

## [Transcript] Global News Podcast / Trump indicted by Georgia grand jury

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I was working in a coffee shop in Boston to like help pay rent while I was training for the trials and so people kept joking they're like oh yeah she just took a two hour coffee break and went and ran the Olympic trials there at that.

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

I'm Valerie Sanderson and at 14 hours GMT on Tuesday the 15th of August these are our main stories. We're in Washington for reaction after prosecutors in the US state of Georgia charged 19 people including former president Donald Trump in connection with the 2020 election.

British police have arrested and charged three Bulgarian nationals suspected of spying for Russia. Spain are through to the final of the Women's World Cup after beating Sweden 2-1.

Also in this podcast two years on from the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan women in the country tell us about their lives. Right in front of this restaurant there's a building.

It used to be the Ministry of Women's Affairs but guess what the Taliban government has turned it into the Ministry of Vice and Virtue now. And while the true story that inspired the Oscar-winning film *The Blind Side* has taken a much darker turn.

We begin with Donald Trump. He's already the first former US president to face criminal charges and now he's facing a further tranche of allegations. Donald Trump and 18 of his closest allies have been indicted on state racketeering and conspiracy charges in the state of Georgia over alleged efforts to overturn the result of the 2020 presidential election.

The Fulton County District Attorney is Fannie Willis. A Fulton County grand jury returned a true bill of indictment charging 19 individuals with violations of Georgia law arising from a criminal conspiracy to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election in this state. The Democratic Congressman Adam Smith one of Mr Trump's political opponents gave the BBC his reaction to the indictment. By all accounts former President Trump is probably going to get the nomination and the degree to which his you know criminal behavior becomes more and more exposed only seems to fire up the Republican Party to support him more which

is deeply troubling. The Republican Party is not in a good place in our country that's a real problem and I hope they figure it out and I hope they get past the cult of Donald Trump and get back to being a reasonable conservative party but right now they are not that. Jennifer Kearns a former Republican strategist expressed her concern for the Republican Party. They don't understand the impact this is going to have on swing voters and on female suburban voters. They don't like all of these indictments stacking up. They kind of shy away from this sort of drama right in the public square and I just don't think that the Republican side really understands the impact that this is going to have negatively. I got more details from where Davis in Washington. Donald Trump himself called it a politically motivated witch hunt to stop him being elected again next year. His view at least publicly is the the more of these cases these charges that are laid against him the further he rises in the opinion polls. I think obviously his base will always support him but these are very very serious charges. Trump and his co-defendants will have to present themselves before next

Friday in Georgia to be formally charged with these latest charges. The prosecutor has made it clear that she would like to see a trial within six months and of course the significance of that is that that's right in the middle of next year's election campaign when Donald Trump wants to be elected again as president. I think it'll be very difficult for Mr. Trump to bat this one off as easily as he's been able to do with some of the other charges because these are significantly not federal charges. These are allegations of crimes committed in the state of Georgia and if you were to be convicted it would be much more difficult for Donald Trump even if you were to be re-elected elected again as president to pardon himself of these charges so they are very significant charges indeed. Do you have any idea what his defense is likely to be? Well it depends which of the counts you're talking about. One of the most egregious bits of evidence is a phone call that Donald Trump made to an election official in Georgia asking for just over a thousand votes to be found. Now that may be argued by the prosecution as evidence that he was looking

to either find votes to tamper with votes or Mr. Trump himself has said no it was a perfectly innocent phone call stating how many votes he was behind in the polls as the votes were being counted.

There are other charges as well in which allies of Trump or former allies of Trump have we know have given evidence to the grand jury about things like trying to tamper with the electoral system in the United States. There's allegations that he and some of his co-defendants including his senior lawyer Rudy Giuliani were also involved in trying to overturn the election in the state of Georgia. So some of these charges are going to be very difficult for Donald Trump to defend himself against although he has said again that this is a politically motivated exercise and he expects to come out on top. We're at Davis in Washington. Two years ago today the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan and went on to impose extensive restrictions on women and girls. Teenagers and young women were banned from attending schools and universities and recently hair and beauty salons were shut. The BBC has heard from Afghan women about their daily experiences since the Taliban took control. We have come to a restaurant but they say that they don't allow women inside anymore. It's frustrating. I'm in a taxi right now. I'm heading to a nearby market in Kabul but there are many places where a lot of restrictions still exist for women.

If a female walks without a male guardian, they can face problems.

So we've finally made it to a restaurant. Right in front of this restaurant there's a building.

It used to be the ministry of women's affairs but guess what? The Taliban government has turned it into the ministry of vice and virtue now. This vice and virtue ministry is all about morality and how people, especially women, look on the outside.

I studied a book about the war between Germany and Russia at the time of Nazis.

The book says how much war has destroyed the morale and mind of people.

When I read it, I cried. The women who are hearing my voice right now, be strong and hope for a bright future. The Taliban's return has also brought economic and humanitarian crises partly due to countries in aid agencies withdrawing support because of the treatment of women.

Now the new United Nations humanitarian coordinator for Afghanistan has warned that a huge shortfall

in funding could lead to the collapse of the country's health system and to widespread hunger.

Our Chief International Correspondent, at least to set, has covered Afghanistan for many years and she was in the country when the Taliban regained power in 2021.

Of all the issues that symbolize the Taliban's authoritarian rule and the broken promises, it is these tightening restrictions on the lives of girls and women. It is a conservative country but what we've seen over the past two years is almost with every month an erasing of women and girls from public life, everywhere from girls' education, even women banned from public parts and beauty parlours. The Taliban keeps saying this is not going to be forever. We're just trying to implement it in a way that respects Sharia law but that's what they said the first time around. So when I spoke to Taliban spokesman Zabala Mojahed, I said most people believe your restrictive edicts

are here to stay. Women are working in some places now, for example in health, education, police, passports, national ID departments, airports. In these places women have been working and for the rest as well as long as Sharia allows it and there is a need. The same goes for girls' education. We have never said that these restrictions are going to be forever.

How long will it take? One year? Five years?

We are hoping it will be solved very soon.

Solved very soon while this impasse is devastating for Afghans, devastating economic crisis but also donors are turning away. Now the United Nations appeal for Afghanistan which used to be overfunded when the international community was there is now only a quarter funded and this has had a huge impact. Only a third of the Afghans who desperately need food aid are now getting them up. The UN saying that funding is going to run out for major hospitals. So when I spoke to Daniel Andres who's the new UN humanitarian coordinator, I said is the world forgetting Afghanistan? Yeah, to some extent we have to say that Afghanistan has no longer the primary attention and also one message that Afghan people really give us so forcefully and strongly is please don't abandon us. The economic collapse or the economic reduction that happened when the Taliban took over is severe. Many people lost their jobs, many people became in need of humanitarian support and especially women and girls say we are already in a very difficult situation. If you take away our jobs and if you take away even the basic needs that we have, where should we end up? Daniel Andres, UN humanitarian coordinator for Afghanistan, talking there to our chief international correspondent, least to set.

Police in Britain have arrested in charge three Bulgarian national suspected of spying for Russia in what's been described as a major national security operation. They're due to be tried in January. Daniel DeSimone reports. The three Bulgarian defendants, two men and a woman are charged with possessing fake identity documents with improper intention. They include passports and identity cards for the UK, Bulgaria, France, Italy, Spain, Croatia, Slovenia, Greece and the Czech Republic. All in Rousseau, Biza Dijambazov and Katrin Ivanova were arrested under the Official Secrets Act in February. It is alleged they were working as intelligence operatives for the Russian state. Daniel DeSimone. The problems facing China's young people in their search for work are well documented. Now the authorities have stopped publishing the unemployment figures for 16 to 24 year olds. After the jobless rate for that demographic

hit a record high of more than 20% in June. I asked Kerry Allen, our China media analyst, if the authorities have said why they haven't published the figures.

So China's National Bureau of Statistics has said today that it's no longer going to be releasing information on this demographic and it's not set a timeline. It said that there's a need for further improvement and optimising labour force survey statistics and what they've specifically focused

on. So Fu Linghui, who's the spokesperson for the NBS, has said that society has different views on whether students looking for jobs before graduation should be included in labour force surveys. And it's very much said that in recent years the number of university students has continued to expand. So it's factoring in students who are studying and might be working at the same time. That seems to be the main reason for this. But obviously with the statistics for unemployment being so high, there are questions about whether they're not publishing this because it's a very difficult thing to process. That one in five young people between the ages of 16 and 24 are unemployed. And what has been the reaction on social media? Well factoring in the social media is used by a lot of young people. I've seen tens of thousands of social media comments today on the platform Weibo, which is like Facebook. And lots of young people basically saying, are the authorities scared? Is unemployment scary high? Are they spooked by unemployment data? And one social media comment I've seen with hundreds of likes has been, if you delete this question over unemployment, then the problem will be solved. The idea that if you close your eyes on this, you're not going to be able to see the results of this and just how bad the problem is. Do these just refer, though, to cities, not to rural areas? They do, yes. So that's another reason why this methodology might be being changed. And one thing we have to factor in is that these figures have only really been processed since 2018. And in recent years, we've seen the COVID-19 virus and China had a strict zero COVID policy, meaning that a lot of young people were at home. They were in their hometowns. And obviously, over the last few years, employment trends have been changing. You've got a lot of people doing flexible work, a lot of people working from home. So this might be another reason why this data is being changed. For now, it's being suspended. And the government are thinking more about how they might process this data. Kerry Allen, our China media analyst. Spain are through to the final of the Women's World Cup after their 2-1 win over Sweden in a semi-final in Auckland, New Zealand. Our sports reporter Katie Smith followed the match from a fan zone in Sydney. It means that Spain are into the final for the very first time. And once again, Sweden fall at this hurdle. The perennial bridesmaids never the brides. They talked about this previous history of making the semis never the final. And it has happened once again. It's a hard old game, isn't it? Sport. So Spain will play the winners of tomorrow's game, of course, between England and the co-host Australia. That's pretty exciting for the host country, isn't it? Yeah, this is the big one. The Matildas who are now stopping the nation, breaking records, TV viewing figures left, right and centre. They stopped the six o'clock news on Saturday. It was pushed back. That never happens on Channel 7. Stadiums have been open just to watch this match. And now they are playing arch, historic sporting rivals, England. And just to add to the drama, Australia are the only team under Serena Wiegman's tenure as the England boss for the European champions. Australia, the only team who have ever beaten them. This is massive. The Matildas have never been in the semi-finals before. They've never been to the final. And England are coming in with that mantle of the European champions. They should be just slight favourites, although they're missing some key players, including Lauren James, who's still serving a red card ban. It's going to be so massive. And the crowd, the excitement here in the country is just huge. What are people saying to you? As you said, you're in a fan zone with Matilda fans. What are they saying? Well, a lot of them were watching the match tonight saying the tension

of this was already, I suppose, stressing them out because they know it's to come tomorrow. They already had to live through that nail-biting penalty shootout against France to reach the semi-final. That almost felt like a hurdle moment for them. I think they're slightly hoping that they won't have to succumb to that over England. Katie Smith in Australia. Coming up in this podcast,

they look pretty much like they can't be steady on their feet. Their lower lips start to droop, and they are slow. The drunken monkey experiment that could help provide a cure for alcohol addiction.

What in the world is the podcast exploring the stories and the issues that you need to know about? 93% of fast fashion workers aren't getting paid a living wage. The former president is accused of trying to overturn democracy. How do elite athletes train in and around their menstrual cycle? Understand more. Feel better with what in the world from the BBC World Service.

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Welcome back. Next to Ecuador, where another politician has been assassinated in the run-up to a presidential election due to be held next week. Pedro Briones was an organizer for the left-wing Citizens' Revolution party. The killing comes soon after a presidential candidate was killed in the capital Quito. Phoebe Hobson told us more about the situation there.

Ecuador is going to vote in presidential elections on Sunday, and this assassination of Pedro Briones, who was a senior left-wing politician in the northern state of Esmeraldas. He was believed to have been shot on Monday evening, the details of which are still a little bit unclear, but it's believed he was shot in a park in the Paristán de San Mateo. His death was announced by the current presidential frontrunner, Luisa González, who said that Ecuador is experiencing its most bloody period. This is because his death comes less than a week after a presidential candidate, Fernando Villavicencio, was assassinated after a political rally in Quito. It makes a total of three politicians to have been assassinated in the run-up to the elections. A local mayor was also assassinated, and these deaths are believed to be linked to very powerful organized crime groups that operate in the country. Just some context for people who might not know. Ecuador is a country of 18 million people. It sits on the west coast of South America, and it gets its name from the equator, which is its location. Until the last few years, it was very considered a reasonably peaceful country in comparison to its neighbor, Colombia. Many people might visit it for the Galapagos Islands. Now, the more powerful drug cartels are taking control of the country, and the President Guillermo Lasso has said the elections will go forward on Sunday, but there is a two-month

state of emergency and increased security around polling stations. Phoebe Hobson. A powerful, slow-moving storm is battering central Japan with torrential rainfall and high winds.

As we record this podcast, Japan is urging people to stay vigilant, as landslide and flood warnings are in place. Several people have been injured, as Laura Bicker reports.

Typhoon land made landfall around 400km southwest of Tokyo, lashing much of central and western Japan with heavy rain and powerful winds. Authorities have issued several flood and landslide warnings, and forecasters predict that the central Tokai region will be hit by three times the average rainfall for the whole of August in just 24 hours. Hundreds of people were stranded in Kansai Airport overnight after road and rail routes were cut off. Laura Bicker. Now, what was the last content you accessed on a digital platform? You could have been playing a song, watching a film, or looking at videos. All of these things are algorithms, computer systems that follow a set



of instructions to solve a problem that give us recommendations on what we might want to watch, read or listen to next. But how much do these algorithms actually know about us? Could streaming services, for example, know your sexuality without being told? Well, BBC journalist Ellie House has been finding out in an edition of The Documentary, Did Big Tech Know I Was Gay Before I Did. Ellie told us this all started from her own personal experience.

So, I'm bisexual, but I didn't always know that. It wasn't until my second year of university that I worked it out. And I remember at the time that I was getting lots of recommendations for new series

with lesbian storylines or bisexual characters. These were pretty good TV series or movies, and I just assumed that everyone my age was seeing them. You know, why would I be different? But when I mentioned it to friends, people who are just like me, nobody knew what I was talking about. And then six months later, I realized that I was bi, and it really felt like Netflix had worked it out before me. After that, I noticed the same thing happening across my social media and streaming

platforms. So Spotify pushed me a playlist it described as sapphic, which means women who love women. And after a couple of months of scrolling on TikTok, I was getting really specific videos on my For You page, which is basically a feed of recommended content, about being a bi woman in a relationship with a man, which I was at the time. When all of this happened, I decided to go on a quest to find out a bit more about the technology that's working behind the scenes to make these suggestions. Now, it's important to say that none of these companies collect personal information like this, and they say that they don't infer it either. But what they do do is try and work out what sort of things we'd be interested in seeing, which might be LGBT content. And it all starts with basic recommender systems, which in its simplest form is you've watched an action film, so you'll get recommended more action films, maybe less romantic comedies.

And for most of these big platforms, the technology is far, far, far more advanced than that. They use what's called collaborative filtering. And this is where it gets interesting.

So this is Marcel Korowski. He's a data scientist working in recommender systems.

It exploits patterns of user behavior. How have users, so watchers or listeners or readers, interacted with items, so songs, playlists, articles, movies, for example.

But it goes even beyond this. So often the information that is more or just as useful for one of these recommender systems to work out what we might be interested in seeing is not what we've been streaming, it's how we stream. So things that to us might seem meaningless, like what device we're using, whether we let something autoplay or whether we click on it ourselves, what time of day we tend to watch or listen. This information can actually say quite a lot. And I asked Greg Serapio Garcia, who is a PhD student at the University of Cambridge, specializing in computational social psychology, what sort of signals I might have been giving that might have indicated my sexuality, even when I didn't realize?

Maybe it's literally the percentage of time you've stayed continuously watching, whether or not you go through the credits, whether or not you skip around, like within these episodes. All of these are really tiny, very specific features that on their own don't really mean anything. But if you take them as part of this larger constellation of data, yeah, you can make really specific predictions.

So when I was researching for this documentary, I saw so many articles from various different countries across the last five, maybe even 10 years of people saying Facebook seems to know I'm

gay, Google seems to know I'm gay, my adverts had personalized, my recommendations are personalized,

everyone seems to know that I'm about my sexuality. That's really interesting. So it's definitely not just me, it's kind of seems to be a common experience.

Ellie House, and you can listen to that edition of the documentary wherever you get your podcasts.

Now to a potentially exciting gene therapy study that could ultimately offer hope for chronic alcohol addiction. The study involves macaque monkeys and use gene therapy to influence

an area of the brain that controls addiction and reward. Kathy Grant, professor of neuroscience at the University of Oregon in the United States, was one of the lead researchers and she told us more.

We've been studying animals drinking alcohol for some time. And in particular, my lab's been studying monkeys and how we introduce them to alcohol and then a proportion of them will become heavy drinkers, chronically heavy drinkers. That means they'll drink eight to 10 drinks a day, every day. And it models well the very heavy drinking in people. And one of the things we find with this very heavy drinking is in the brain, in an area that helps with motivation, it's primarily important that a neurotransmitter named dopamine. This is a drug your brain releases that makes you feel good, isn't it? Yes. And it becomes very, very low in heavy drinkers. And you've managed to artificially create dopamine release in the brains of these monkeys that were heavy drinkers, and that seems to cure them of their drinking. Yes. So would this work on humans?

We don't know that yet. But it was a proof of principle study and it's very encouraging. And it certainly suggests that this could be a treatment for individuals where all of our other treatment approaches are just not working for some chronic heavy drinkers. Because it is brain surgery and that is a fairly major intervention, isn't it? Exactly. It's invasive and it's irreversible. What do drunken monkeys look like? They look pretty much like they can't be steady on their feet. Their lower lips start to droop a little bit and they are slow in their actions.

Are there ethical concerns doing this? Of course. The research is highly regulated. We would only do this research because the information we're getting from the monkeys is something we cannot get

ethically from humans. But the potential for this, if it were to work in humans, is enormous, isn't it? Yes. There is about 2.4 million people worldwide that died from chronic alcohol use. Each year? Each year. And this holds out hope for them? Yes, we hope so. These individuals that just cannot stop drinking will end up killing themselves with the alcohol if there isn't an intervention. Professor Kathy Grant from the University of Oregon speaking there to Alex Ritzen. The Oscar-winning film *The Blind Side* was billed as an inspirational true story, but the man whose life it was based on now says he was exploited by the family who he believed wrongly had adopted him. This report from Charlotte Gallagher.

Big Mike. Hey, my name's Leigh-Anne Tooe. My kids go to Wingate. You said you were going to the gym.

Do you have any place to stay tonight? Don't you dare lie to me. *The Blind Side* tells the rags to riches story of Michael Owen, a black foster child who's adopted by a wealthy white family and becomes an American football star. It was a huge success and Sandra Bullock won an Oscar

for her portrayal of Leigh-Anne Tooe, Michael's adoptive mother. But Michael is now alleging he

was never adopted by the Tooe family, but tricked into a conservatorship. He says Leigh-Anne Tooe and her husband, Sean, made millions of dollars from his name. Conservatorships are court orders that appoint a parent or legal guardian to oversee the personal or financial affairs of someone incapable of fully managing them because of their age or disability.

They've been in the news a lot because Britney Spears had one until 2021 and was incredibly unhappy about it. Court documents filed in the US state of Tennessee, alleged that where other parents of Michael's classmates saw Michael simply as a nice kid in need, the Tooe saw something else,

a gullible young man whose athletic talent could be exploited for their own benefit.

Michael Owen is asking the court to terminate the conservatorship,

bar the Tooe's from continuing to profit from his name and likeness,

and establish how much money he says he's owed. He says that while the Tooe's made millions from the blind side, he received nothing. The Tooe family haven't responded to the BBC, but told a

local newspaper they hadn't made any money from the film, only a share of proceeds from a book

the movie was based on. They said they were devastated, adding it's upsetting to think we

would make money off any of our children. And that's it from us for now, but there'll be a new

edition of the Global News podcast later. If you want to comment on this podcast or the topics

covered in it, send us an email. The address is GlobalPodcast at BBC.co.uk. You can also find us

on Twitter at Global NewsPod. This edition was mixed by Chesney Fox Porter, the producer was

Tracy Gordon. The editor is Karen Martin. I'm Valerie Anderson, and until next time, bye-bye.