

## [Transcript] Global News Podcast / Nagorno Karabakh exodus: More than half the population has fled the war torn region into neighbouring Armenia

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

I'm Robin Brandt and at 13 hours GMT on Thursday, the 28th of September, these are our main stories.

Predictions there will soon be no Armenians left in Nagorno-Karabakh. We're in the border town where tens of thousands are heading. There's a really big crowd. Lots and lots of people milling around here. Lots of people arriving all the time in cars and vehicles packed with belongings. We look at the catastrophic melting of Switzerland's glaciers.

Also in this podcast, Barbie Fever reaches Russia. And who wants to buy the first work from the man who taught America to paint? I think there's an artist hidden in the bottom of every single one of us. You too. Can paint almighty pictures.

Now, we start the podcast in Azerbaijan. More than a week on from the country's 24-hour military victory in Nagorno-Karabakh, the huge outflow of people from the war-torn region continues.

Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan says in the coming days, he predicts there will be no Armenians left in the enclave. It was thought to be home to around 120,000 of them. More than half of this population has now left, packing their belongings into cars and joining the queues of people trying to leave via the only accessible road out. Our correspondent, Sarah Rainsford, described the scenes where she is in the Armenian border town of Gorish.

It seems busier this morning than any of the days we've been here. Actually, there was a really big crowd. Lots and lots of people milling around here. Lots of people arriving all the time in cars and vehicles packed with belongings. We saw one car passing us earlier with a cage full of chickens on the top and a kid's bike strapped to the top of that. You know, there is really kind of somber mood here, I'd say, as people are arriving. They're exhausted. They're hungry. They've had an extremely

long and difficult route out of Nagorno-Karabakh through the mountains with a really long tail back. Some people have spent two days in their cars waiting to get out to get through. And they arrive here. They sort of tumble out. I saw an old lady in a dressing gown. I see lots of children sitting, eating on the grass or wherever they can find a spot to sit down. And there's a massive

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aid effort underway here. Now, not only the government trying to help people here, but also local businesses bringing aid and local people offering their homes and rooms for the refugees to stay in at least temporarily. It's been described to me as a matter of principle to help out. An Armenian official said, you know, that the people of Nagorno-Karabakh were their brothers and sisters and that they needed to be helped. It was a moral duty. And there is definitely a huge rallying round here to help people. But the need, you know, the demand is pretty enormous. And we keep asking this question, but I think it remains important. As Abayjan has reassured these people, they will be safe if they stay in Nagorno-Karabakh. But clearly tens of thousands, it seems like most of that population just don't believe those reassurances. Yeah. And I think, you know, bear in mind, there have been so many wars, so much bloodshed, so much hatred and enmity over the years that I guess that's what lays behind that. You know, it's not that we've got reports of actual attacks or atrocities being committed inside Nagorno-Karabakh, but certainly that is the fear of everyone I speak to here. And remember, many, many people in this crowd have either fought for Nagorno-Karabakh or they've lost members of their family, close relatives and friends, and now they've left those graves behind in that enclave as well. And they're also coming to terms with the fact there's now been a formal declaration by the president, the separatist president of that enclave, that in fact it will cease to exist at the end of this year. So a formal declaration of what these people here already know. Sarah Rainsford reporting from the Armenian border. Authorities in Switzerland say the last two years have been catastrophic for the country's glaciers. The latest analysis shows 10 percent of their glacial volume has melted away, and they are predicting that some of them could completely disappear within a generation. Dr. Matthias Hus, who's the head of glacier monitoring in Switzerland, says the acceleration of the rate of loss is concerning. It's terrible to see that this extreme of last year is just repeating, even though it feels a bit less extreme because we have already seen this. And I'm also a bit worried about this because we might get used to these news of all these extremes we're seeing, not just for the glaciers, but everywhere in the climate system. But this is not just normal. It's completely exceptional. Well, for more of an explanation on this, I spoke to our correspondent in Switzerland, Imogen Folks. In 2022, we had this record ever loss of 6 percent of the ice volume. This year, it's a little bit less. It's 4 percent. But the glacier experts I've been talking to say that's absolutely no reason for complacency. If you take those two together, that's 10 percent, in two years, more than the glacier has lost in the 30 years between 1960 and 1990. So it's an acceleration. Some glaciers have actually disappeared. They've discontinued the measuring of at least one of them this summer because it's just gone. There's nothing left to measure. And even the bigger ones, the Alec glacier, which is the most magnificent thing, I've been up there to see it, it's 800 meters thick in parts. But the level of melt now, they say, if nothing changes with global warming, if we are heading towards that 2 percent, that glacier too will be gone in a generation. And let's ask the obvious bit important question. They are making a direct correlation between this and between manmade climate change. Yes, they are. I mean, they say there's absolutely no doubt that global warming is associated with manmade greenhouse gas emissions, fossil fuel use, and the rise in global

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temperature. Glaciers are especially sensitive to that. The Alpine environment is especially sensitive to that. The average temperature there is rising actually faster than the global average. And they are, interestingly, one of the experts I talked to yesterday, he said they're like the ambassadors of climate change, the glaciers, because they are telling us this is not good. And let's not forget this is not just a nice view, the Alps and the ice on them. These are what's called the water towers of Europe, because they store the winter snow and release it gradually. It goes into Europe's rivers for the river freight. It goes to water Europe's crops. It goes to cool Europe's nuclear power stations. So losing that water will, if it happens, will have a big environmental impact. Imagine folks, the global tech giant Metta, owner of Facebook and WhatsApp, is giving its AI chatbots personalities, which means if you use them to answer questions or find out information, you'll be interacting with something a little less like a computer, and just a bit more like you. Our technology correspondent, James Clayton, told Jeanette Jalil Moore. You might have a request about what kind of country you would like to go on holiday, or you might have a question about cooking. And there are individual chatbots that can answer you. And on top of that, there are also chatbots that have celebrity characters attached to them. So, for example, the NFL's Tom Brady, who will give sports advice. So it's a kind of a new wave of chatbots that actually have personalities. It's not just about answering questions. And this has been described as the latest salvo in a chatbot arms race, because we've also got an announcement by Metta's rival, OpenAI, creator of ChatGPT, which is confirming that its chatbot can provide users with up-to-date information. So this really is a battle to get to users to go for their product, if you like. One of the kind of issues with some of these chatbots is they're not actually relevant on real-time data. So they can be out of date when you ask it a question. Now, that's kind of important if it's going up against a search engine. So that's what we've seen today from ChatGPT. This very much is an arms race. And that's what you're seeing today, two big companies based in California with two big announcements. Yes, so Mark Zuckerberg is talking about this being an amazing year for AI, but it hasn't been so amazing for his pet project, the Metaverse. Where is he at with that? The idea of the Metaverse is that you spend at least part of your time in a sort of virtual reality world where you can meet your friends and you can play games and you can work, but based in another type of reality. So you can do quote-unquote almost anything, but in a virtual world. But it's not catching on. The problem he has is that so far, since 2022, Reality Labs that creates essentially the Metaverse for Meta has lost 21 billion dollars. Next year, it's going to lose even more year on year than it has this year. So he has pumped tens and tens of billions of dollars into this thing. The problem is that so far there's very little evidence that this is VR and AR as anything more than just kind of a niche thing. People aren't spending lots of time in virtual reality. And the other problem he has is that the thing that he's created that is most like a Metaverse, it's called Horizon Worlds. You can play it on the Quest, which Meta's mixed reality headset has terrible reviews. Very often when you play it, there's almost no one who is actually in these worlds with you. The graphics look pretty bad. It's just a very, very poor version of what Mark Zuckerberg articulated. James Slayton with an honest take. Now Taiwan has unveiled its first ever domestically made submarine as it seeks to counter China's growing naval might. The islands decided to develop its own boat after failing to find anyone willing to build one for it. Here's Mickey Brister.

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More than two decades ago, the United States promised to build and sell Taiwan a fleet of submarines. But the deal never materialized, partly because of objections from China, which considers Taiwan its own territory. Several European nations also declined to help. So in 2016, the island decided to build its own. This submarine, unveiled by the president who ordered it, is the first of eight. It will now undergo sea trials and should be operational in two years time. Taiwan will hope it deters the threat from China.

Mickey Brister. Now, considering the scale of anti-Western rhetoric in Russia at the moment, you may be surprised that a true American icon has been pulling in the crowd to Moscow. Despite Western sanctions, Barbie, or rather the Barbie feature film, has found its way onto the Russian big screen, a pirated version, that is. Russian politicians have denounced it as an advert for the American way of life. And the Russian authorities are laying on more patriotic types of entertainment to try to rally support for their government. From Moscow, here's our Russia editor,

Steve Rosenberg. I'm in a Moscow cinema and there's something rather odd happening. People are buying tickets too and actually paying a lot of money to see a pretty obscure 15-minute Russian film called Speed Dating. But although the name of the movie is on the tickets, this is not the main event of the evening.

Inside the movie theater, the mystery is solved. The real reason people are here is to watch Barbie, a pirated copy. Hollywood Studios stopped official releases in Russia after the Kremlin's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Russia's culture ministry is not amused by any of this. It suggested that the Barbie movie has little in common with what it calls traditional Russian values. But the cinema goes I spoke to would tickle pink that Barbie land has, well, landed. I think it's good that Russian cinema and theaters, they are able to show no matter what those films for us. Because of that,

we are able to not miss a huge part of the culture. It's great that we have an opportunity to share our cultural experiences. It is about being open-minded to other cultures.

But in Russia, Barbie has enemies. Some girls, especially the teens, are trying to be like a Barbie doll and they exhaust their body. MP Maria Butcherina has called for Barbie dolls to be banned

from Russian kindergartens. And that's for the film. So for me personally, it's so far from the reality that I don't think it promotes what Russia wants to bring to the world today.

What does Russia want to bring to the world? Well, some people call it traditional values. How can you talk about values as a representative of a country that has invaded its neighbor? Well, you know, we have a different position on that. We believe that actually,

NATO was so aggressive to us. You hear this a lot from Russian officials. Accusing NATO, America, the West of threatening Russia when it was Russia that invaded Ukraine.

This alternative reality is designed to deflect criticism from the Kremlin and to boost patriotic fervour at home. More Motherland rather than Barbie land.

140 miles from Moscow, bootleg Barbie has yet to reach the town of Shokina.

Here I discover a very different kind of entertainment.

Up on stage at the local theater, four paratroopers in military fatigues are singing about patriotism and Russian invincibility. One of the songs is about the war in Ukraine.

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We will serve the motherland and destroy the enemy, they croon. The audience are waving Russian flags

and films are being projected onto a big screen, no Barbie or Ken, instead soldiers and images of Vladimir Putin. But does the patriotic messaging work? To find out later on the streets of Shokina, I decide to ask people about the Barbie film. Andrei tells me he's a patriot and prefers Russian movies. But Diana wouldn't mind watching Barbie. To be a cultured, sociable, interesting person she says you need to watch films. Trouble is being cultured and sociable are not Russia's priorities right now. Steve Rosenberg reporting.

The race for the White House is definitely up and running but guess who skipped the Republican debate again? You're not here tonight because you're afraid of being on the stage and defending your record. You're ducking these things and let me tell you what's going to happen. You keep doing that? No one up here is going to call you Donald Trump anymore. We're going to call you Donald Duck.

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Welcome back to the Global News Podcast, the race for the White House and it is a race if the latest round of opinion polls are accurate. Got another step closer in the US on Wednesday when the leading

contenders to challenge Joe Biden from the Republican side gathered for a live debate.

It was the second time that they've gone before the cameras except yet again the front runner wasn't there. Donald Trump vying for a second go at being president refused to take part.

Our North America correspondent Peter Bose was watching. The stage is set for a showdown. Seven would be Republican candidates for the presidency.

The second debate to help whittle down the field took place at the Reagan presidential library in California, again without the front runner and former president Donald Trump.

A point at least two of the candidates, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis and Chris Christie, the former governor of New Jersey, were determined to highlight. You're not here tonight because you're afraid of being on the stage and defending your record. You're ducking these things and let me tell you what's going to happen. You keep doing that. No one up here is going to call you Donald Trump anymore. We're going to call you Donald duck. The debate itself was scrappy, full of interruptions and all out shouting muckers between the candidates. But China loomed large amongst the concerns with the multi-millionaire businessman Vivek Ramaswamy positioning himself as the best able to deal with the superpower. We're only going to ever get to declaring independence from China, which I favor if we actually win. There's exactly one person in the Republican Party which talks a big game about reaching young people and that's me.

And let me. The former South Carolina governor and UN diplomat Nikki Haley objected to the political newcomer's approach to the China-based social media app TikTok, sounding exasperated when he defended its use. This is infuriating because TikTok is one of the most dangerous social media apps that we could have. And what you've got, I honestly, every time I hear you, I feel a little bit dumber for what you say. One issue that's currently challenging Republicans, whether to continue providing financial aid to Ukraine, again exposed divisions between the candidates. Ronda Santos said he wouldn't offer Kiev a blank check. And as president, he would spend more on fixing America's problems. Our own country is being invaded. We don't

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even

have control of our own territory. We have got to defend the American people before we even worry about all these other things. An America first message that echoes the views of Donald Trump. He wasn't there, but his agenda was with several of the candidates voicing concerns over the southern border with Mexico and illegal immigration.

Far away from California, Donald Trump was addressing striking car workers near Detroit in Michigan. He made only a fleeting reference to the debate happening on the West Coast. It's all over television this speech. You know, we're competing with the job candidates. They're all running for a job. No, they're all job candidates. They want to be in the, they want to tell you anything. Secretary of something. They even say VP. I don't know. Does anybody see any VP in the group? I don't think so. A spokesman for the Trump campaign described the debate as boring and inconsequential, adding that nothing was said that would change the dynamics of the contest.

Recent opinion polls have suggested the former president is pulling ahead of Joe Biden, but there's more than a year to go until the election, with multiple criminal and civil trials for the former president to navigate while he's campaigning. Peter Bose in the US. Let's have our second look at artificial intelligence in this podcast. Can AI help make brain surgery less complicated? Well, trainee surgeons have started using an AI tool to help guide them through procedures. It's hoped that the new technology being developed at University College here in London could be used by surgeons during live surgery within two years' time. The BBC's global health correspondent, Tulip Mazunda, has more. In a darkened room, a latex face peeps through blue surgical drapes. All focus is on the nose, as the endoscope, a long, thin tube with a small camera inside, is pushed up the left nostril towards the centre of the brain.

Nicola Newell is one of the first trainee surgeons to use artificial intelligence to learn how to do keyhole brain surgery. Today she's trying to remove a tumour from the grape-sized

pituitary gland. We have a simulated pituitary operation here. The first screen is a camera footage from the little endoscope, and it's displaying the inside of this patient's brain.

That's consultant neurosurgeon, Hany Marcus, who's overseeing teaching today and is leading this AI

project. And on the other screen adjacent to it, you have the AI, which is analysing this video in real time, and identifying not just the tumour, but also the surrounding structures. So what I'm looking at here is it's inside the brain. There's lots of different areas that are lit up different colours. So the middle is blue, you've got sort of pink. And that's the AI identifying that? What's it telling you? Yes, that's right. So the blue right in the centre is the tumour itself. The structures around it are generally things you're trying to avoid. At the very bottom there, in purple, are the blood vessels that supply your brain. And injuring those blood vessels can result in a patient dying. The AI we know now from some studies does a very good job at defining this boundary. And surgeons like myself, even if you were experienced with the help of AI, do a better job defining that boundary than without AI. This AI system has learned from watching and analysing more than 200 videos of this type of surgery. It would take your average brain surgeon around 10 years to gain that level of experience. But it's taken this system around 10 months. You could in a few years have an AI system that has seen more operations than any human has ever or could ever see. We've just come into the lab, which is next door to the

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mock theatre. And this is where two of the researchers who are teaching the AI about brain surgery are doing some of their work. Should we have a look at the tumour recession phase? Yeah, so let's go to the AI lab today. One of them is Daniel Khan, who's a neurosurgery trainee and AI researcher. How do you make sure what you're teaching the AI is absolutely correct, that it's not going to sort of run away with itself with information that is possibly incomplete? The type of AI we use is called supervised learning. Everything that we put into it is something that we've taken a look at as an entire team of experts. That looks like myself and some of the other members of our team spending hundreds of hours making sure that the information we're feeding the AI is as accurate as it can be. Like the technology itself, regulation around artificial intelligence in healthcare is still evolving. Researchers here at UCL say they are working to develop national guidance and have very robust systems in place for their own work. They're also in touch with doctors in lower and middle income countries to see how this tech could be used elsewhere. I think it's going to be huge and I think it's going to be creating a whole different set of specialists for us. That's consultant neurosurgeon Mahmoud Koreshi in Nairobi. He chairs the Neurological Society of Kenya and says he's excited by the new tech, but emphasises that it would need to be implemented very carefully. We would want that technology to be promoted, but also to be evaluated in a collaborative fashion. We can adapt it to our needs. When you get that compilation through AI of a large number of surgeries done efficiently and you learn from it, the trainees are going to pick this up much more quicker, turning them into better surgeons, reducing the mobility and mortality of our patients in a, I believe, a significant way if we use it correctly. That was consultant neurosurgeon Mahmoud Koreshi ending that report from my colleague Tulip Mazumdar. We're going to look back now at the life of a veteran actor who you'll have seen if you've watched some or even all of the Harry Potter movies. Michael Gambon, who was best known for playing Dumbledore in most of those films, has died. He was 82. You know, at times, I forget how much you've grown. At times, I still see the small boy from the cupboard. He began his career as one of the original members of the Royal National Theatre in London. In 2009, he spoke to the BBC about his time with that company and said this to Sue McGregor about his audition. I'd done some plays at Unity Theatre, which is a communist theatre in Camden Town, and I'd done a West End understudy part, and I'd auditioned for the National Theatre, and they took me as a walk-on. I couldn't believe it. It was wonderful. Because your first choice of career was an aircraft mechanic, is it? Yeah, yeah. So now I came all that up, and I auditioned for Sir Lawrence. I was so thick, I didn't know he played Richard III, and I did Richard III. But you did the opening soliloquy. He said, what are you going to do? I said, Richard III. He said, which part are you going to play? I said, Richard III. He said, yes, I know, but are you going to play Buckingham, Catesby, one of those parts? I said, no. He said, what, you're going to play the main role? I said, I didn't realise he was just laughing. And I started, was there a big woman in this humour? He said, no, no, no. He said, you can't do that. That's close to me. You have to walk away from me. He said, I can see you in full length. And the next day they rang up and said, you can start on Monday.

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He tells a great story, doesn't he? Well, Fiona Shaw, who like Michael Gambon, was born in Ireland and was also in the Harry Potter films, spoke to Sarah Montague about him.

I remember him saying, I just follow chaos theory, he said. So if a part came for the National Theatre,

he would say yes. And if a part came, like Penny's, you know, television, he would do that. And if a movie came, he would do that. So he varied his career remarkably and never judged what he was doing. He just played. And he did once say to me in a car, he said, you know, I know I go on a lot about this and that, but actually, in the end, there is only acting. And I think he was always pretending he didn't take it seriously, but he took it profoundly seriously. Well, I have to ask you about them sort of the most recent production, of course, Harry Potter. What was that like? He was Dumbledore. So he was in the Wizard Kingdom. I was in the Muggle Kingdom. But he was, you know,

he took over from Richard Harris. And of course, he began to mimic Richard Harris, who had recently died. And he would do his accent, so the slight Irish accent, which of course he always loved having an excuse to do because his family had come from Ireland and gone to live in Camden. And he used to say that his father had used to go into a shop and wrap material around his waist and then put on his overcoat and leave. But he always was hinting at a sort of criminal activity. But I'm sure it didn't happen. He just loved the precariousness of reality and unreality. And of course, that made him a very great actor.

Can I ask you just briefly how you will remember him?

Well, I remember him because he was also a gunmaker, you know, he could, he could make guns. And he was always, he could, he could fool the V&A and believe in, they were 18th century guns. So I would think of him as a trickster. I mean, just a brilliant, magnificent trickster. But with text, there was nothing like him. He could do anything.

The actress Fiona Shaw, remembering Dumbledore, Michael Gamble.

Now we're going to end on a painting from the man who taught America to paint. A work by Bob Ross,

the first piece he painted on his first TV show, has gone on sale and the asking price is almost \$10 million. You may not know his name, but the man with a large head of curly hair and unruly beard and a certain laidback style became famous teaching Americans to paint in the 1980s.

I think each of us, sometimes during our life, has wanted to paint a picture.

I think there's an artist hid in the bottom of every single one of us.

And here we will try to show you how to bring that artist out to put it on canvas because you too can paint almighty pictures. Well, the first program aired in 1983. He went on to record 11 years of episodes before he died in 1995. He continues though to have a massive following on YouTube. The painting on sale is called A Walk in the Woods and it's owned by the art dealer Ryan Nelson. He is an artist that has transcended generation after generation. I was five years into the building of Modern Artifact, which started roughly 15 years ago and I decided that I thought it would be cool to own a Bob Ross painting. And fast forward to today, we found the greatest treasure, we found what you could call his rookie card. This is one of one season one episode one out of 400 on-air paintings. What started it all? Currently, there's 350,000 people that search for Bob Ross on a regular basis to this day. That is almost double what they search for in terms of Warhol or Picasso. So the \$10 million number, you look at \$200 million Warhols that are a photo that he



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didn't take. I love Warhol. He's in my collection. 10 million is not a lot to ask on this price. But Ryan, for an artist who said that everybody could paint and his aim was that you could pick up the brush. You don't need to be blessed by Michelangelo to create a masterpiece. Does this seem like an irony to us for this kind of a price?

No, not at all. In fact, I mean, he was an expert on the wet on wet technique. But, you know, Bob Ross didn't go on to the air to tell everyone that he was a great painter. He went on air to deliver a message to us all. And that message is what the collectors will see in this painting and what people see when they watch the show. And it's, you can believe in yourself. You can accomplish something that maybe you didn't think you could accomplish. When you look at one of his paintings and you start an episode, you think to yourself, there's no way that I can do it. But he brings that belief to you. And it's something to bring in to your entire life.

Ryan Nelson on Bob Ross speaking to my colleague, Davina Gupta.

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 in it, you can send us an email.

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formerly known as Twitter, at Global NewsPod. Now, this edition was mixed by

Vlodmy Muzetshka and the producer was Vanessa Heaney. The editor is Karen Martin. I'm Robin Brandt. Thanks for listening. Goodbye.

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