

Hello, this is the Global News podcast from the BBC World Service with reports and analysis from across the world. The latest news seven days a week. BBC World Service podcasts are supported by advertising. This is the Global News podcast from the BBC World Service. I'm Nick Miles and at 13 hours GMT on Monday the 27th of March, these are our main stories. Thousands take to the streets in Israel over plans to overhaul the country's judicial system. Scotland elects a new leader of its main governing party and a new school year starts in Afghanistan but not for most of the country's girls. Also in this podcast. We are talking about the eagerly awaited puffin migration as the seabirds return home to Northern Ireland. And we start in Israel where thousands of people have taken to the streets in protests at the government's plan to change the judicial system. The Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu wants to change how judges are appointed and the Supreme Court's powers would be weakened. At the moment Mr Netanyahu is also in the middle of a corruption trial for bribery, fraud and breach of trust. He denies all the charges. This man marching in the Israeli capital explained why he was worried about the reforms. Well strike action is spreading across Israel with shops, banks, hospitals and universities all shutting down. Razir Iqbal spoke to our correspondent in Jerusalem Anna Foster and put it to her that the country was in some disarray. I think it is and I think yesterday evening was a real turning point. The sacking of Yav Galant, the defense minister, created spontaneous protests because we've seen organized protests for 12 weeks now here in Israel. But people last night were compelled to go out onto the streets. I was here in Jerusalem and I spoke to various different people who when they heard that news felt that a line had been crossed. One man was telling me that he hadn't protested yet but he felt that this was the moment that he needed to come out and in his words defend his country. Those demonstrations continued overnight. I was with protesters as they scrambled up through undergrowth up to the Knesset to wave their flags to bang pots and pans and make their voices heard. I was with them on the streets from Benjamin Netanyahu's residence as water cannon came down the road and tried to blast them with water as they paraded down there. They clearly have energy for a fight. They think that things have changed and I think the reason they feel that things have changed today is because of that strike that you were talking about. It began this morning at Bangor airport with flights being held, not being able to depart. Now we've seen banks closed, shops closed. The fast food chain McDonald's has shut across Israel. The ports, the borders, medical staff have gone on strike. They will be providing emergency medical care only and at this moment the pressure is really on Benjamin Netanyahu to show some leadership, to make a decision about what he's going to do next. What can we read into the fact that we were expecting him to speak and he has not yet? I think that there are very difficult and very delicate conversations going on behind the scenes, conversations that have taken probably all day so far because this has been heavily criticised by opposition politicians, by as we heard members of Benjamin Netanyahu's own Likud party because Yoav Gallant, the former defence minister, was a Likud colleague and also between the right-wing coalition partners as well because without them Benjamin Netanyahu does not have a functioning ruling majority. So what he has to do now is try and keep two sides happy with two very different sets of priorities. It will be very difficult for him to negotiate a solution in which both of them are happy because the protesters, they want to see this legislation scrapped altogether.

Perhaps his far-right coalition partners might agree to a pause but for them a scrapping would be a big capitulation. So they will be discussing where to go next, what language should be used and how they can try and come out of it saving some sort of face but also really stopping this paralysis of society here in Israel which has grown by the hour.

Anna Foster. Scotland's main governing party, the Scottish National Party, has a new leader. Humza Yousef saw off the challenge of two other contenders and straight after his victory he said that it was a priority for him to rejoin the European Union and he had this to say to the people of Scotland about the country's place within the UK. My solemn promise and commitment to you

is that I will kick-start our grassroots, our civic-led movement and ensure our drive for independence is in fifth gear. The people of Scotland need independence now more than ever before and we will be the generation that delivers independence for Scotland.

Well our political correspondent Rob Watson was watching it all happen in Scotland. Rob, let's come on to those two very bold ambitions on the EU and independence from the UK in a moment.

But first tell us a few words about the man himself, Humza Yousef.

Well it really is an extraordinary moment for Scotland and indeed for the whole of the United Kingdom because although he is Scotland's sixth First Minister he's certainly the one who's come from an immigrant background. His parents and grandparents work from Pakistan. He was born here in Scotland and he is hugely proud about that. He talked about that. He's also I think it's worth pointing out very young Nick. I mean goodness he's only 37 years old even though he's been in

government for some time. So that's him in terms of his personality, in terms of his politics.

He's very much continuing the tradition of Nicola Sturgeon and the outgoing First Minister.

What does one mean by that? Well he's much, he's very much left of centre. He's very much interested in progressive issues so things like gender recognition. It is also very,

very pro-European so absolutely he has talked about Scotland rejoining the European Union as a priority. Those bold goals looking forward he didn't give any kind of time frame which was probably wise wasn't it? It is wise although of course in the campaign he and the other contenders had said that they hoped to have Scotland independence within five years. Well of course they say that kind of thing because it's what the party base of the Scottish National Party wants.

It wants independence yesterday but I think rather interestingly he talked about delivering independence in this generation and given how young he is that would leave some time Nick because I think there probably is an understanding with Mr Yousef and indeed other in the senior ranks of the SNP that they have a long job ahead that what they have to do is to somehow build support

for independence in Scotland to a sort of overwhelming majority the kind of majority that a government in Westminster simply couldn't ignore and he knows I think most politicians, most political commentators here know that Scotland is not at that point yet it is very much a country split along the lines of 50 perhaps 50 just under 50% wanting independence but more than 50% not. Yeah absolutely he also knows that being outside the UK and still outside the European

Union would be a very cold place indeed as well wouldn't it? Yes and in many ways it rather complicates

the task of independence for Scotland I mean the idea originally when they have the referendum in 2014 Nick was that it would all be fairly straightforward because both Scotland would be inside the EU so would the rest of the UK they would all be inside the single market and the customs union and we all know how chaotic it's been for Britain to leave the single market and the customs union so in many ways the sort of the technical economic picture is even more difficult than it was in 2014 and I think again that is why I think he and others in the SNP think that they have this a kind of a long haul towards independence that sort of slowly inch by inch if he would put it on the doorstep trying to persuade people that Scotland could make it as an independent

country. That was Rob Watson. Another school year has started in Afghanistan but teenage girls who've been again forced to stay at home. The Taliban government has barred girls and women from secondary schools and universities in Afghanistan the only government in the world to do so. This report from the BBC South Asia correspondent Yogita Limay.

As a new school year began Afghan women were out on the streets again. Education is our right it's our red line don't politicise it they chanted as they marched in Kabul protesting against the Taliban's bar on secondary school education for girls. Crucial years are being wasted for tens of thousands like 15 year old Tamanna. She isn't able to hold back tears.

When I see the boys go to school and do whatever they want I feel hurt it's hard to hope that our schools will be reopened. It's evident on Tamanna's face that her grief is still raw.

When I see my brother going to school I feel sad and broken. Earlier my brother used to say I wouldn't go to school without you. I would hug him and say you go I will join you later because I thought the Taliban might change your minds. Almost every time we've spoken to teenage girls in Afghanistan about school they've broken down within minutes of the conversation.

Some are trying to find ways around the ban. Parasto is in her 20s. She runs a network of secret schools trying to help as many girls as possible continue their studies hidden away from the Taliban. You talk to so many of these students who aren't allowed to go to school can you explain for us what that's like day to day what is their life like? It is devastating it's frightening it's heartbreaking and it is the worst of all is not having any hope and being helpless because nobody right now in the world speak about helping us they just condemn that's all they they think that they have to do. Aren't you scared that you might get caught? Oh absolutely I'm scared but we still have to do that because we do not have any other way. The thing that billions of girls in all around the world are doing very freely as they are wishing to do girls in Afghanistan have to do that secretly with all the fear in the world inside their heart threats from the Taliban have forced women's rights activist Leila Basim to close the library she had opened for women. Leila's library was one of the few places where women could freely meet because following the secondary school ban

a series of blows have been inflicted on women's freedoms now also barred from universities and from public places like parks gyms and swimming pools I spoke to Leila over the phone. The Taliban used to call me saying how dare you establish a library and do such activities once they visited us and said this is not a place for women. Women must stay at home. The Taliban say the closure of schools and universities is temporary until a suitable environment can be created. The women and girls we spoke to said they did not believe them but had no option but to hope. That was Yogeta Limay. A rescue ship funded by the British street artist Banksy has been seized in Italy and after the coast guard said that the crew had disobeyed its orders the ship was told to return

to Sicily after a rescue operation but instead went to help three more migrant boats. Stephanie Prentice reports it's the rescue boat known for its famous financial backer as well as its top speeds described by the crew as being able to outrun human traffickers named after a French feminist anarchist Louise Michelle has reportedly saved hundreds of migrants at sea over the past three years but the white and pink vessel provided by the British street artist Banksy has now been impounded with no timeline for its release. As far as we are aware there are at least 15 distress cases as we speak that we could be helping and we are not because we're not allowed to leave the port. In a series of tweets its crew described a clash at sea with the Italian coast guard over the weekend. They say they were told to leave an area at sea but ignored it after coming across 34 people in the water at night. A mother holding an unconscious baby was among those they brought on board. In response the coast guard said they were complicating delicate rescue work and said that charity boats have to stick to a code of conduct.

UN data suggests that 10 times more people are attempting to cross Interland producer this year compared to last year and at least 29 migrants have died in recent days.

But Tunisia is a country facing instability on many fronts and with better weather conditions on the horizon the number of people trying to reach Italy is sure to increase and so are clashes between the coast guard and rescuers. That was Stephanie Prentice.

Coming up we're in Myanmar.

Where the military leader has been talking tough in a rare public speech.

But first the firing of an intercontinental ballistic missile by North Korea in the past few weeks has reminded the world of the growing threat posed by the country's weapons program.

So how is a country that struggles to feed its own people funding these growing military activities? Well starting on Monday the 27th of March season two of the Lazarus Heist podcast from the BBC World Service investigates the latest exploits of cyber hackers claimed to be linked to the North Korean state and allegation Pyongyang denies. Joining me now are the hosts of the Lazarus Heist Jeff White and Jean Lee. Jean if I can start with you you opened the first US news bureau in Pyongyang and you still watch the country very closely. Can you tell us about North Korea's increase in weapons testing and why they're doing it now? The North Koreans right now are trying to portray this as a defensive measure. They say they're taking this to protect the country from US aggression but really it's about Kim Jong-un he's the leader of North Korea and it's about the Kim family hold on power. Kim Jong-un he's a young man he's built his leadership and his legacy around nuclear weapons and at home he has told his people that North Korea faces an

existential crisis that they need him his family's leadership and nuclear weapons to survive and I would say he's also using weapons as a way to gain international stature so he does want to force the world to accept North Korea as a nuclear power and he wants to use those weapons to negotiate economic concessions. You know this isn't a new strategy these nuclear ambitions go back some 30 years to his father and his grandfather. We've seen 30 years of attempted negotiations and sanctions to try to stop North Korea from building these weapons sanctions designed to stop the full of money into the program and you know go back to season one if you're interested in hearing some of the crazy stories about their past history of illicit money making and we've got more stories to share in season two about how they're making that money today. Well let me stop you there June because I'm going to bring in Jeff now your colleague on the podcast. Jeff so how exactly are they going about doing this financially?

All the students alluded to you know North Korea has this campaign of missile launches and nuclear tests that all has to be paid for somehow. As a result of those tests and launches North Korea has been placed under these sanctions very heavy sanctions it's kind of hard to figure out how North Korea can sort of function as a country and buying and selling things the basic things countries do are largely sealed off for North Korea and so the accusation is that North Korea has used its government hackers computer hackers to break into banks and financial institutions around the world and steal the money and in terms of amounts we're looking at the latest estimate on the amount of cryptocurrency things like bitcoin and so on stolen by North Korea's government hackers is something in the region of 2.1 billion dollars. So are they particularly adept at doing this or are other people around the world doing some similar things? What are the North Koreans tapped into? What's worth pointing out when we say North Korean hackers the only way you get a computer or an internet connection in North Korea is if the government grants that to you so it's not like the UK where you might have bedroom hackers you know the classic kids in hoodies hacking that that just couldn't exist in North Korea the government has to sanction any computer use and so we're talking about North Korea's computer hackers between government hackers is the accusation shouldn't come as a surprise North Korea has hackers most countries do including the UK we have government hackers who hack on behalf of the government the difference in the North Korean case

is that they are going after cash is the accusation in terms of how they work very classic tactics it's sending out phishing messages phishing emails you know messaging people on LinkedIn for example and

trying to trick them into downloading computer viruses that can then be used to get access to their computers but of course once you're inside somebody's computers if the computer's in a bank you can potentially then steal the bank's millions of dollars and tell us the Lazarus group but why have they been nicknamed that? They wouldn't themselves call themselves the Lazarus group they are almost certainly a unit within the North Korean military and probably have military ranks and unit assignments and so on the Lazarus name came about because a bunch of security researchers called them that largely because if they break into a computer networks you know you get your techies on top of it and you try and kill them off but just like the Christian Saint Lazarus the North Korean hackers have a habit of coming back from the dead and reinfecting your systems. Listen thank you very much Jeff White and Jean Lee I will be listening avidly to that thanks for your time. Now to a vast parade ground in Myanmar. It was a textbook show of military strength with

jets flying overhead saluting troops tanks and missile launchers. The head of Myanmar's military junta was at the center at all marking armed forces day. General Min Un-Klang who took power in a coup 18 months ago promised to deal decisively with what he called acts of terror from the armed groups challenging his rule. Our correspondent Jonathan Head was there watching in the capital

Nippidor. There were no signs of a softening of his line it was very much you know a tough approach to his opponents accusing all of those who've taken up arms against the military government

as being terrorists even accusing countries that have criticized his human rights record that means you know you're at Britain the United States Canada and the rest of being terror supporting countries and saying basically we are on track eventually and we don't know when

this is going to happen to return to a form of democracy that we like and that means a form of democracy where there is no Aung San Suu Kyi and there is no party capable of challenging the military's now 60 year long dominance or monopoly on power. At the moment that dominance on power

is being held in place by a lot of Chinese and Russian weaponry until that flow of weapons stops it's going to be quite easy for the generals to keep in power. Not easy I think the problem they have at the moment is they are in power here in Nippidor this is almost a fortified capital it's a very hard place to describe it was built specifically by the military to make themselves feel safe for 20 years ago and they have their own special exclusive zone that no one can go into and yet there are large parts of the country where the communities reject the authority of the military and are willing to fight them. These are very desperate battles now where increasingly the army is going in in force it's using a lot more air power that's where these Russian and Chinese planes and helicopters that we saw parading flying over today we know they've been used extensively in airstrikes on rebellious communities and the civilian cost is very very high and I think the military is hoping that if they can keep this up they will eventually grind the opposition down that people with no other support there's no countries backing the opposition will eventually have to give up. And what indication is there that the insurgency is finding it very difficult to carry on? It's always difficult because they've got very few weapons and they are getting intercepted a lot a lot of insurgents very young untrained volunteers are being killed often in the most unspeakably brutal way and the soldiers are fond of dismembering their bodies and sort of displaying them in some gross kind of butchery there's a lot of shop tactics being used I will say atrocities are not wholly on one side but certainly the military is responsible for some dreadful dreadful incidents. I mean interestingly here in Nepidor which is notionally very secure the hills that form the backdrop to that giant parade ground divide it from an area about 50 kilometers away where there is constant fighting and where insurgents

there claim they killed 90 soldiers just in the last few days and have been showing pictures of huge weapons holes they've got so in that area which borders Thailand the insurgents have been very successful but in other areas it really is a desperate fight they've got very few weapons they're very determined but you can only go so far when you're cut off from any external support from outside. That was Jonathan Head. Social anxiety is a very common disorder that can cause an overwhelming fear of social situations but to help calm the senses people often try meditating or sniffing pleasant smells like lavender but now researchers in Sweden are suggesting that body odour could help alleviate symptoms the newsrooms Phoebe Hobson has more. Body odour is normally something you'd want to avoid smelling but according to Swedish researchers

a whiff may have a calming effect their hunch is armpit sweat may activate brain pathways linked to emotions that could be used in therapy for social anxiety volunteers were asked to donate armpit sweat from when they were watching either a scary movie or a happy one 48 women with social

anxiety agreed to sniff these samples alongside receiving a more conventional therapy called mindfulness where people are encouraged to focus on the here and now rather than replaying negative

thoughts some of the women were given genuine body odour to sniff while others the control group

were given clean air instead those who were exposed to sweat even if produced when watching a scary

movie appeared to do better with the therapy before you ditch your deodorant more tests need to be carried out but scientists say the findings are promising that was Phoebe Hobson now as you may have noticed here on the global news pod occasionally we like to end the program with a bit of a fluffy story so we're going to talk about puffins now with their bright orange feet distinctive parrot like bills and puffy white cheeks they're sometimes called the clowns of the sea or sea parrots they spend winters at sea but return at the same time each year to the UK to nest in their burrows in the ground they are extremely loyal they mate with the same bird and produce one chick known as a puffling today or tomorrow the puffins will arrive back on a tiny island off the coast of northern Ireland called a rathlin island here they are returning there a couple of years ago happy return from all the puffins there um Rebecca Tanner has the great title of experience manager at Britain's Royal Society for the Protection of Birds she worked in northern Ireland last year Justin Webb asked her whether we know why puffins are so precise with their timings and return on the 27th or 28th of March each year I don't think we know how they're

doing it so precisely that's for sure the reason they're coming back to land at this time of year is it's the start of their breeding season but they are very very regular with it and yeah I don't think anyone really knows exactly how they do it it is I mean just one of the extraordinary things about them quite apart from their ability to travel huge areas and to seem to know where they're going that makes them so fascinating I suppose all sea birds are but there's something particularly fascinating isn't there about puffins they're very very charismatic um they've obviously got that very colorful appearance very recognizable um so people do get very excited to see them yeah

and where do they go when they've been away so we're talking about them all coming back and really huge numbers on their rathlin island and other other parts of the UK as well certainly parts of Scotland where have they all been in the same place or not we think not so they disperse over a really large area they go out into the middle of the Atlantic they go into the North Sea and they can go far as south as about the Bay of Biscay so they really do like sort of scatter around and then yeah what's amazing is they all come back to the same place and all gather together

and and it's kind of this amazing sight isn't it of huge numbers of birds together but does that tell in a sense the wrong story so are they threatened are they reduced in numbers is life getting more difficult for them yeah so puffins as well as lots of our sea birds that we get in the UK are threatened so puffins in particular numbers are declining there's a couple of reasons for that so their food source sandeels are becoming more scarce that might be because of climate change or overfishing

there's other risks to them as well so things like lights in the evenings that in when the puffins pufflings are fledging they can be attracted to the wrong thing and they go to go into land and also at the moment bird flu is a big problem for lots of our sea birds so yeah I was going to ask you about that what what's the impact of bird flu been it's really really difficult to say because obviously these birds nest in huge numbers so on rathland there was about 150,000 guillemots

and those are the birds that we were seeing dying off quite a lot across the whole of the UK

and yeah it's going to be hard to say and I think this year will really show just what the impact has been because we know for a fact that even though they left the cliffs and they weren't in such close proximity to each other once they like head out into the water there have been reports of them washing up and being affected with bird flu so we don't really know what the impact is going to

be. That was Rebecca Tanner from the RSPB and that is 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 that we've covered in it you can send us an email the address is globalpodcast at bbc.co.uk you can also find us on twitter at global news pod this edition was mixed by Lewis Olsopp and the producer was Phoebe Hobson and Vanessa Heaney the editor is Karen Martin I'm Nick Miles and until next time goodbye

a series of increasingly sophisticated cyber crimes being carefully orchestrated around the world the attraction to target ATMs is fairly obvious I mean I'm full of cash it was just like a block of crap put these cards put any pin number any good money. U.S. investigators say the heists are being carried out by the Lazarus group a criminal hacking gang who are said to be working under the orders of the North Korean state tens of millions of dollars for the North Koreans these actors are not as anonymous as they think they are the group's goal to steal money to help fund the country's growing ballistic missile and nuclear program but despite evidence suggesting otherwise North Korea denies any involvement in season two of the Lazarus heist from the BBC world service we're following the latest twists and turns in the incredible story of the Lazarus group hackers and piles and piles of stolen cash over two billion dollars we're at 2.1 billion dollars and stolen funds search for the Lazarus heist wherever you get your BBC podcasts