

## [Transcript] Global News Podcast / July set to be world's warmest month on record

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I'm Janet Jolial and in the early hours of Friday the 28th of July, these are our main stories.

The head of the UN says data showing this month will almost certainly be the hottest on record represents a disaster for the entire planet. President Biden has announced measures to help ease the effects of an intense heat wave in the United States.

Russia's leader Vladimir Putin has acknowledged there's been a significant increase in fighting in southern Ukraine.

Also in this podcast, unfortunately, the DNA just hadn't survived because of this harsh soil environment. So luckily for us, though, we have this emerging technique.

How analyzing a 2,000 year old skeleton's teeth helped to shed new light on the role of women in prehistoric Britain.

It's no longer global warming. We're now in an era of global boiling. That was a stark warning from the United Nations. It came amid data showing this month is virtually certain to be the hottest ever recorded. So hot in fact that researchers are confident the 2019 record will be broken, even with several days to go. Some experts believe that July might well be the warmest month in the past 120,000 years. The UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said the news spelt disaster for the whole planet.

The consequences are clear and they are tragic. Children swept away by monsoon rains, families running from the flames, workers collapsing in scorching heat.

For vast parts of North America, Asia, Africa and Europe, it's a cruel summer. For the entire planet, it is a disaster. And for scientists, it is unequivocal. Humans are to blame. All this is entirely consistent with predictions and repeated warnings. The only surprise is the speed of the change. Climate change is here, it is terrifying and it is just the beginning.

Our climate reporter, Esny Stalard, told us more about his apocalyptic warning.

Guterres didn't pull any punches when he laid out the devastating impacts we've seen over the last month of climate change, but he also warned that this is more to come. And he used this speech actually to call on many countries to do more to tackle climate change, particularly richer nations, to give more money to help countries protect themselves from some of those devastating consequences he spoke of. And this comes as we are expecting what the hottest July on record after the hottest June on record. Exactly. We're still a couple days off from the end of July, but because the temperatures we've seen are so extreme, then the WMO, the World Meteorological Organization and their partners, Copanicus, are almost completely certain this will be the hottest month on record and the hottest July that we have ever seen since records began. But they also said looking at historical data that goes back tens of thousands of years from things like sea ice, they think this has been the hottest month we would have seen in hundreds of thousands of years. But despite this, is there the international will to act?

Well, we have seen significant progress in times of switching away from things like fossil fuels to renewable energy. But as Antoni Guterres pointed out, some of those countries haven't done enough when it comes to giving money towards tackling climate change and also reducing their

emissions. In the UK, we've signed some pullback from those commitments. But the countries like

the US are pressed on ahead with their Inflation Reduction Act. Europe is committed to more renewable energy and China is building more offshore wind farms than ever before. So in some sense, there is positive news, but I think there is disagreement about whether it is quick enough. So there will be a lot of pressure on countries at the next climate summit, which will be held towards the end of this year. What does this all mean for that agreement that was signed back in 2015 in Paris by nearly 200 countries to try to take more action to keep temperatures below a certain level? So back in 2015, all countries agreed to keep global average temperature rise below two degrees and try and keep it below 1.5 degrees. This hottest month that we are now going to see means that we will have breached that, even if temporarily. So that does call into question whether we can still achieve that goal. It does put a lot of pressure on COP 28, but potentially it's hoped that some of the experiences over the summer so far will really help to focus leaders' minds on the task in hand.

Well, the extreme heat has led to wildfires breaking out across the Mediterranean region in Algeria, Greece and Italy. Our reporter Azadeh Mashiri is in one of the worst affected areas, the Greek island of Rhodes. So much of these buildings, of these businesses that represent people's livelihoods have been scorched, and that's what the people of Rhodes, the locals we speak to, is so concerned about, is what does it mean for their future? Of course, this extreme heat, the dry heat, the winds mean that they're worried that all of this could continue.

When I spoke to the fire service earlier, he said every day we hunt fires. The officials and ministers have been saying that they're at war, that this is a battle, and because that's what it feels like, every day they're fighting a minimum of 65 fires a day. Sometimes it goes upwards towards 80, and so that's why you'll hear helicopters and planes above you consistently, because these fires spread, the winds are strong, and the predictions that you're hearing are, firstly, that they're not sure, that's the terrifying thing, is that sometimes they're just not sure how this will progress, but they keep saying that though this isn't affecting all of Greece, this is localized, the risk of these fires continuing in these areas of southern roads, for example, and on the mainland as well, those risks aren't over.

Let's look at the situation in Italy. Sofia Battizza reports from Reggio Calabria in the south of the country. This year, the heatwave has been so long and so intense that firefighters are struggling. They've had to battle nearly 2,000 fires in the last few days. This region of Italy is famous for its nature. Now it's completely burned to the ground. Now we spoke to a woman, she told us that within seconds her home was engulfed by the flame, and that it was terrifying. Now her family managed to get to safety, but several people in southern Italy have died trapped in their homes because of the fires. So on Thursday, the Italian government introduced emergency measures to try and help families and businesses who have been severely hit by the bad weather. But the fear here in southern Italy is that the scorching temperatures and the strong winds could cause more wildfires, and that could lead to more loss of life.

Across the Atlantic, the US is also seeing record temperatures. On Thursday, President Biden gave examples of the impacts they have been having on more than 100 million Americans. Americans, like an elderly woman in Phoenix, who fell out of her wheelchair and after five minutes on the ground had third degree burns, or the firefighter who's already has a lugg or 45 pounds of gear through smoke and flame, which is incredibly hot. The job is even harder and more dangerous to do in record heat. For the farm workers who have to harvest crops in the dead of night to avoid the high temperatures, or farmers who risk losing everything they planted for the year, or the construction

workers who literally risked their lives working all day in blazing heat, and in some places don't even have the right to take a water break. That's outrageous. President Biden went on to call the soaring temperatures an existential threat and unveiled several measures to combat climate change. John Donison in Washington told us more about them. What President Biden had to announce today was a number of measures to deal with the heat, in particular better protection for workers, those working in sort of construction, farming, to protect them and allow them not to have to work in those conditions. He announced a further seven million dollars to improve the nation's weather forecasting and about 150 million for better storage of water, particularly in those drought affected western states. But I think the truth of the matter is that these are measures that deal with the symptoms of climate change, not the causes. And President Biden faced with a congress that has sometimes been inclined to drag its feet on these matters, has been criticized by some for not acting quickly and effectively enough. And you have to remember, of course, that America is the second biggest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world, second only behind China. John Donison, the UN says it suspended its humanitarian operations in Niger a day after soldiers announced the overthrow of the country's elected president. On Thursday, the UN Secretary General demanded the release of Niger's president, Mohammed Bazoum, immediately

and unconditionally as military officers continue to hold him captive. He's been a key ally for Western nations fighting Islamist militancy. There are now fears Niger could move closer to Russia and Wagner troops could replace French ones, as has happened in several other African countries. Eero Sani, a special advisor to President Bazoum, spoke to the BBC from Nanyami, the capital of Niger. This school is really something that's pulling back our country and it's damaging our democracy, which is the democracy that everyone really appreciates. This school is not for the interest of our country, it's not for the interest of our people. So these military, if they really love this country, should renounce to their coup and go back in their barracks and leave the democracy

go its way. Our security correspondent, Frank Gardner, has this assessment of why the coup matters to the rest of the world. Well, Niger matters for two reasons. One is it's got uranium ore, which is a hugely valuable natural resource, important to the French, but also of interest to the Wagner group. The other is that it has become the center of operations for the French, since they were in effect kicked out of Mali next door. The US has got a hundred million dollar drone base there, the French have got over a thousand troops, Germany's got an outpost, Italy, Canada, train Nigerian special forces there. It was seen as a kind of island of stability in a very volatile region and now Niger has had its own coup. It's still not clear how it's going to progress and it's possible that the new leaders will say, well the Western forces can stay on, but I think we should expect Wagner to want to make a move. They've been very successful in pushing out French and Western forces in three countries in the region, in Central African Republic, in Mali, and in Burkina Faso. They will almost certainly have their eyes on the Niger as well. If that happens, then they've got a corridor linking all the way from Libya in the north, all the way down to Nigeria and that would give the Kremlin enormous reach in Africa. Thank God. Vladimir Putin has confirmed that there's been intensified fighting in Ukraine, especially in the south. He told Russian television that Ukrainian forces suffered heavy losses and had been pushed back. Graf Verit reports. President Putin does not often comment on the detail of fighting in Ukraine.

His remarks on the sidelines of a summit with African leaders give way to increasing signs of

a relatively big push by Ukrainian forces south of Zaporizhia. The Russian presidents had combat activities had intensified significantly, but the enemy had achieved no success. According to the U.S. Institute for the Study of War, a significant mechanized counteroffensive by Ukraine appeared to have broken through some Russian defensive positions south of Orykiv.

Graf Verit. Well, on the first day of that Russia-Africa summit in St. Petersburg, photos have been posted on social media showing the head of the Wagner mercenary group Yevgeny Rigozhin. One of them shows him meeting an official from the Central African Republic.

The images have caused surprise. Many people expected Mr. Prygoshin to be sidelined by President Putin after leading a failed mutiny last month. Wagner has troops in a number of African countries, as we've been hearing, and I asked our Russia editor, Steve Rosenberg, about the Wagner chief's appearance in St. Petersburg.

Yevgeny Prygoshin was not on the official list of participants. He was not sitting at the table today or at the plenary session, as far as we could see, and then this incredible photograph pops up of a smiling Yevgeny Prygoshin shaking hands with an official from the Central African Republic, apparently in a St. Petersburg hotel. And it's incredible, really, when you think that just over a month ago, this is the man who basically organized a mutiny and sent his Wagner fighters on the road marching on Moscow. And, you know, several Russian soldiers were killed in that. It ended quite quickly. And yet here is Mr. Prygoshin, a free man, in Russia, swiding in St. Petersburg. It may tell us that the Kremlin believes it needs Mr. Prygoshin. It certainly needs Wagner in certain parts of the world. Especially Africa. Especially Africa, right, where Wagner paramilitaries have been very active. But it may also suggest that the Kremlin cannot move against Mr. Prygoshin, perhaps because he has very, very powerful friends. But you would imagine this is uncomfortable for President Putin, and it comes as he's trying to shore up African support with promises of grain at a time when there are fewer African leaders than he would like attending this summit. Yeah, there are two ways of looking at this question of numbers, right? You could look at it and say, oh goodness me, only 17 African heads of state. But the Kremlin has a kind of glass half full attitude to this question and says that it's a pretty good turnout, considering it's a difficult situation, geopolitical situation at the moment. In a sense, it doesn't really matter how many have come, because Vladimir Putin has got what he wanted, right? He's got this big international event, this big summit that he can use as a political stage to deliver various messages. Message number one being Russia is not as isolated as the West will have wanted. And he's also using it, I think, to try to change the whole narrative, to sort of distract from Russia's war in Ukraine and to portray his country as the caring, sharing Russia. That was Steve Rosenberg. Still to come, we hear how Prince Harry is set for a court showdown with the publisher of the Sun newspaper in Britain. Love, Janessa is the true crime podcast from the BBC World Service and CBC podcasts, investigating the murky world of online romance camps. She was trying to get me to send her money.

Catch up with the whole series now. Search for Love, Janessa, wherever you found this podcast. You win their hearts, you win their wallets. Welcome back to the Global News Podcast.

The European Central Bank has raised interest rates back to the record high last seen in 2001, when it was trying to boost the value of the newly launched euro. The key rate was increased by a quarter of a percentage point to 3.75. It comes a day after the US Federal Reserve raised rates by the same amount. The rise will push up the cost of borrowing from millions of households

and businesses denting their ability to spend. The ECB president, Christine Lagarde, said the aim was to stop prices rising so rapidly. Inflation continues to decline, but is still expected to remain too high for too long. We are determined to ensure that inflation returns to our 2% medium term target in a timely manner. The governing council therefore today decided to raise the three key ECB interest rates by 25 basis points. The rate increased today reflects our assessment of the inflation outlook, the dynamics of underlying inflation, and the strength of monetary policy transmission. This latest rate hike wasn't unexpected and markets had priced it in. Sam Fenwick spoke to Cornelia Mayer, an economist from Bern in Switzerland.

No, I don't think it's a shock for businesses in Europe because, as you said, it was expected. What is interesting is that Madame Lagarde and the ECB were not willing to give us guidance to what's happening. They're really watching inflation. It's come down somewhat in the Eurozone to 5.5% in June from 6.1%, but the lead economy, Germany, it's gone up from May to June to 6.4% from 6.1%. So when we talk about inflation, we're no way out of the dolphins.

Mrs. Lagarde was also saying that consumer prices are still too high. Why are they still too high when we've had 12 months of rate hikes? Rate hikes are there to abate prices, but prices are also about supply chains. We have a wall going on. If you look at what's happening in oil, oil has really risen. It's at the three months high. You look at agricultural prices. It's very high. Core inflation is also quite high. That's when you strip out energy and you strip out food because we still have supply chain woes. So everything has become just a lot dearer.

Is this the new normal? Is this just what consumers have got to get used to?

Well, I think it is something that consumers have got to get used to as long as we have it more in Europe. And especially now that energy prices are going up again, we probably need to look at it and you know, there's a major dislocation of supply chains, a rearranging of supply chains, and those things do cost money.

Mastercard has moved to block Americans from buying marijuana with their debit cards. While the drug is legal in many individual states, it's still illegal at a federal level, which means that most credit card providers cannot facilitate its purchase. So many cannabis retailers accept debit cards instead. Mastercard has said it must uphold federal law. Democrats in Congress have been trying to change those laws. Julian Marshall heard more from our business correspondent Michelle Flurry, who's in New York. Mastercard has come out and it's essentially issued guidance to financial institutions, but also to cannabis dispensaries that are allowed in certain states across America, that transactions on its debit card are no longer allowed. And this is sort of a blow for an industry that really is already on the fringes of the financial system in the United States because marijuana remains illegal at the federal level, despite the fact that you have several individual states legalizing its medicinal and recreational use. That's created a sort of system whereby none of the major financial institutions, so no banks, will provide their services to these dispensaries that the industry, if you like, around cannabis that's growing up. And so many of them have to deal with cash in terms of payments instead of sort of cashless payments. And that is causing problems for them. Some had found a workaround whereby debit cards

and pins could be used as a form of payment, but Mastercard is essentially clamping down on that. I mean, are there any attempts at a federal level to legalize this, to make these transactions legal?

Yes, so you've got the Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and his Republican counterpart, John Cornyn, who are trying to get a marijuana banking bill passed. It's called the Safe Banking Act. And the idea is that it would make it easier for the cannabis industry to access banking services. The problem is, at the moment, that just seems to be hitting roadblocks within Congress. And with the Senate about to go on summer recess and no signs that it's about to be put to

a vote before then, you're looking at least, you know, until the kind of the autumn before Congress turns its attention back to this and takes a vote. So there is no sign of change at the moment. But it is something that politicians recognize needs to change, that you can't have this sort of state level legalization of an industry and then keep it shut out of the banking system and essentially, in some ways, make it hard for them and also make some of these businesses more vulnerable to crime,

because if they're dealing with a lot of cash and people know that, that can make them target for thieves. Seems extraordinary, Michelle, to hear you use the phrase cannabis industry in the United States, one that is more or less legal. Yeah, I mean, this has been, I think if you look at polls of where Americans stand on on sort of recreational use, attitudes have really changed over recent years. And that's been reflected, I think it's about more than 30 states at this stage, in which certainly medicinal, but also recreational use is now being legalized. And so there is this sort of situation then where the laws of the land at the federal level haven't kept pace with where people are at the state level. And so it's this kind of strange situation, which is leading companies like Mastercard to issue these sort of warnings. Michelle Flurry in New York. The High Court in London has ruled that Prince Harry can sue the publisher of the Sun tabloid newspaper in Britain for allegedly using illegal methods to gather information on him. The Prince says he was targeted by journalists and private investigators working for the paper's publisher, News Group Newspapers. He's launched a claim for damages. The company denies the allegations. Our home affairs correspondent, Tom Simons, was at the High Court. The Duke had six years to sue for breaches of his privacy. And these allegations go back decades. But he claimed he missed the deadline because he didn't know he had a case. He said lawyers at Buckingham Palace had decided not to take the publisher of the Sun to court under a secret agreement with the newspaper to settle cases at a later date. The judge, Mr Justice Fancourt ruled that the evidence to support this was vague and limited. He also said Prince Harry could have found out through exercising

reasonable diligence that there was evidence of phone hacking. But the Duke has been given permission to go to trial on separate allegations that his private information was unlawfully obtained by investigators working for the newspaper. That may take place next year, with the actor Hugh Grant also taking legal action and more than a hundred others.

Tom Simons, there's been a shock result at the Women's Football World Cup with Nigeria beating the co-hosts Australia. Some of the Nigerian players were in tears after their 3-2 victory in Brisbane. A win for Australia would have guaranteed their place in the next round. Mimi Fawaz was watching. Coming in Australia game in the first half, we saw Nigeria strong defensively, very compact. But what they needed to do was to open play, to press up front more. And that's exactly what we saw when Ajibadi, of course, passed a goal to Uchen Ekanu, who then got that goal for Nigeria, and then Asi Sattashwala coming in as a sub in the second half and getting the third goal for Nigeria. Many Barcelona fans know her two times, of course, Champions League

winner. Five times African female footballer of the year, a super sub who got that winning goal for Nigeria in the match. Mimi Fawaz. Meanwhile, South Africa's Deziri Ellis is one of 12 female coaches at this year's Women's World Cup event. This is her second tournament in charge, and one she hopes will be better than the first time in 2019, when the South African squad, Banyana Banyana, failed to win a single match. Then Ellis thought that she'd be out of a job. Well, as South Africa face Argentina on Friday, Celestine Caroni reports on the coach's long career and South Africa's prospects. In July last year, the unmistakable South African chorus of Vuvuzela's reverberated through Prince Mulai Abdullah Stadium in Morocco. On the winner's podium with her team, Banyana Banyana, dancing around her, coach Deziri Ellis hoisted the Africa Women's Cup of Nations trophy into the air as green, gold and purple confetti filled the sky. Women's football looked very different 30 years ago when Ellis, a former midfielder, played for the same national team during apartheid. At times when we travelled with provincial teams, they would allow us to go into say a caravan park, and when they saw the group of players coming in there all of a sudden, you know, change their minds and say, sorry, the place is full, etc. And all we wanted to do was play. After the Afghan victory, Ellis was awarded South Africa's highest honour, the order of Ikamanga by President Cyril Ramaphosa for her contribution to women's football. Deziri's success with the team has been changing the perception of female coaches and players. What we do and what we've achieved, we've changed a lot of mindsets and perceptions. There's a lot more girls wanting to play football now. I mean, these players, they can't walk in the street without, you know, having an autograph taken or having a their photograph taken because of what they've achieved with Wefcon. During their stay in Wellington, New Zealand for this year's World Cup, team Banyana Banyana travelled to and from practice in a white coach emblazoned with images of players and on the back in enlarged letters, we leave the impossible. With seven years on the job, Ellis is one of Africa's longest serving coaches and has been crowned calf coach of the year three times in a row in 2022, 2021 and 2020. Football commentator Jean Seninde tells us what makes Ellis a good coach. She has built a culture with her playing style which is very direct and she doesn't change it whether they win or they lose. The team has a psychologist. The team also has someone who is helping the players with their menstrual cycle because she knows when they are successful off the pitch and they are feeling good, they are going to give her the result that she needs on the pitch. Ellis led the team to their maiden World Cup participation in 2019 but the team didn't win a single match. Four years on, she feels their odds have changed. A lot of the players have the experience but also the experience of playing abroad, of training at the high level every day, of playing at the high level every week so that brings a lot to the team. Getting positive results in the group and getting out of the group stage would be huge. That report was by Celestine Caroni. Archaeologists here in the UK say they've solved the mystery of who lies inside a 2,000 year old grave. Analysis of the tooth enamel of the skeleton has shed new light on the role of women in prehistoric Britain as Stephanie Prentice reports. The grave found on an island off the south of England was as confusing as it was intriguing. It seemed that the stone lined chamber had been made for someone of high status but scientists couldn't tell if a man or a woman had been buried inside. Items found within the chamber, a long sword and what seemed to be a mirror should have been clues but actually caused more

confusion.

The sword was more commonly associated with Iron Age males and the mirror with females.

Two attempts at analysing bones found inside failed and the mystery was left unsolved.

But now new techniques have helped the puzzle come together.

Sarah Stark is a human skeletal biologist at UK Heritage Organisation, Historic England.

Unfortunately the DNA just hadn't survived because of this harsh soil environment so luckily for us though we have this emerging technique and rather than looking at the DNA we're actually able to look at proteins that are found in our teeth. It's a really similar idea to DNA where the proteins can be linked to XY chromosomes. So this is how we were able to not only get a result but get a really strong result that this was indeed a female. The grave and the items inside belonging to a female have made researchers re-imagine the role of women during the Iron Age and say some of them had a leading role in warfare at the time and probably used mirrors to signal during raids on other communities. The next step for the team is to use the new technology to review

other Iron Age burial sites all around the world and try to learn more about what they call hidden female warriors. Stephanie Prentice

And that's all from us for now but there will be a new edition of the Global News podcast later.

If you want to comment on this podcast or the topics covered you can send us an email.

The address is [globalpodcast@bbc.co.uk](mailto:globalpodcast@bbc.co.uk). This edition was mixed by Nick Randall, the producer was Liam McSherfrey, the editor is Karen Martin. I'm Jeanette Jaleel. Until next time, goodbye.