

[Transcript] Global News Podcast / More than 5,000 dead after floods in Libya

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This is the Global News podcast from the BBC World Service.

I'm Gareth Barlow and at 13 hours GMT on Wednesday the 13th of September. These are our main stories. More than 5,000 people have died, with thousands more still missing after devastating floods in the East Olvia. President Putin has promised help for North Korea's space program during a meeting with Kim Jong-un at a Russian cosmodrome. And aid agencies are racing against time to save earthquake survivors in remote regions of the Moroccan Atlas Mountains.

Also in the podcast. Dear listener, I hope this email finds you well.

E-Research suggests four more email language may be close to extinction.

We begin the podcast in Libya where floods have devastated the eastern part of the country, described by the United Nations as a calamity of epic proportions. At the time of recording this podcast officials say more than 5,000 people have died, with thousands of others still missing. The port city of Derna witnessed the worst destruction, heavy rains and the collapse of two dams along with four bridges submerged much of the city. Our correspondent Joe Inwood reports.

Nothing could resist the waters. As the river Derna swelled, then broke its banks, entire districts of the city were washed into the sea. Those caught in its path didn't stand a chance. People were asleep and no one was ready. My whole family lived next door to each other.

We were all neighbors. We lost 30 people so far, 30 members of the same family.

We haven't found anyone. From above you can see the devastation done to this city.

More than 100,000 people used to live here. A storm Daniels swept across North Africa.

It dropped a huge amount of water onto the hills, swelling the river Derna and causing two dams to burst. But why was it so powerful? Daniel is an example of a Mediterranean cyclone.

These are initiated by the jet stream which brings cold air high above the earth's surface.

That starts off these thunderstorms. Once that's formed an area of low pressure develops and that feeds off the warm waters in the Mediterranean with the system taking on characteristics more like a tropical storm. The damage to Libya's infrastructure is incalculable.

This hospital in Bida was submerged in the deluge. All the while the death toll mounts, mass graves filling up, hospitals turning into morgues.

We've already had 1700 dead just in this section of the hospital.

We counted them as they were lying in the hallways. We buried anyone identified by their family or friends. Things are very bad. The hospital is dilapidated.

Some aid is already on its way but with relief operations already stretched by the earthquake in nearby Morocco, help will not come as fast as the needs here will grow.

And rescue efforts have been hampered with the country's split between rival governments with Libya's fragile and complex political situation laid bare by this disaster.

Frank Gardner is our security correspondent.

Libya ought to be a real success story. It's got a small population, a hugely rich hydrocarbon sector. It's on the shores of the Mediterranean. It ought to be a great success and yet it isn't because for 42 years it was under the brutal repressive regime of Colonel Gaddafi which essentially

crushed or basically got rid of anything that resembled a government institution.

Libyans used to lecture me and say, you see Mr Gardner, we have no government here. We don't need government. The people rule. No they didn't. Gaddafi and his close henchmen ruled that country

with an iron fist. When that was swept away by the Arab Spring of 2011, it left a vacuum and that has been filled by competing warlords, tribal factions, Islamists and really it became the rule of the gun. And what you've got now is two rival governments, one in Tripoli that is the internationally recognized so-called government of national unity that's backed by most western countries and then in the east you've got what's called the national parliament which sounds very democratic but the ultimate power here is a warlord called Khalifa Haftar who is backed by Russia, UAE, Egypt and others. What that means is that the normal business of maintaining storm drains, the dam, safety systems, checks, surveillance of anything that could go wrong like this simply just falls away. It takes second priority. The voice there of Frank Gardner.

After his mammoth two-day journey, the North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has finished his talks in Russia with President Putin and is now on his way back home. There's precious little detail about what the two men discussed. A Kremlin spokesperson said only that Russia would strengthen cooperation with North Korea on all fronts and saw the prospect of working more closely together in space. Mr Kim for his part told his host that the two countries had the shared aim of fighting imperialism. Russia is now in the sacred fight against hegemonic forces in order to protect its sovereignty and security interests. We have constantly expressed our full and unconditional support for all the decisions taken by the president and the Russian leadership and I want to assure you that we will always be together with Russia in the fight against imperialism.

For more on this I spoke to our Russia editor Steve Rosenberg.

It was interesting when Kim and Putin actually sat down to begin their talks and we heard their public comments to camera. Vladimir Putin said we're going to talk about economic cooperation, we're going to talk about humanitarian issues but he just given his guest a guided tour of Russia's most modern cosmodrome, modern spaceport showing Kim Jong-un launch pads and Russian rockets so

it would be logical to assume wouldn't it that on the agenda too would be cooperation in space and we know that that's something which is of major interest to Kim who has tried twice and failed twice to launch his own military spy satellite but also at those talks the Russian defense minister Sergei Shoigu who was in Pyongyang a couple of months ago looking at North Korean weaponry so again that brings us back to America's suspicion that Russia and North Korea are close to or perhaps have already agreed we don't know some kind of arms deal that would provide Russia with a large amount of munitions possibly ammunition possibly artillery shells to help Russia's war in Ukraine in return for something going to North Korea whether that's something be humanitarian aid or cash or advanced military technologies we don't know and we possibly won't know we won't be told there's going to be no press conference there'll be no signing of documents no big ceremony a lot of what's agreed at this meeting I think will remain rather secret they are both without doubt pretty savvy operators it strikes me that like you say Pyongyang will have its wish list too but the president Putin will be at pains to ensure that he doesn't send any tech to Pyongyang that might further make his near neighbor more dangerous or potentially destabilize it that's right and also you know China probably won't appreciate too much going to North Korea well we have to keep that in mind but I think you know they say that location is everything don't they

Gareth and I think that the fact that this is happening at the Cosmodrome right at Russia's most modern space center the fact that Kim took two days in a train to get there I think that's significant I think what Vladimir Putin is doing is sending a signal to Washington actually that you know look with me I've got my guest Kim who's rather keen on getting his hands on advanced military technology to help develop his space program to help develop perhaps his missile program too just the kind of advanced technology that the Kremlin happens to have hint hint it doesn't mean that Putin is going to reach for his briefcase and pull out big folders with all this technology and hand it all over to Kim and that's not going to happen but I think the message is the signal is to the West you know I could do this if I so want to so be careful but of course if Russia really really does want an arms deal with North Korea if it is desperate and we don't know how desperate it is to secure supplies of extra munitions from Pyongyang then it's quite possible that Russia will hand something over whether it's going to be help in launching a North Korean military satellite we don't know and as I say we're unlikely to hear openly today from Russian officials what they've agreed Steve Rosenberg so then can North Korea offer the munitions that Russia is looking for in exchange for military technology the former British ambassador

to North Korea John Everett says the partnership might struggle to take off I think we have to recognize that there are real constraints on this relationship what does North Korea give Russia other than munitions now Russia is desperately munitions certainly but there are real quality problems with North Korean munitions they have a high fail rate the ones in storage have not been looked after properly the fuses in the shells are not in a good condition you have an awful lot of duds which the Russians must surely know and after they fired off a few salvos of shells that simply failed to explode how many more are they going to be prepared to buy from North Korea the relationship isn't actually that well founded and I suspect that after a certain amount of razzmatazz it might run into the sand sooner than either leader would really like well there's plenty more insight and analysis on the story on our website at bbc.com/news/new-research suggests formal phrases in emails like to whom it may concern or your sincerely could become extinct in the next decade that says new generations move away from the traditional letter writing style and adopt a more personable tone Harry Bly reports dear listener I hope this email finds you well traditionally you start a workplace email with dear sir slash madam or perhaps the person's title then for a sign off there are the classic best wishes or kind regards sometimes kindest regards but why do we use this style of language which we wouldn't do in normal speech that kind of phrase is the sort of thing that we've adopted in place of the very formal yours faithfully but also not just like bye see you soon Laura Bailey is a senior lecturer in English language and linguistics at the University of Kent so kind regards is specific to emails it's clearly a sign of lots of people use that for their signature but I've got to say some people use that for when they want to send an email that really conveys quite how annoyed they

are but this professional language is slowly disappearing that's according to research commissioned by Barclay's bank now younger people especially are starting emails with hi hello even hey addressing recipients by their first name not their title and signing off with thanks or even the study predicts that phrases like yours truly yours sincerely and to whom it may concern may not be used at all in 10 years time so why is this formal language being phased out Laura Bailey again I do think that it's probably to do with how we relate to each other on an interpersonal

level there's less of the strict hierarchy in workplaces these days bosses often want to be seen as approachable and friendly so you're much less likely to have to call your boss Mr so and so and we're consequently being more informal in our communications with each other as well the survey found that many believed social media to be an influence too as well as young people wanting to sound more personable with 40% of Gen Z participants saying they felt it a struggle to demonstrate their personality through email that report by Harry Bly still to come the new look at the life story of rock legend David Bowie unexpected elements is all about finding the surprising science angles to everyday news I love that this show has the scope to discuss both emergent AI nuclear in Ghana and also what those stringy bits are on a banana and joining the dots between their global connections nature does pack a lot surprises for us an invisibility cloak in the acoustic domain so called that's unexpected elements from the BBC world service find it wherever you get your BBC podcasts now on the global news podcast the death toll from last Friday's earthquake in Morocco has risen to around 3000 as the authorities continue their efforts to reach remote areas of the Atlas Mountains close to the epicenter and it's not just the state providing aid large numbers of ordering Moroccans are buying food and supplies and heading into the mountains to give it to those who've been affected by the quake the BBC's James Coppnell joined one group setting off from the nearby city of Marrakesh a gym in Morocco waits clattering to the floor loud music on the stereo and as you come towards the front of this building well it's been transformed in something of a makeshift storeroom bottles of water sanitary products mattresses even toys for children group of young Moroccans are using this gym as a base to transport products up to those affected villages in the mountains I'm Amina TV now we have these people who can afford to buy these things that are in desperate need for it so we decided to get literally everything that they would need that they require and we had people giving donations from all around the country and then we're just going and distributing all of that I mean I'm content creator and this is our gym actually we've seen everyone is helping no matter how but we've seen people with the one bike with one half bag of sugar helping we've seen people sending full trucks and what we're witnessing is real unity and it's it's really good and filling our heart to know that we're Moroccan that makes us really proud we've been on the road for quite some time now a convoy of 10 or so vehicles we've been heading out on a good tarmac road past historic old castles and brand new farms the landscape is pretty parched but ahead of us I can see the Atlas mountains that's our destination those villages that have been so badly affected by this earthquake well things haven't gone quite according to plan in fact it doesn't seem to have been that much of a plan we've gone from one place to the other we haven't yet found a village to hand out these provisions we are on a very narrow mountain road in this little village and we're stuck there's a sort of traffic jam vehicles coming in both directions people are trying to help here but it's all quite chaotic well we've ended up in a village high up on the hillside called Agro-Gore no one here lost their life in the earthquake fortunately though many have lost their homes down the hill there were a couple of deaths in a nearby village it's here that Amin and Amina and all their team are handing out some toys to what look like some very very excited kids here it's well organized as you can see like this person is in charge of giving the list of babies per age so we can give them the diapers the good size and this person she's not from your

group she's someone you found here in this village she's in the village actually she's a volunteer and this is I guess quite a quite a small village just up in the mountains it took us a while to get here we're just trying to get to the most remote villages because as you can see when you go to main roads we already can see a lot of military a lot of dance it's overwhelming there's so many kids in this village and we're just distributing toys to them that's all they care about that's all they want and it just makes us so happy to see smiles on their faces it's amazing you seem quite emotional I am I am I have two kids they have everything and then when you see kids like that who have nothing it's just pretty sad pretty sad standing nearby I found a resident Eunice I wondered how he felt about his fellow citizens bringing some help for his village it's it's good it's nice this is this is Morocco this is Morocco this is Morocco people helping each other yes one people all that is one people that report there by James Coppinal China has sentenced the former head of the nation's largest life insurer to life in prison as President Xi Jinping's crackdown on corruption in the financial industry continues one being was chairman of china life and found guilty of taking more than 45 million dollars in bribes the details from our asia business reporter nick marsh one being was actually technically sentenced to death but it's suspended for two years after which he'll go to jail he'll serve life the court documents show that he'll be given no parole in terms of what he's actually been found guilty of as you said these are corruption charges and also he was concealing certain overseas securities and these payments were apparently for securing for friends and relatives things like personal loans green lighting certain projects and he was a member of the communist party like many before him he's not the certainly the only top executive he's been found guilty of these corruption charges there was the former chairman of the china development bank he was sentenced to life in jail recently lai xiao ming who was a big asset management chief was actually executed on corruption charges back in 2021 and i think it shows firstly president Xi Jinping who made his name as a big anti-corruption guy early in his tenure he really shows no intent on slowing down on this crackdown and it also shows whose boss doesn't matter how much money you have if you're in finance or whatever industry ultimately you answer to the party and they'll be the ones you decide that was nick marsh now to britain where public debate is raging after the home secretary the interior minister said the government was considering banning the excel bully a dog breed weighing over 50 kilos which is a muscular mix of people and staff at your terrier it comes after one of them attacked an 11 year old girl in birmingham over the weekend the excel bully which originates from america is already illegal in france turkey and the ua e and it's claimed to have killed 10 people in the uk last year so just how dangerous is the breed the uk veterinary surgeon amy stamp spoke to the bbc's justin web these are really big powerful dogs often upward of 50 kilos and if they're in a situation where they feel threatened and they're presenting aggressive tendencies then the damage from a dog of that size is is going to be far worse than the damage caused by a smaller breed how is it for for you and other vets dealing with them how difficult it can be really really challenging for us to do the job that we want to do and it ultimately begins to affect these dogs and their welfare as well so for reasons such as they only may not present them to the practice anyway if they know they're going to struggle to handle them when they're there but sometimes we'll see them for a medical problem but we're unable to examine them what why do

people

have them i mean the people who presumably you're if you're bringing a dog like this into a vet you care about it it's costing you a fair bit of money to deal with when you talk to them about wider issues of pet ownership what do they say when we're seeing large breeds like this then quite often they are seen as a status symbol you know they are dogs that are bred to be intimidating to look at but and we'll say this is not all XL bullies and there are very many of them that are really lovely sweet dogs and are that that's interesting because i mean i had thought that they were bred that they were simply in their nature to be hugely aggressive in certain situations so are you saying some aren't this is definitely not all XL bullies and like with any dog breed there are inherent traits in that you'll always see a collie wanting to herd and even if they're not trained to do that so yes there will be a tendency that maybe they will climb that what we call the ladder of aggression they will climb that a lot quicker but the responsibility lies with the owners to be able to train these dogs to manage those traits appropriately yeah meanwhile for vets around the country not just in your practice this must be tricky sometimes to deal with them and you wonder if it might even put some people off becoming vets in the first place it definitely can be scary when you're seeing a dog at this size like say they're upwards of 50 kilos like any any large dog like that then if you're faced in a situation where they're opposite you and especially if you're not 100 sure of how the owner is handling their dog if they're an inexperienced owner then it's a recipe for disaster would you ban them Amy i think banning the breed is not the answer here it's not going to solve the problem there's huge inherent risks with that because they're not recognised as a breed they're a crossbreed and they're a really wide variety of XL bullies so you'd then be banning a breed based on how it looks the veterinary surgeon Amy stamp we're in this podcast with David Bowie who during his lifetime

spoke to the BBC more than any other broadcaster and now a new book brings together dozens of those interviews from BBC TV and radio including one which is now thought to have been his last that transcripts effectively tell his life story in his own words and have been compiled by the BBC journalist and Bowie expert Tom Higgler a 17 year old David Jones has just founded the society for the prevention of cruelty to long-haired men now exactly who's being cruel to you well i think we're all fairly tolerant but for the last two years we've had comments like darling and can i carry a handbag thrown at us i think it's just have to stop now David's first appearance on the BBC was back in 1964 and he was there as the founder of the society to prevent cruelty to long-haired gentlemen now this sounds like a spoof and clearly a publicity stunt but there's also an element of seriousness to this because Bowie had long hair at the time and as did his friends they couldn't get served in bars and just walking down the street this person came up to and he said and then this big herbert just punch me and knock me to the ground then you go forward almost 10 years and he appears on top of the pops with star man and if you like that's the moment that Bowie is introduced as Ziggy Stardust to the nation 17 to 20 million people are looking at him and suddenly here is this extra terrestrial landing on terrestrial tv and parents are not going who is that but what is that one funny and interesting interview i think is one he did with Valerie singleton in the late 70s it's almost slightly disdainful of him what about all those incredible that that period when you wall is outrageous feminine clothes and the makeup well they were i mean i thought david bowie and i immediately associated with that did that carry over into real life i only

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used to wear that kind of stuff when i was about 17 or 18 by the time i reached the
rival age of 2021 i got into high heel shoes and things they came about through japanese
theater more than anything else i tried to put together kabuki and pantomime we always saw his
last interview on radio anyway at least was with mark riley just before his assack but it came
across his interview from 2005 with Courtney pine on radio two great to have you on the show david
now you're keeping man thanks very much for asking Courtney yeah i'm doing fine i've been working
out a lot this last year and uh i'm back on call something good it's the only interview that david
bowie gave after his heart attacks about 14 months afterwards this is david bowie and i'd like to
introduce this wonderful track hot calling blues from the album oh yeah by charlie mingis this is
the second book i've written on him so it's always fascinating to hear him because he's one of the
most interesting voices in rock music i can only really think of john lennon being his
equal in terms of just humor and breadth of knowledge and intelligence and what really struck me
as just how courageous he was that he performed through a heart attack on stage to the audience
not once but twice and that is a whole different level of bravery to what was a very brave career i
mean here's somebody who was openly bisexual he wore dresses he shaved his eyebrows he looked
like an alien at the time when you said you were gay you could be beaten up on the street so there's
an awful lot of homophobia and yet this is a i think just a new level a new type of courageousness
the music there of david bowie and that report by tom haigler
that's all from us for now but there will be a new edition of the global news podcast a little later
if you want to come into this one or anything we've talked about in it do send us an email the
address
is globalpodcasts at bbc.co.uk you can find us on x also known as twitter at global news pod this
edition was mixed by pat sissons the producer alfie haverson the editor caro martin i'm garros
barlow and until next time goodbye