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Alanna Leslie: Hi. Imagine if you had to decrease the numbers of wild cats in a country. How would you handle it? That's the case for Australia and, later on, we'll hear more about how they're handling the situation.

I'm Alana Leslie in London and it's time for me to bring you Newsreel World, news from English-speaking countries all over the world.

Liberia: University financing

First... everyone likes free stuff, right? In London, we get given free newspapers on the underground and in Sweden you get free lunch in school, right? It's great. In Liberia, they've recently made university education free for students. They did this because students were protesting about an increase in tuition fees. So, the government said we'll just get rid of them. In principle, great for the students, right? But the Liberian government, now led by ex-footballer George Weah, didn't replace the money that Universities get from tuition fees at all. Literally nothing. Understandably, Universities have been put under severe financial strain by this. So much so that their basic ability to function has started to break down.

For Newsreel World, Harriet Gaye reports from a University campus in Liberia's capital, Monrovia.

Harriet Gaye: The revolutionary vanguard student Unification Party at the University of Liberia is indignant about the consequences of a free tuition policy on students.

Mohamed Deygbo: My name is Mohamed Deygbo. I'm the chairman of the National Unification Party. The issue of the free tuition is now serving as a very major impediment to the growth and development of the University. Sometimes, electricity come at eleven o'clock, before there's no electricity So the whole campus is dark!



Harriet Gaye: Exams were disrupted at the end of July after university staff had gone without pay for two months and refused to work.

Massa Konneh: I'm Massa Konneh. For this gone semester, we have to agitate for the lecturers to get their salaries.

Harriet Gaye: The bus service taking students between campuses has stopped functioning since the free tuition came in, student Ephraim Nyumah explains.

Ephraim Nyumah: Students have to get on commercial buses to get to campus. By the time you get to the bus station, there is no car. You got to wait for one hour, two hours. You cannot see car.

Harriet Gaye: The government has placed a ban on student political activities as increasing economic hardship has led to protests in Monrovia. The biggest protest so far was in June, not far from the University of Liberia's main campus. It attracted around 10,000 people calling for an end to bad governance and corruption. Until the situation improves, students are thinking of ways around the challenges so they can continue to learn. Here's a 20-year-old Mary Korpo Kerkula.

Mary Korpo Kerkula: One thing that have helped us is our smartphones because once you are on track with your class semester agenda you can look through it, get to know the topic then make research to be ahead.

Harriet Gaye: This is Harriet Gaye in Monrovia Liberia reporting for Newsreel World.

Pakistan: Extra holiday

Alanna Leslie: Now Pakistan... The summer holidays were only a few weeks ago but wouldn't it be great to be told you're getting more time off unexpectedly. Then what if you get all excited about being off and find out it was a lie. That would suck, right? In Pakistan earlier this month, that's exactly what happened. An official looking document started circulating on social media saying that people in Pakistan would have an extra four days holiday for Muharram; a national holiday celebrating the beginning of the Islamic calendar. So many people believed it, that the Pakistani government had to issue a denial saying that the document was fake. Which just shows always double check what you read online.



Australia: Cat problems

Alanna Leslie: Now, Australia... Are you a cat person? I am. I had a cat called Honey, and she had a really strange habit of bringing lizards into the house from outside and playing with them. Australia has a lot of wild cats. Cats aren't a native species there as they first arrived in the country with British colonists in the 18th century. And these feral cats are having a massive and harmful effect on the local ecology. The Australian Government is taking some pretty strong action to deal with the problem.

For Newsreel World, here's Lily Mayers with more...

Lily Mayers: Australia's home to more than 800 native bird species. Many can't be found anywhere else in the world. But the country is facing an extinction crisis. The biggest threat to birds and other small mammals is an increasingly uncontrollable pest. In West Australia, the government's even considering whether to enforce new laws which would keep house cats indoors permanently or during certain times of the day. Chief Science Officer John Kanowski from the Australian Wildlife Conservancy says part of the national plan to control feral cats includes killing two million of them by 2020.

John Kanowski: Feral cats the main cause of extinctions in Australian mammals. Australia has the worst record of mammal extinctions in the world.

Lily Mayers: So, they are the primary threat to endangered species, small mammals in Australia?

John Kanowski: Yep that's correct.

Kate Leaver: Do you think it's fair enough that we should be culling feral cats if they're killing so many native animals?

Australian student (male): That's a good question, I can't say I've thought about it much!

Lily Mayers: While many understand the pressure cats are putting on our native wildlife, the cull has Australians split.

Australian student (female): I completely encourage any attempt to protect any native wildlife especially birds and anything that is very uniquely Australian.



Australian student (male): I'm not a vegan so I guess I don't have anything ethically against killing animals if it's for the greater good.

Australian student (female): No, I don't think they should be killed because I think that they're just unlucky that they don't have a home. If they do think it's a problem maybe they can sterilize them, yeah; but not kill them.

Lily Mayers: Fair or not the government has already started taking them out in targeted areas important to threatened species. But cats are an admirable opponent, they're extremely adaptive and live everywhere from the mountains to deserts and beaches.

The Republic of Ireland: Separate housing – including or excluding people?

Alanna Leslie: Now the Republic of Ireland. Starting university can be really exciting, but also massively nerve-racking. You're moving away from home, often to a new city or country, to live with complete strangers. Basically, you're massively outside of your comfort zone in pretty much every single way. For me moving from Jamaica to the UK for University was a huge culture shock. And the weather was completely different. My accent stuck out so much because it was different to everyone else's and at times it made me feel really uncomfortable and out of place. But it did get better over time. Limerick, a city in the south west of the Republic of Ireland is pioneering a scheme that's designed to help new students from the LGBTQ community feel more comfortable.

Reporting for Newsreel World, Sarah Coleman has more.

Sarah Coleman: The new term has started here at the University of Limerick and a pioneering scheme has begun this semester known as Rainbow Housing. This is optional on-campus accommodation exclusively for students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and allied. University of Limerick is the first college in Ireland to introduce the scheme, and I asked some students on campus what they thought about it.

Irish student (male) Definitely good news for anyone who's looking to come into the university and wants to feel included within the community in that sense.

Sarah Coleman: Megan Thornton, a U.L. student, came out as queer during her first year of college at U.L.

Megan Thornton: When I, like, initially saw it I was like oh I don't know how I feel about that. But, literally, when I even gave it a second's thought and thought about my own



experience I realised that it's something that's really necessary. When I started going to college, I just came out to my parents just came out to my friends. I had no idea how to come out to people that I didn't know. And suddenly, I was going into a house full of eight strangers and I didn't know how they were going to react to me being queer.

Sarah Coleman: However not everyone is in favour of the scheme. Nicky Anderson, who is also a student at U.L, says lots of her friends who were part of the LGBTQ community were unsure as to why it was being introduced.

Nicky Anderson: Most of them actually didn't agree with it. They felt that it was excluding them. It was making them feel like people wanted them to be separated which isn't the case because we're all friends with them and they themselves had really positive experiences in normal housing. So, they just kind of didn't realize why it was being brought in.

Alanna Leslie: Thanks Sara. That's it for today.

This is Newsreel World. I'm Alana Leslie. Let's catch up soon.