autonomy mean in practice? Well, the first thing the Corsican Nationalists want is official recognition of their language, which I can tell you is nothing like French. But a really burning issue is that many there feel the island is being taken over by people from mainland France. And a lot of them want a ban on outsiders from France, mainland France, buying homes there. Paul Moss, the family of a black girl at the centre of a racism row in Irish sport, has told the BBC the apology they received from gymnastics island this week was useless. A video which went viral online earlier this week showed their daughter being passed over by a judge handing out participation medals at an event in Dublin a year and a half ago, where she was the only black child. Stephanie Haggerty spoke to the family in their first broadcast interview. The parents who were not naming told the BBC they were profoundly disappointed

with how they had been treated by gymnastics Ireland over the past 18 months. They said they felt the authorities were trying to cover up what had happened, despite an apology sent to them on Sunday. It's almost useless to be honest with you. It's so useless. It's like I cried for so long. And then millions of people cried with me before I could get this. They only sent an apology because the world wanted them to. The incident happened in March 2022. But the video went viral last week when it was leaked online. The family don't know by whom. They said they were disappointed

that gymnastics Ireland didn't show up to the mediation session organized between themselves and the judging question in August this year. And with how long the process has taken. Gymnastics Ireland told the BBC that this was the first incident of racism that had been reported to it since the organization was founded in 1975 and said there have been many learnings. It added that the delays had been caused by human error, threats of legal action, intervention by third parties, and what it called our own understanding that this was a complaint from the parents against the official. We contacted the official in question for comment, but have received no reply. That report by Stephanie Haggerty. The troubled Chinese property developer Evergrand has confirmed

that its billionaire founder and chairman has been detained on suspicion of criminal activity. The company said its shares would remain suspended until further notice. Stephen McDonnell reports from Beijing. China's property crisis continues with huge portions of the industry under considerable pressure over debt. Property makes up a quarter of the country's gross domestic product and within that sector Evergrand looms large as the one-time symbolic champion of a booming economy. During the decades of success, what was not known was the extent to which the money owed to creditors by the company was building and building, resulting in liabilities which amount to roughly the size of the entire GDP of a country like Finland. Then today Evergrand's

shares were again suspended on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. Willa Chen, a researcher at Forsythe

Bar Asia, said there were two likely reasons for this. The first was the report that the company's chairman had been detained, he said. The second was to do with issues related to Evergrand's restructuring

plan. The developer has now confirmed in a statement that Huigayan has been taken away by investigators due to suspicions that it committed crimes and that the company's shares would remain suspended until further notice. Despite all this, it is still possible that a way to save Evergrand can be found. The government has to this point not shown a willingness to bail out China's property developers, which have dug themselves into this hole using over-development as a way of staying ahead of those to whom they owe vast amounts of money.

Stephen MacDonald. Next to some music, and it's been a pretty remarkable year for the Japanese British singer and actress, Irina Sawayama. She performed at the massive Glastonbury Festival in England, first on her own, and then on stage with Elton John. She's appeared on the cover of British Vogue in a Hollywood blockbuster, and she's been called the future of queer pop music.

Music critics have been wondering about the inspiration behind her album Hold the Girl. Now she's revealed the painful truth to the BBC's gender and identity correspondent, Megamon. This is the end of the tour, so it's like the last day. It's been a really intense run.

Irina Sawayama is about to perform on a rooftop New York stage in front of over 3,000 fans. The Japanese British artist has been called the new face of LGBT representation in pop music. She's been touring internationally for almost a year, promoting her album Hold the Girl. In previous interviews, she said the album was inspired by a very painful experience, but didn't share exactly what it was.

I've actually never talked about this in any other interview. This is the first time I'm talking about this, but essentially through doing sex therapy, sex and relationship therapy, I realised that something that I thought was a relationship that I had when I was 17 was actually I was groomed. And why it happened then, why that realisation happened in my 30s, was because I was finally his age. It completely broke my whole world apart, because at the time, after, you know, it came to light that that was what was happening in my school, basically was a schoolteacher, I was so badly slut-shamed that I developed so much shame around my sexuality and lost completely my sense of self.

It's been a significant year in Irina Sawayama's career. She was on the cover of British Vogue magazine, starred in the Hollywood film John Wick 4 with Keanu Reeves, and was on Glastonbury Music Festival's iconic pyramid stage with Elton John. Irina says a touring has been a cathartic experience and her audience connect with her music, though they may only just be learning the true meaning behind some of the songs. I haven't talked about this in specifics. I've just said, you know, it's about a period in my life when I was younger. But I know the truth, and when I look out to the audience and I see femmes or women connecting to it, I'm like, maybe you know, maybe you know what

I'm talking about, maybe you're feeling it right now. Now to Northern England, and police investigating the felling of one of the UK's most famous trees have arrested a 16-year-old boy. The tree growing at a place called Sycamore Gap had been next to Hadrian's Wall, a former Roman defensive fortification, for nearly 200 years. The tree even appeared in a Hollywood movie and became a global landmark. Alison Freeman has been to the site at Northumberland National Park.

It was a tree known the world over. Its silhouette was commonly photographed, and it provided the backdrop for important moments in people's lives. It even featured in the 1991 Hollywood film Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves. This is the sheriff's land. Ron, this is my land and my



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tree, therefore whatever's in it also belongs to me. But it was felled, not by Storm Agnes, but by what many are calling a deliberate act of vandalism, a clean cut with guide marks visible on the stump.

The question everyone asking is why. A question I asked the head of the Northumberland National Park Authority, Tony Gates. Well, I can't even speculate on that. You know, it's really sad that someone's felt a drive to do this, because I can imagine whoever or whatever people did this know how important Sycamore Gap is. You know, people have been proposed to here, people have celebrated anniversaries. You know, this is part of the cultural heritage of this part of the world, and I think it's just been lost needlessly. People visiting here today were visibly shocked. Some were in tears. Everybody still feels very bereft about it, you know. I mean, who would do it for goodness sake? It's absolutely devastating. I mean, it's heartbreaking. It's just a special place. I propose my wife here. People hugging and crying, like remembering loved ones that they'd scattered ashes here. One lady said she'd shared all of her birthdays and celebrations with her kids here. Detectives say a 16-year-old boy is in custody and is helping police with their inquiries. Locals and visitors alike are now struggling to understand why such a beautiful tree has been lost. Alison Freeman in Northern England. And that's all from us for now, but there will be a new edition of the Global News Podcast later on. If you want to comment on this podcast or the topics covered in it, you can send us an email. The address is GlobalPodcast at [bbc.co.uk](mailto:bbc.co.uk). You can also find us on X, formerly known as Twitter, at Global News Pot. This edition was mixed by Chris Hansen. The producer was Lea McCheffrey. The editor is Karen Martin. I'm Nick Mars, and until next time, goodbye.