

[Transcript] Global News Podcast / Travis King in US custody after North Korea expulsion

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Life's Less Ordinary is the podcast from the BBC World Service bringing you extraordinary personal stories from around the globe. Search for Life's Less Ordinary wherever you get your BBC podcasts. This is the Global News Podcast from the BBC World Service. I'm Nick Miles and in the early hours of Thursday, the 28th of September, these are our main stories. The American soldier, Travis King, who fled to North Korea in July, is back in US custody after being expelled by Pyongyang.

The US State Department says it will work with allies to set up a monitoring mission for Nagorno-Karabakh. And police in Brazil have carried out fresh raids and arrests in connection with riots carried out by supporters of the former president, Jair Bolsonaro, after he left office. Also in this podcast, we meet the scientists working on the mysteries of antimatter. Obviously, if it went up, there's a Nobel Prize, right? It goes down, everyone says, yeah, I told you so. But the work isn't over. There's a wiggle room right now.

We start with a prisoner release that reads a bit like a scene straight out of a Cold War movie. It seems to have taken the intervention of China, Swedish facilitators, and the approval of North Korea. But now Travis King is back in US custody. Here's the American soldier who ran across the border from South Korea into the north in July. He was facing military disciplinary procedures at the time. Matthew Miller is the spokesman for the US State Department. The United States has secured

the return of Private Travis King from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. He was transported to the border between North Korea and China, where he was met by our ambassador to the

People's Republic of China, Nicholas Burns. He then boarded a State Department op-ed plane and flew

from Dandong, China to Xinjiang, China, and then on from Xinjiang to Osan Air Force Base in South Korea, where he was transferred to the Department of Defense. We appreciate the professionalism of

our diplomats who worked with their counterparts at the Department of Defense and coordinated with

the governments of Sweden and the People's Republic of China. And we thank Sweden and the People's Republic of China for their assistance in facilitating that transfer.

As we recall this podcast, Travis King is now said to be on his way to the US.

Pyongyang says it deported Mr King for entering the country illegally, though added that he had fled there because of poor treatment in the US Army. Michael Bristo, our Asia-Pacific editor, told me why he'd been released now. It's difficult to say because North Korea haven't told us, but they've probably have got as much of a propaganda coup or value out of Travis King as they're ever going to have. They've already announced that they've held an investigation into why he came across the border, and they said it's because of discrimination, even racial discrimination he faced within the US Army, so a pop at the United States there. They also, by giving back Travis King, get some credit from the Americans, because remember these are two countries without diplomatic ties. You couldn't think of a more strained relationship in the world, and yet North Korea has collaborated, handed back a US soldier. So that gives them some credit with the Americans, and perhaps suggests in the future that they could talk about other issues. And it's not surprising, perhaps, that this man didn't go back over the border from North Korea to the South, given that Pyongyang was only saying the day before yesterday that the peninsula is on the verge of a nuclear conflagration. That's probably why they put him out the back door in China. Probably is, but also the border between North and South Korea is really heavily fortified. There's only one place where you can actually go across safely, and that's the place where he escaped through. It's a village called Panmunjom, which is a truce village, essentially, so there's no guns there. So that's how he was able to get across. China has often been the route out of North Korea, for North Koreans, from everybody, leaving North Korea. I went to North Korea a few years ago, and you went in through Beijing. So to come through China is perhaps understandable, but again, diplomatically, the United States and China are in a good place at the moment, and the corporation China has shown also indicates that perhaps there's somewhere for those two countries, the United States and China, to talk about other issues. It's so difficult, isn't it, to read the rules about where these different relationships are going. And it takes incidents like this to actually highlight that and see how convoluted it all is. What's your impression about what North Korea's long-term goal is? Just to take your first point there, that the convoluted nature of these negotiations to get Travis King out must have been incredible, and perhaps why there's been so much secrecy surrounding them up until he was actually out of the country. You're talking about three countries, North Korea, China, the United States, really are odds with each other. So to come together and arrange anything is really quite extraordinary. North Korea's long-term goal, I don't think this really changes much. I just think it was an easy way for them to get a win, really, to do something good for the Americans, perhaps down the line they'll ask for something in return, keeping this in their back pocket. Michael Bristo. The US State Department says it will work with allies on an international monitoring team for Nagorno-Karabakh after Azerbaijan took control of the territory during an overwhelming offensive last week. Azerbaijan has promised to respect the rights of all ethnic Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh, but more than a third have now fled. One former leader of the territory, Ruben Vardanyan, was detained by Azerbaijani forces as he tried to leave. The billionaire banker was head of the separatist government for several months until February this year. The BBC's Sarah Rainsford is in Armenia, speaking to the people arriving from across the border. Just walking down this street Anna is lined with cars and every one of them has a family

from Nagorno-Karabakh. There's a woman here, heavily pregnant and she's just leaning against the wall and crying. There's a car right next to me here with bundles of blankets piled on the roof rack and a big bike on top of it. The ground is in the back. It's actually trying to make a We are from Stepanakert. The road out was tough, very stressful. It took two days. There was a really

big queue. The whole of Karabakh is living. I cry now all day long. We left everything, four houses, everything.

Not far from me. Beautiful Armenian church at the foot of the mountain is the main reception point for refugees here in Gorus and there are crowds of people everywhere. There are minibuses standing by ready to take people to different corners of this country. It's all quite calm.

The mood here is depressed. These are people who are leaving behind everything and heading into the unknown. We are students in high school and we help people because they're coming.

We are coming to see sweets, drinks, coffee for people. There is no stop.

So you live here in Gorus and you saw what was happening and you wanted to help.

How do you feel about seeing all these people coming from Karabakh?

We just help. We don't know what to do. We don't know what to do.

I've been trying to speak to some of the men here who fought to defend Nagorno-Karabakh but nobody

wants to comment publicly. One of them just said that he wouldn't speak because after all of these years fighting to defend the right to be in that enclave they'd lost and he said he was ashamed of that.

In the central square here in Gorus there's just been a big delivery of aid.

There's boxes full of sweets and puddings. We are being told that the authorities here in Armenia are coping. My name is Varajisani and I'm representing the Ministry of Economy of Armenia. When it comes to the responsibility that the government and myself is carrying on is to organise logistically to feed these people. This is the first priority.

Back up here at the border crossing there are still lots and lots of cars coming across.

A van just passed with a fridge freezer strapped to the roof.

It's nearly dusk here and I'm looking over towards the mountains of Karabakh now and

I can see a long line of those cars sneaking into the distance still.

That report by Sarah Rainsford in Armenia. Brazilian police have been carrying out fresh raids and arrests as they continue to investigate the January the 8th riots in

Brasilia. The violence took place a week after the defeated President Jair Bolsonaro left office.

Leonardo Rosha reports. A police statement said three arrest warrants were issued as well as 10

search and seizure warrants in four Brazilian states. The suspects haven't been named but

Brazilian media say one of the warrants is for a man who made an infamous online broadcast

from the chair of a Supreme Court judge during the riots. The violence took the country by surprise.

Supporters of Mr Bolsonaro had been camping in the outskirts of Brasilia for weeks

saying the elections had been rigged. Suddenly thousands of them gathered outside Congress

and for hours vandalized government buildings calling for a military coup. Mr Bolsonaro is

being investigated but denies any involvement. Leonardo Rosha. Scientists have made an important

discovery about a mysterious substance which could hold the key to explaining how the universe began.

For years physicists have been trying to find out whether so-called anti-matter responds to

gravity in the same way as its opposite matter from which everything around us is made. Researchers have finally been able to test this after creating thousands of atoms of anti-matter at a specially built facility at Europe's Particle Research Centre, CERN. Our science correspondent Palab Ghos was given exclusive access to the laboratory in Switzerland. Scientists scramble as an alert sounds at the anti-matter lab.

Anti-matter is just the coolest most mysterious stuff you can imagine. The coolest stuff is getting a little too warm. Professor Jeffrey Hanks and his team add liquid helium to keep it almost as cold as cold can be. Absolute zero, the temperature of outer space. As far as we understand you can build a universe like you and me made of just anti-matter. To me that's just inspiring to address one of the most fundamental open questions about what this stuff is and how it behaves. For answers Jeffrey has built what he calls his anti-matter factory. We're in the centre of the ring that provides us with the anti-matter. This is the place at CERN where they provide us with the antiparticles that we need to do our experiments. Our world is built of tiny particles called atoms the simplest of which is hydrogen which is made from a proton and an electron orbiting it. In the control room researchers are collecting antiprotons and anti-electrons created by particle accelerators at CERN and then mixing them to create anti-hydrogen atoms. What we're doing now is accumulating atoms and after some hours we'll actually do an experiment with them. But these particles are traveling at the speed of light. We have to slow it down with these very complicated machines in order to get it to a stage where we can catch it. The anti-matter is then trapped in a magnetic field. 88,000 mixing triggers. The team turn off the magnet to see if the anti-hydrogen falls up or down. If it's up it would revolutionise our understanding of physics. We found that anti-matter falls towards the earth in the same way that equivalent matter would. Is that not a bit of a disappointing result? Well obviously if it went up there's a Nobel Prize right. It goes down everyone says yeah I told you so but the work isn't over. There's a wiggle room right now. Jeffrey's wiggle room is that the anti-hydrogen may fall at a slightly different rate to hydrogen. If that's the case then he may still get his Nobel Prize. That's because any difference in matter and anti-matter could explain why the universe is the way it is according to Dr. Danielle Hodgkinson of the anti-matter team. You might ask yourself how do we live in this universe which appears to be almost entirely dominated by matter. This is what motivates our experiments. We measure the fundamental properties

of anti-matter and that might be a clue towards how our theories need to be revised.

Furiously writing equations on a blackboard, Sen's Dr. Irene Vanzuella is a physicist pondering those theories. She's among many who are eagerly awaiting the next set of results.

Everything that is new and that especially goes against what we think it must happen is super interesting because it means that we have to change something and changes are fantastic.

The scientists at the anti-matter lab continue their work knowing that the current theory does have to change and they want to be the ones to make that happen in order to answer one of the biggest questions why the universe exists at all. Pallab Gauch at Europe's Particle

Research Centre in Switzerland. Still to come. On the shelf with this magical collection of

dusty kind of greeny blue bottles with this little shelf sign saying layer cast of whiskey cast 1833.

Now there is a rare opportunity to find for what some connoisseurs say could be the oldest scotch whiskey in existence. Cyber attacks on critical infrastructure threaten the essential

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The attacker had very good knowledge of banking systems. 3.1 billion dollars in stolen funds. Money laundering operations. The cyber criminal group. These are smart guys. Seasons one and two of the Lazarus Heist from the BBC World Service are available in full right now. Following the twists and turns in the incredible story of the Lazarus Group Hackers. The Lazarus Heist from the BBC World Service catch up with the whole series now wherever you get your BBC podcasts. Back now to the Global News Podcast. The European Court of Human Rights on Wednesday heard a case brought by a group of children and young adults from Portugal who accused governments in Europe of failing to do enough to stop global warming. They want the court in Strasbourg to force more than 30 governments to cut emissions. The young people say global warming threatens their physical and mental well-being, citing the heatwaves and wildfires in Portugal in recent years. Some governments say the court doesn't have jurisdiction over them. Others say those bringing the case have failed to prove they're directly affected. But their case is gathering popular momentum with support from campaign groups and celebrities. The BBC has spoken to one of the young people involved in the case. Marianna is 11 and her thoughts are translated by her older sister Claudia. She said that she was involved in this because she wants to protect her future. And I think that having this conscience at her age, she's only 11 and she already knows that if we continue in this path that she won't have a good life. I think it's amazing but also it's very worrying. Like why does she have to be worried about this? She should be just playing with her friends and doing TikToks. Professor Sonia Sena Veratne is a specialist in extreme climate events at the Institute for Atmospheric and Climate Science in Zurich. Julian Marshall asked her if she thinks governments are guilty as charged by these young people and that they're not doing enough to combat climate change. It's certainly correct if you look at the last IPCC report. We know that basically most countries of the world have signed the Paris Agreement which has as its aim to basically limit global warming if possible to 1.5 degree and what we know clearly from the current emissions well is that we actually not on track. It's clear we need more action if we want to have a chance. And if that doesn't happen are these young people right to be fearful of the consequences of climate change in the future? Yes, I definitely right. I would say already now we do see consequences of human induced climate change. There are already now people dying of human induced climate change during heat waves for instance and we do know from the IPCC reports that with any fraction of additional global warming we have a lot of increase for instance extreme events in several regions of the world and the risk for many impacts would be substantially larger at two degrees compared to 1.5 degrees including some irreversible impacts. And will this process of global warming will it will it accelerate if the action that climate scientists

and others want governments to take is not taken? So what we can say is it's more of a gradual change

but what what we have is that the situation is getting worse and worse year after year because we have a problem of accumulation of the greenhouse gas in the atmosphere especially CO₂ is a very long live greenhouse gas and that's the main issue we're dealing with which is that the situation is getting worse with every additional emission of CO₂. I mean this this legal action is directed principally against European Union member states but even if they were to take the kind of action that is necessary to limit temperatures to 1.5 degrees centigrade it still leaves India it still leaves China it still leaves the United States out there does it not? It does but in the end as mentioned every emission matters so we have to stand somewhere and there is

this possibility here in Europe to have such a court case what is clear is in term of historical responsibility both the US and most of the European countries have historical responsibility because they have been responsible for a lot of the CO₂ that has been accumulated. On the other end obviously we need also to have reduction of emissions in other countries

but every country needs to make its contribution and if we can reduce emissions in Europe this would be already a substantial improvement. Professor Sonja Seneveratne from the Institute for Atmospheric and Climate Science at ETH Zurich. The Biden administration has formally admitted Israel into its visa waiver program the move comes after years of negotiations more from Barbara Plattusher. Starting on November 30 Israelis will be able to travel to the US for trips of up to 90 days without needing a visa. The Biden administration said it approved the arrangement after Israel lifted travel restrictions on Palestinian Americans. Those resident in the occupied territories had been banned from Israel's main airport but now they can use it and they can visit Israel without a permit as tourists but some Democratic senators have expressed concern that Palestinian Americans still face discrimination and an Arab American rights group is seeking to block the decision in court. The Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has welcomed the move. Only about 40 of the world's countries are exempt from visas and now Israel has also joined the list. This decision is further evidence of the strong ties between Israel and the USA.

I would like to express our deep gratitude to the US President Joe Biden for his support for the move which will further strengthen the ties between our nations. To France now where in what's thought to be a world first Paris City Council has announced it will subsidize health insurance for pets for around \$65 a year. Owners in the city can top their own medical care up to cover cats and dogs. The scheme has proved very popular indeed and now councillors and animal rights activists are also debating whether other pets including rats should be covered too. Evan Davis spoke to Catherine Nicholson the European Affairs Editor at France 24 who's also a cat owner and lives in Paris. Paris really is the city that loves its pets. There are actually more pets per Parisians than there are pets per Londoners and this is something that was voted in unanimously by the Paris councillors

in July and they're hoping that they'll be able to bring it in next year and the idea is that City Hall thinks that Parisian pets suffer in particular ways that are more than other places around France. They suffer environmental stress they say so they're talking about things like air pollution which certainly is a measurable problem in Paris. Things like illnesses passed on by rats we have a massive rat problem in Paris. Cats falling out of windows sadly so many of us live on six and seventh floors and then other things like apartment dwelling animals getting

overweight and then getting all the problems that we know about like joint problems diabetes that sort of thing so they're going to offer this just for Parisian pets. And it's effective it goes on your health insurance. The government pay most of your bill but you generally have a top-up insurance policy to cover some of it. They will sort out a price that you will pay on your health insurance for your pet. That's right so the idea is that this is going to be massively cheaper than the private pet insurance offers that already exist. Like Obamacare for pets. Obamacare for pets but they might steal that slogan. They say on average a cat and dog insured in France the owner will spend more than 500 euros a year. Now the communist party councillor who's proposing this says he's hoping to have it available for between 10 and 60 euros per year which just seems incredibly

ambitious but he says that because of the sheer number of cat and dog owners in Paris he's confident

that they are going to be able to get an offer from an insurance company that gets it down for that cost.

Catherine Nicholson the European Affairs Editor at France 24 next to the world of video games. It's been a name synonymous with this genre and specifically football for over 30 years but now the best-selling franchise FIFA is changing its branding to EA Sports FC. The new incarnation hits the shelves this week. Laquessa Burak spoke to the BBC's gaming correspondent Stefan Powell and asked him why the name EA Sports FC. It's not quite as catchy as Fancy Game of FIFA you know which has become synonymous with gaming over the last 30 years like it's in 1993 was the first FIFA video game we've seen. I think the hope for the shorthand is that it becomes FC so they're hoping that in the future people say Fancy Game of FC so they'll get rid of the EA Sports bit. I've been chatting to experts in this field it's probably the biggest rebrand attempt in the entertainment industry's history. Someone described it to me as like rebranding the Bond franchise because of how many people it's worth two billion dollars a year to Electronic Arts the company that make the game 20 million people play it every month it's a it's a it's a BM off in the sort of gaming space.

Why they've done it well there's two reasons firstly cash there was a sort of a discussion about how much they should be paying for the license going forward and they couldn't reach an agreement on that reportedly but also in my interviews with EA Sports in the lead up to this game coming out they were saying to me that actually it also comes down to control and freedom by being away from the license of FIFA they can decide what is in the game more they can decide who and what brand partnerships they want to do in the future which gives them the degree of freedom which they haven't

had in the past because they've had to do things tied and restricted to the FIFA license. Video games and FIFA as in football how closely are they tied? What do you think about it for 30 years the major video game that people played that replicated football a football simulator was called FIFA and so very closely tied. Did they own it was there? So no Electronic Arts made the game but it was licensed the brand the title was licensed to them by FIFA and then through that originally they got access to all the play likenesses all the kits for the football teams all the stadiums etc etc but now what they've done is they've struck individual agreements with all those different clubs and leagues and teams around the world so it's something like 9,000 players and 700 teams numbers off the top of my head it's a lot and that approach to the game has been central to why this game has been so popular over the years because if I want to play as Mbappe I want him to look like Mbappe I want him to be as fast as Mbappe and I want to feel like I am encompassing

embodying

my favourite player and so they've been clever in that they've been able to maintain those licenses and likenesses going forward so even though they're losing the name they're keeping hold of arguably

what made the game unique in the first place and so popular. The BBC's gaming correspondent Stephen Powell now to Scotland and fans of a wee dram or a single serving of whiskey are getting a once in a lifetime opportunity they will be able to bid for what is believed by some connoisseurs to be the oldest scotch whiskey in existence 24 bottles of the single malt dating back almost 200 years are being put up for auction. As Bernadette Kehoe explains the bottles had remained undiscovered for decades in the cellar of a Scottish castle in Perthshire.

It was an unassuming hiding place for the rarest of tipples tucked away at the back of a shelf behind a cellar door at Blair Castle in Perthshire. Fortunately the Victorian whiskey distillers were meticulous in leaving a plaque indicating it was produced in 1833. It may even have been sipped by Queen Victoria who visited the castle a decade later staying three weeks and developing it said a taste for a whiskey and honey concoction. The current resident trustee Bertie Trouton couldn't believe what he'd stumbled across. On the shelf were these magical collection of dusty kind of greeny blue bottles with this little shelf sign saying Blair Castle whiskey cast 1833 bottles 1841 so I did what anyone would do in my situation I think and opened a bottle. I thought we had to immediately check that it was you know still as good as the label suggested. Scientific testing proved the liquor's age. An expert taster described it as having medicinal characteristics without any pronounced peat smoke. 24 bottles will be sold individually in November. Others will be kept back to go on display at a new exhibition about the history of whiskey distilling at the castle. Bernadette Kehoe there's a whole raft of plausible excuses available at your disposal if you decide you don't want to spend time with someone but in an attempt to avoid celebrating New Year's Eve with his partner one man from New South Wales in Australia opted

for an extremely far-fetched and ultimately costly story. Rebecca Wood reports. What about my cars broken down or I've got food poisoning or I'm washing my hair but no not for poor Jera from Wollongong. In an effort to be elsewhere on New Year's Eve he went for the excuse I've been kidnapped. Leaving home just before the stroke of midnight on December 31st he told his partner he was going to meet his so-called financial guy. Instead he was off to see his lover. To buy time they sent a text message to Jera's partner saying he was being held hostage but would be released in the morning. According to local media he later told police it was by a group of unknown Middle Eastern men. Fearing for his welfare his partner contacted the emergency services but thousands of dollars of taxpayers money and 200 hours of police work later the truth was revealed and he was arrested. A court has handed him a three-year community correction order and told him to pay 10,000 US dollars to the police in compensation. Magistrate Michael Ong said his abhorrent behaviour was motivated by the least compelling reason that he's ever come across. Rebecca Wood reporting. And that's all from us for now but there will be a new edition of the Global News Podcast later. If you want a comment on this podcast all the topics covered in it you can send us an email. The address is globalpodcastatbbc.co.uk. You can also find us on X formerly known as Twitter at Global News Pod. This edition was mixed by Caroline Driscoll the producer was Lea McChesney. The editor is Karen Martin. I'm Nick Miles and until next time goodbye. To protect themselves from cyber attacks you built it will help you defend it.

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