

# World sadder, angrier than ever before

CNN ONLINE

It's not just you -- the world really is getting more miserable. People across the earth are sadder, angrier and more fearful than ever before, according to a major analysis of global well-being. All three emotions rose to record levels in 2018 -- for the second consecutive year -- in Gallup's annual Global State of Emotions report.

In the most recent 12 months dominated by war, political crises and humanitarian emergencies across the globe, Chad took the unwelcome honor of being the world's most negative country.

It was followed by Niger, Sierra Leone and Iraq, while Latin American nations dominated on the positive side. Iran, Palestinian Territories also made the worst 10 list.

Gallup charted humanity's prolonged slump by holding 151,000 interviews in 2018 with adults in more than 140 countries. It has measured emotions annually since 2006.

In 2018, about 4 in 10 people said they experienced a lot of worry the day before the interview, while a third said they were stressed and nearly 3 in 10 said they felt a lot of physical pain. A quarter experienced sadness, and 22% were angry.

People were also quizzed on positive emotions, prompting some



brighter news. Globally, more than 7 in 10 people said they experienced enjoyment, felt well-rested, and smiled or laughed a lot on the day before the survey, while 87% said they were treated with respect.

Paraguay regained the top spot as the world's happiest and most positive country. It fought off close competition from Panama, Guatemala, Mexico, El Salvador and Honduras -- despite such nations suffering high levels of poverty and violence. Indonesia was the most positive nation outside of the Americas.

Scandinavian countries usually top lists of the world's happiest countries, with four -- Finland, Denmark, Norway and Iceland -- coming out in front this year in the UN's World Happiness Report. Gallup's interview-led approach, however, has repeatedly found higher levels of fulfillment in Latin America.



Russian President Vladimir Putin talks with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un at the Far Eastern Federal University campus on Russky island in the far-eastern Russian port of Vladivostok, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



## Biden joins 2020 White House race

AFP, Washington

Former US Vice President Joe Biden jumped into the race for the White House yesterday, positioning the veteran Democrat as a frontrunner among the many candidates seeking to challenge Donald Trump in 2020.

The party's 76-year-old senior statesman is the most experienced and recognised Democrat in the race, a popular former vice president who has been dominating early polls following months -- even years -- of campaign planning.

In a tweet accompanied by a three-and-a-half-minute video, Biden said he could not stand idly by as US President Donald Trump "fundamentally altered the character of this nation".

"The core values of this nation... our standing in the world... our very democracy... everything that has made America -- America -- is at stake," he wrote in the post.

"That's why today I'm announcing my candidacy for President of the United States."

Biden, whose working-class appeal remains intact despite nearly half a century in Washington politics, is seen as a comforting, known quantity for American voters who will be vetting some 20 Democrats now officially in the presidential field.

The RealClearPolitics poll aggregate puts him as favourite with 29.3 percent support, followed by independent Senator Bernie Sanders at 23 percent.

The record number of candidates means Biden finds himself in a field of unprecedented diversity as he makes his third run for president, following two unsuccessful attempts in 1988 and 2008.

### DENUCLEARISATION OF KOREAN PENINSULA

# US guarantees not enough

Says Putin as he meets visiting Kim; leaders vow to seek closer ties

AGENCIES

Russian President Vladimir Putin said after holding his first face-to-face talks with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un that US security guarantees would probably not be enough to persuade Pyongyang to shut its nuclear programme.

Putin and Kim held a day of talks on an island off the Russian Pacific city of Vladivostok two months after Kim's summit with US President Donald Trump ended in disagreement, cooling hopes of a breakthrough in the decades-old nuclear row.

The talks between Putin and Kim did not appear to have yielded any major breakthrough.

But Putin, keen to use the summit to burnish Russia's diplomatic credentials as a global player, said he believed any US guarantees might need to be supported by the other nations involved in previous six-way talks on the nuclear issue.

That would mean including Russia, China, Japan and South Korea as well as the United States and

North Korea, a long-standing format that has been sidelined by unilateral US efforts to broker a deal.

"They (the North Koreans) only need guarantees about their security. That's it. All of us together need to think about this," Putin told reporters after talks with Kim.

"...I'm deeply convinced that if we get to a situation when some kind of security guarantees are needed from one party, in this case for North Korea, that it won't be possible to get by without international guarantees. It's unlikely that any agreements between two countries will be enough."

Such guarantees would have to be international, legally-binding, and vouch for North Korea's sovereignty, said Putin.

The two leaders appeared to get on well. The first session between Putin and Kim, comprising one-on-one talks with just a few aides present, lasted twice as long as the 50 minutes allocated in the schedule.

Putin described Kim as "quite open" and as "thoughtful" and "interesting".

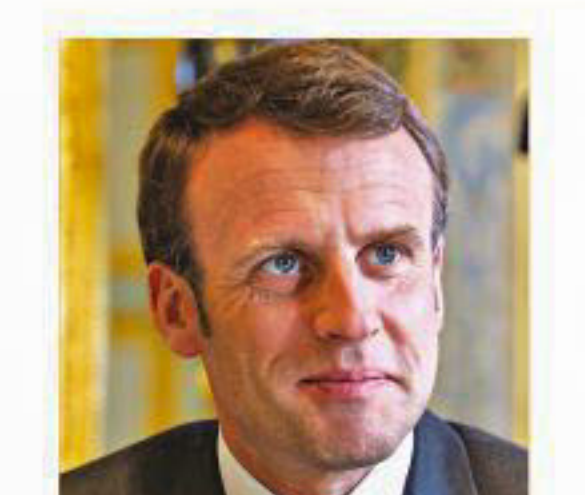
Promising to brief the Chinese and US leadership about his talks, Putin said he thought a deal on Pyongyang's nuclear programme was possible and that the way to get there was to move forward step-by-step in order to build trust.

Kim, who arrived in Vladivostok on Wednesday on board his armoured train, said the situation on the Korean peninsula "is an issue that the world is very interested in".

Before the Putin-Kim meet, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Wednesday he expected "bumpy" talks ahead with North Korea but that he still hoped to reach a potentially landmark denuclearization deal.

In an interview with CBS News, Pompeo said the Hanoi summit had more "nuance" than publicly reported, with the two sides sharing their positions.

North Korea has demanded an easing of sanctions and Trump has indicated sympathy, saying he is fond of Kim.



## Macron set to unveil key reform plan

AFP, Paris

French President Emmanuel Macron was yesterday set to unveil his long-awaited response to nearly six months of street protests as he lays out reform plans that could prove decisive for his political future.

Macron, 41, swept to power in 2017 on hopes he would be a youthful breath of fresh air for France.

But over the past six months, the momentum has been knocked out of his presidency following the emergence of the anti-government "yellow vest" movement which has held weekly protests against social inequality.

Thursday's address, scheduled for 1600 GMT, will see Macron holding his first-ever full domestic news conference to outline a series of reforms drawn up after a vast listening exercise launched in response to the protests.

He is expected to announce a series of important but not revolutionary measures, including tax cuts for the middle classes and the re-evaluation of small pensions -- both of which were among the demands of the yellow vest protesters.

But most of the reforms are already known after leaks to the press, including the likely closure of the ENA administration school which has become a direct feeder for the French elite.



Climate change activists block traffic in the City of London financial district during environmental protests by the Extinction Rebellion group in London, yesterday. Environmentalists glued themselves to the London Stock Exchange entrance and staged impromptu concerts in the middle of traffic on the final day of a campaign that brought parts of the UK capital to a standstill.

PHOTO: AFP

### SAD TALE OF WORLD'S TROPICAL FORESTS

# 120,000 sq km lost in 2018

AFP, Paris

Last year humanity destroyed an expanse of tropical forest nearly the size of England, the fourth largest decline since global satellite data became available in 2001, researchers reported yesterday.

The pace of the loss is staggering -- the equivalent of 30 football fields disappearing every minute of every day in 2018, or a total of 120,000 square kilometres (46,000 square miles).

Almost a third of that area, some 36,000 km<sup>2</sup>, was pristine primary rainforest, according to the annual assessment from scientists at Global Forest Watch, based at the University of Maryland.

"For the first time, we can distinguish tree cover loss within undisturbed natural rainforests, which contain trees that can be hundreds, even thousands, of years old," team manager Mikaela Weisse told AFP.

Rainforests are the planet's richest repository of wildlife and a critical sponge

for soaking up planet-heating CO<sub>2</sub>. Global forest loss peaked in 2016, fuelled in part by El Nino weather conditions and uncontrolled fires in Brazil and Indonesia.

The main drivers are the livestock industry and large-scale commodity agriculture -- palm oil in Asia and Africa, soy beans and biofuel crops in South America. Small-scale commercial farming -- of cocoa, for example -- can also lead to the clearing of forests.

Nearly a third of primary forest destruction took place in Brazil (13,500 km<sup>2</sup>), with the Democratic Republic of Congo (4,800 km<sup>2</sup>), Indonesia (3,400 km<sup>2</sup>), Colombia (1,800 km<sup>2</sup>) and Bolivia (1,500 km<sup>2</sup>) rounding out the top five.

Madagascar lost two percent of its entire rainforest in 2018.

Globally, forests absorb about 30 percent of manmade greenhouse gas emissions, just over 11 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year.



## Judges to join protests

3 military council members resign after 'deal' with Sudan protesters

REUTERS, Khartoum

Sudanese judges will march from the Supreme Court in Khartoum to a sit-in outside the Defence Ministry, joining for the first time the anti-government protests, one of the judges said yesterday.

Omar al-Bashir was overthrown by the military on April 11 after months of protests against his rule. The march is the first by judges in Sudan since before Bashir took power in an Islamist-backed military coup in 1989.

After ousting Bashir, the military established a Transitional Military Council (TMC) to run Sudan for a period of up to two years.

The opposition has demanded a rapid handover of power to civilians. The sit-in outside the Defence Ministry, which began five days before Bashir's removal, has continued as protest leaders press for faster and deeper change.

The Sudanese Professionals' Association, which spearheaded the anti-Bashir protests, called for a million-strong march to take place at the Defence Ministry on Thursday.

On Wednesday evening, the opposition and the TMC agreed to form a committee to resolve their differences.

The TMC and the opposition had appeared on a collision course over popular demands for democratisation under civilian government. The SPA had declared on Sunday it would suspend talks with the military council.

Three members of the TMC resigned, including the head of its political committee tasked with negotiating with the opposition, the TMC said late on Wednesday, but their resignations are yet to be accepted.

## 157 children rescued from trafficking ring

More than 150 children -- some as young as 11 -- were among 220 people rescued from sex and labor trafficking rings in West Africa, Interpol said. Most of the victims were beaten, subjected to abuses and told they would never see their families again by their traffickers, said Interpol. They came from West African countries including the Republic of Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, and Togo. Local police working with Interpol rescued some of the victims from places where they were forced to become sex workers, and the majority were working as servants in markets in both countries. Forty-seven people were arrested following the raid, the agency said. The months-long operation began in 2018 and involved local law enforcement officers and anti-trafficking agencies in Republic of Benin and Nigeria -- countries identified as hotspots for child labor trafficking, it added.

## Chad: The country without internet

How do you run a digital business when your country's president has shutdown the internet? The social media blackout in Chad began in March 2018 after recommended reforms to the constitution that would allow President Idriss Deby to stay in power until 2033, when he will be 81. Deby has been in power since 1990 and had previously pledged to restore term limits before the country's 2016 elections. Since March 2018, people in Chad have been unable to access sites such as WhatsApp, Viber, Facebook, and Twitter. Internet shutdowns are frequently used by governments across Africa. In 2019 alone, Sudan, Zimbabwe, and the Democratic Republic of Congo have all enforced a shutdown for various reasons.

## Automation threaten 14 pc of existing jobs

Robots and computers threaten 14 percent of existing jobs over the next 20 years, so countries must retrain workers for a transformed labour market, the OECD warned yesterday. In a report published in Berlin, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) estimates that in addition to the destruction of jobs and entire trades, an additional 32 percent of current jobs are likely to be "deeply transformed" by automation in the work place. According to OECD General Secretary Angel Gurría, the lack of preparation for the looming digital age is a time bomb on social and political levels. "It is important that people feel that they will be supported if they lose out, and helped in their search for new and better opportunities," he said in a foreword to the report.



SOURCE: AFP, CNN