

[Transcript] Global News Podcast / The Happy Pod: The portable incubator saving lives in a war zone

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. Hello, happy news listeners. My name is Anatoly. I'm happy to bring you happy news from Uganda. I'm Kerry with some happy news of Heroics in Taiwan.

Hi, I'm Brett and I've got some good news about the Great Barrier Reef.

This is the Happy Pod from the BBC World Service.

I'm Jackie Leonard and in this edition uploaded on Saturday, July the 15th, the revolutionary incubator saving babies lives in war zones and beyond.

When you get pictures back from the field of a child that's actually been impacted by something you've done, it's special. It's something no one can take away from you.

The man who has deduced that humans have been kissing a lot longer than we once thought. African warning drums and modern technology, the inspiration that led to an award-winning invention. Really making sure that your impact is felt while you live on this planet is really coming to reality and that gives us so much joy. Also, what happens when artists from 90 countries meet in Norway? The idea that you're not alone. So I think that was like what I learned, that we all long for that. We all want that.

And we begin with a solution to a life or death problem. Around the world, one in every 10 babies is born prematurely. They are incredibly vulnerable, but most can be saved with appropriate interventions

including the warmth of an incubator. James Roberts was a student when he came up with his incubator inspired by a documentary about Syria. Its special design makes it possible to use in otherwise impossible situations and it's now in service in Ukraine where it's played its part in saving well over a thousand babies. His mom incubator was recognized this week by the Royal Academy of Engineering and he explained what makes his design different from the traditional model.

They're massive, huge pieces of kit, take a lot of space. They're very heavy, complicated pieces of equipment. What we've done is taken the same type of therapy and put it into a much more flexible solution, meaning that we can go anywhere on the hospital, being filled up into a small space. You can really take it anywhere and deliver the system anywhere that needs to be.

We really focused on the user and try to make a device that was seamless, something that was simple to use. The problem with simplicity is I think sometimes people think basic and anything is further from the truth. Designing in simplicity is an incredibly hard thing to do, meaning that we can have almost one bus and operation on the front means that we have a lot of the clever stuff underneath the system. If you think about what a commission has to do every day, you think about the amount of devices they have to interact with just to effectively save lives and then look at the complications when you first see them. I don't know if you're anything like me, but I get confused. I go to a friend's house, they've got a different TV remote than I do.

We've made it as easy as possible for collision to use so they can have a trusted bit of equipment that they know is going to work. When you came up with this, you were 22 and still at university. Why were you drawn to this? I'm a product designer or design engineer, I guess, by background. Went to study at Loughborough University. Design was my first love. In the final year of study, we had given the brief of design something that solves a problem. I sat down in front of the TV and a documentary came on basically saying that because they lacked what they thought was a

simple

piece of medical equipment, they're effectively losing entire generations. I decided to try and come up with a system that solved those problems. I then told my parents what I was doing. My mum then said, which I didn't know about, that she was born pre-term in the 1960s and was probably one of the first incubators in the UK. Without one, I wouldn't be here.

So you've created this thing and it's already saving lives in places where it's desperately needed. Tell us about some of the places where it's being deployed. The most notable ones is that there's quite a few of these in Ukraine at the moment. We were getting reports that they're having to take babies down to the bunkers where they were getting cold and at risk of passing away or the nurses were having to stay up in the maternity centres at risk of being maimed. So they're having to make those really tough calls. With our advice, they don't need to do that. They could create makeshift neonatal intensive care units in these shelters. We're also being using the NHS at the moment. It's all focused around keeping mother and father closer to the child in these really stressful times. Your achievement is being celebrated internationally. You've been recognised with the Royal Academy of Engineering's Princess Royal Silver Medal. It's lovely to get the recognition, isn't it? But that's really not what it's about. The recognition is amazing.

Don't get me wrong. It's a really heartwarming accolade to have and I'm hugely appreciative of it. But in terms of what excites us the most or what gets us up in the morning to come to work every day, it is when you get pictures back from the field of a child that's actually been impacted by something you've done, it's special. It's something no one can take away from you. Do you have ambitions to branch out into something else? What's next for you? Mom's vision is to give every child access to smarter healthcare technology. That is a broad vision. The incubator is our flag in the ground. It shows this is what we've done. We've done something that I think very difficult to do, but shows we can do it with other products and other things going in the future, whether that be in a hospital context or even in the home. If we're trusted to look after the most vulnerable children or the most vulnerable patients, literally newborn babies, then why would we be trusted elsewhere as well by the parents who see what we've done? That was James Roberts, CEO and

founder of Mom Incubators. Now let's talk about kissing. It appears that for some time our assumptions

about humanity's earliest record of romantic kissing was about a thousand years out. Scientists have been joining the dots on the evidence and it seems that humans actually began puckering up, I'm sorry, about four and a half thousand years ago in some of the earliest Mesopotamian societies. Dr. Truls Pank Arbul co-authored the report. He is an expert on the history of medicine in Mesopotamia at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark and he told us how the study came about. My co-author Sophie Lundrasmussen, who's also incidentally my wife and I were discussing an article that came out last year that had to do with herpes simplex virus.

The herpes simplex virus, the cold sore virus. Well that's romantic.

Oh yeah and that's what we do over dinner at night, so it's always nice. But we were discussing this article, she's a biologist, I'm an astrologist, so we were discussing this article and it had been proposed in that that maybe this virus had evolved due to the introduction of kissing in Europe at some point many thousand years ago and we were a bit puzzled by that and we thought it sounded interesting, started reading up on what the background was and one of the things I quickly

realized was that all the literature that had to do with the origin of the kiss actually described it as originating in India and the earliest reference as being from 1500 BCE and I knew in my field that we had older sources so I started reading up on it and I quickly realized that the earliest reference we had to kissing was from 2500 BCE. We set out to try and describe this and look at some of the anthropological literature that had to do with the context wherein kissing occurs and so on. So you've already raised the cold sore thing, it's clearly not all about romance. How much of the research, how much of the evidence basically boils down to the spread

of disease? Well we also looked into what might be said in favor or not in favor of kissing as a means of disease transmission and obviously it has been involved, it can't be avoided when you exchange saliva like that but it's clear that it must have been relatively widespread in the ancient world and it seems to have had several points of origins and that's probably why we see it in several groups of historical sources. It has been proposed previously that well it originated in India and spread from there but I think we can safely put that debate to rest now and of course there might have been communities that didn't practice this sexual romantic kissing. In anthropology at least there is this hypothesis in relation to modern day cultures all over the world that it's actually not the majority that practices sexual romantic kissing, it's only somewhere in the 40% that practices it and the thing that anthropology has suggested is that in modern day the societies that practice sexual romantic kissing are also socially complex or have a lot of different social classes. But it's interesting you talk about different classes and complicated social strata, it's not just humans that do it is it? No exactly, our closest living relatives for example chimpanzees and bonobos tend to engage in these acts of kissing in relation to social relations and sexual interactions as well. So there is definitely a behaviour that might be found I would assume quite far back in the Homo sapiens as well. Dr. Troll's Pank Arböl. Now this one doesn't start very positively but stay with me it gets better. It begins with a man following and attacking a woman on a street in the Taiwanese city of Taitung. A man has been arrested

and charged, the woman is said to be recovering well in hospital. The good part is the intervention of three men who came to her aid. Kerry Allen our China media analyst has been following the story. Obviously a horrific incident but what happened within a very short space of time is a man driving by suddenly turned his car around and him and his two sons jumped out the car and just grabbed improvised weapons and basically tried to get this man to drop his knife. And when you say improvised weapons? When I say improvised weapons I mean a soup ladle, a fan and a suitcase and these

amazing pictures have circulated all over Taiwanese media and you see the man with the ladle literally

managed to whack it out of his hand. And the video was extraordinary I wonder if it was real has it been verified? It has been verified it's been all over Taiwanese media outlets have been speaking to witnesses Taiwanese media spoke to one woman who works at a local nuts stand. Those two university students suppressed him he was brandishing a knife a really long utility knife then one of the students said to me we've got the knife call the police he then came and grabbed my electric fan to hit him with. So what do we know about the men who came to the rescue? Well we know

that there a man and his two sons the father is being named as Xu Shiguang and yeah they just happened

to be driving by. The suspect attacked the victim and we immediately turned the car around we quickly

got out and confronted him. I looked for something by the road that I could use it just happened to be a soup ladle I grabbed it. And what sort of reaction has there been? Well there's been huge reaction to this I mean what an incredible story and the the footage and images that have been shared are just incredible I mean it looks like something out of a video game just these men surrounding this one man with such unconventional such weird weapons and and yeah it's a scene that

you don't see very often. That was Kerry Allen and Bravo Xu Shiguang and sons.

Still to come in this podcast. So I thought hey we can start looking at using the same processes the reef uses to glue everything together but accelerate it by using this bio-glue.

The new process that could help the great barrier reef recover.

Whether you call it football or soccer in your part of the world match of the day Africa top 10 is the podcast bringing you the best of African football. I'm former Congolese captain Gabriel Zoukwani and joining me for hosting duties Ivory Coast's Yaya Turei and Nigeria's Effena Koku. Each week we're trying to decide who makes it to number one on our African football top 10 lists. That's match of the day Africa top 10 from the BBC World Service. Find it wherever you get your BBC podcasts. Now to one of your sounds this one sent by John Holloway whose location is well wherever his boat is. Bagpipes but not any old pipes what's special about this sound John. Galician pipes only have one or two drones instead of the Scottish pipes which have three so the melodies are much lighter and they're the sort of thing which bring a smile to your face and you can't help wanting to start to dance which is a completely different experience from listening to the Scottish pipes which tend to be much more serious or sometimes even funereal.

Study on John I actually had bagpipes at my wedding but thanks. I discovered them about 15 years ago

I'd gone along the north coast of Spain and arrived in this little tiny village and they have the world Celtic music festival there every year and about 100,000 people turn up for this festival in this little village so every little bit of grass has got a tent on it every granny is looking after somebody's children and that's where I discovered it this amazing sound so whenever I hear the pipes

I have these very vivid memories of the girls going down the streets behind the pipers with their tambourines and it's the memories of having a lovely glass of Galician beer in a bar with people on the night of the full moon we have a bring and share supper and we spend the whole evening laughing and joking and eating whatever everybody's brought along and the international festival of which John speaks is wrapping up this weekend in Galicia so we missed this year but we are shamelessly angling for an invitation to next year's festival if anyone who can make that happen is listening now some of the other stories that caught our eye over the last few days a zoo in South Korea is celebrating the birth of its first giant panda twins the twins both female were born at the Everland theme park near the capital Seoul it's fair to say that the Ukrainian tennis player Elena Svitolina didn't expect to do as well as she did at Wimbledon this year she had bought tickets to see a Harry Styles concert in Vienna but had to give them away in order to concentrate on her

day job the good news for her is that Harry saw her instagram post and offered her tickets for any of his remaining shows another animal story if i sneak it in quickly no one will mind 14 of Angola's native giraffes have been transported to their homeland decades after becoming extinct in the wild there the giraffe conservation foundation says that recent efforts to protect giraffes have seen their population start to rebound after 35 years of decline also some promising news this week on dealing with the Varroa mite the deadly parasite that has devastated honeybee populations around

the world it turns out that the tiny mite can be identified by a distinctive walk and that could lead to the development of a remote detection system allowing beekeepers to eradicate infestations early now time for some clever innovation and a software engineer in Uganda has come up with a way of improving neighborhood security with a modern take on a traditional practice for centuries people across Uganda Kenya Nigeria and Tanzania have used drums to alert their community to an emergency Anatoly Kirigwajo took that idea and using modern tech came up with a device that at the

touch of a button connects neighbors and the police alerting them all to an attack or robbery and hopefully prompting a swift community response the younger device has won Anatoly this year's Africa prize the continent's largest engineering award announced at a ceremony in Accra Ghana and he told us more my inspiration draws very long ago when I just finished school and then I got a phone call when my neighbor tells me your house is open and there's nothing in the house and then because I had done computer science I was an engineer software engineering I asked myself what I could do over time so you were robbed yourself some inspiration as well I gather from African warning drums yeah so I remembered that our elders told a story of how in the villages they would be put into clusters of homes and then the government of that time would equip them with drums as tools so once you would get robbed maybe you would drum twice and then if you had a sick person at home you'd now maybe drum once and they knew which kind of tone that would actually call for specific kind of action what have your family and friends had to say wow my family and friends have been really very good fan of us from day one and they are super super excited and the beauty of it is that some of them have been already embodied on the younger system and all this really means that our family members and friends are very proud and excited of the new invention that we are bringing to help people in Africa that are very prone to this kind of crime what does the Africa prize mean to you I'm very very super excited because the legacy that we've always been talking about creating a dent in the universe and really making sure that your impact is felt while you live on this planet is really coming to reality and that gives us so much joy Anatoli Kirigwa Joe from Uganda and we'll hear from his co-winner Edmund Vessels from South Africa in next week's edition now more from you Mohammed from Iran says he loves it when his seven-year-old African grey parrot Behrang says hello and if any of you can train your parrots to say this is the happy pod we would be thrilled and this was shared by Kevin in Oakville Ontario and he says that is the sound of his Welsh terriers tags jiggling as he goes for his morning walk now when we break things we might be tempted to try and stick them back together and even though it's a little bit more complicated than that scientists working to repair Australia's great barrier reef are sort of doing just that the coral reefs are being badly damaged by cyclones and boats and they need patching up so that they can regrow and recover enter Brett Lewis from Queensland University of Technology

and his biodegradable putty at our core level we want to regrow corals and we want to hope that corals can maintain themselves during climate change but for corals to continue to regrow you need a substrate and a stable one that they can grow onto and so there have been some attempts to kind of stabilize it and some are kind of successful but they're very intrusive some require large amounts of metal frames to be put out on the reef so in pretty much most cases we're intruding in the

environment our intervention is very obvious and if it fails we leave behind rubbish so I saw this adhesive this bio adhesive something that can be produced from waste from sawmills and plants it's easily attainable it's easily made it's very cheap and as long as we produce it correctly it's non-harmful to the environment so I thought hey this could be an application for them using the same

processes the reef uses to glue everything together but accelerate it by using this bio glue so tell us about the point at which you realized actually this this could be the answer this could work was there a eureka moment do scientists still say eureka not this one it's a very slow and arduous

process the truth is these adhesives have been worked on for decades so we are just building on that work and it's taken a long time to get us here and we'll continue to refine the adhesive and maybe even make better ones in the future that work even better than the current one and of course the Great Barrier Reef is vast it's huge how will you be deploying this putty tell us about how that will happen one part of how we're trying to understand the Great Barrier Reef is to identify areas of threat so we're doing a vast amount of mapping to try and work out and target these areas and help those areas out and then when we go to do that we will be using automation so here at QUT we have a school that is really focused on robotics and speaking with them so far the idea here is to deploy a fleet of robots that will be able to go out and inject these adhesives into these targeted areas that we've already mapped out the last time I was on the Great Barrier Reef was at the end of the last century it was very lovely we talk about it as you know it's a great natural wonder of the world for people who haven't seen it describe the Great Barrier Reef I'll put it this way when I first started out and I decided that I was going to travel Australia I was going to do everywhere the moment I got to the Great Barrier Reef I never left I stayed there for three years and I decided after those three years that I was going to do a degree in science and try and help protect it so I don't know how to put its beauty in words but it is very much inspiring when you go there what's your hope for the reef and for your work on the reef so my personal goal is to make sure that there are coral reefs available and still alive by 2050 in order for them to hopefully recover when we have got everything under control that was Brett Lewis of Queensland University of Technology

artists from 90 countries from Iran to Italy Belgium to Brazil and Costa Rica to Canada have converged on a small Norwegian island best known as the home of Edvard Munch Yllo is 50 kilometres from Norway's capital Oslo close to the coastal town of Moss and for the next few months it's hosting the Nordic Biennale of contemporary art with the theme Gathering Together our reporter Iona Hampson travelled to Yllo to hear from the artists Oslo based art collective Ten House have invited artists from around the world to take part in this year's momentum Biennale at Gallery F-15 on the water's edge of the Oslo Fjord from immersive spaces and sculptures to short documentaries the contemporary pieces are so

different from the work at the famous Norwegian painter Edvard Munch best known for his work The

Scream who used to live on a farm nearby I'm Dalgog Svajnar and the director of Gallery F-15 this position of the sun is changing all year around for Edvard Munch it was very nice because he got more and more interested in colors so he liked to live here and to stroll around and just to get inspired Together as Together is a slogan the artists are engaging with and leads to an experience for all the senses in this period building I'd come to this doorway which has planks of wood nailed to the side I'm just gonna come under the sheet this tie-dye sheet to this room which really smells of seaweed which covers the floor wet which is this female collective of graffiti artists who've gone around Europe to create their graffiti what they want to depict is their challenging journey in which as female graffiti artists they feel that they're not accepted within the community I actually managed to speak to one of the graffiti artists who did not want to be named and I found out a little bit more about their journey it's a lot of waiting yeah and like a lot of stress and I don't know if I want to like expose the secret for some artists the invitation to be part of something so diverse allows for a safe personal expression my name is Nyara Leitchi I mean I was from Brazil and the video tells about also my coming out story is a bit of a link to the the rainbow flags and so I show my first rainbow flag as well here my name is Gesha I'm from Good School from Indonesia

to go here we need to apply for visa it's a long process complicated process and now we're here we can be able to tell these stories we are able to meet these lovely people so it's a gratitude so what can we learn from creatives coming together from around the world the idea that you're not alone so I think that was like what I learned that we all we all long for that we all want that you know that you're not alone you have these people that maybe doesn't speak the language with you but you still like feel that their presence and then can connect beyond languages beyond boundaries and then have something they can have once they return to their home that report

from Norway was by Iona Hampson and that's it from us for now but remember if you would like to participate you can send the sound that brings you joy or indeed anything else you want to contribute

to really to global podcast at bbc.co.uk you can also find us on twitter at global news pod this edition was mixed by Chesney Forks Porter the producers were Anna Murphy and Phoebe Hobson our editor is Karen Martin I'm Jackie Leonard and until next time goodbye