

Sanction-hit North Korea's average rain and snowfall this year fell to the lowest level in 37 years, Pyongyang's state media said yesterday. The isolated, impoverished nation has long struggled to feed itself and suffers chronic food shortages. Last month, the WFP and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation said in a joint report that North Korea's crop output last year hit the lowest level since 2008, and that an estimated 10 million people -- 40 percent of the entire population -- are in urgent need of food.

Trump Jr agrees to testify in Senate

AFP, Washington

President Donald Trump's son Donald Jr has agreed to testify before the Senate Intelligence Committee investigating Russian election meddling, US media reported Tuesday. The agreement resolved a looming fight between the Congress and the White House after Donald Jr was subpoenaed by the Republican-led committee last week.

China blocks all language editions of Wikipedia

AFP, Beijing

Beijing has broadened its block of online encyclopedia Wikipedia to include all language editions, reported internet censorship research group OONI. It said China started blocking all language editions of Wikipedia last month. Previously, most editions of Wikipedia -- besides the Chinese language version, which was reportedly blocked in 2015 -- were available, OONI said in their report. China's online censorship apparatus -- dubbed the "Great Firewall" -- blocks a large number of foreign sites in the country, such as Google, Facebook and The New York Times.

No civilization is superior

Says Chinese President Xi as US trade war heats up

CNN ONLINE

Chinese President Xi Jinping has urged countries not to "close their doors and hide behind them" in his first major public speech since US President Donald Trump raised tariffs on \$200 billion of Chinese goods amid an escalating trade war.

Opening the Conference on Asian Civilizations Dialogue in Beijing yesterday, Xi said there was no need for "civilizations to clash with each other."

"No civilization is superior over others. The thought that one's own race and civilization are superior and the inclination to remodel or replace other civilizations are just stupid," he said, adding to do so would invite "catastrophic consequences."

China retaliated to Trump's latest round of increases on Monday, raising tariffs on roughly \$60 billion of US exports. One editorial in state media said, "for us, this is a real 'people's war.'"

Trade is just one of several fronts on which the US and China have clashed

in recent months. Xi's speech touched on a topic thrown into a spotlight by top US State Department official Kiron Skinner in late April, when she controversially said that China was Washington's first "great power competitor that is not Caucasian."

"When we think about the Soviet Union and that competition, in a

way it was a fight within the western family ... That's not really possible with China. This is a fight with a really different civilization and a different ideology," Skinner said.

Speaking at yesterday's conference, which featured representatives from 47 countries, Xi praised the achievements of China and other Asian nations over

the centuries and said all civilizations needed to learn from each other.

As recently as late April, the US and China appeared to be close to ending the year-long trade war.

But there has been little progress on trade talks since a Chinese delegation left Washington on Friday, sources close to the situation said.

Both countries have blamed each other for the breakdown in negotiations, with Trump saying on Tuesday that Beijing "broke" the deal.

Nevertheless, Trump appeared to play down the split between the two countries, describing it as a "little squabble."

There are still hopes for a deal, with a US trade delegation expected to head to Beijing in the coming weeks.

Xi and Trump are also expected to meet in Japan during the G20 in June.

Chinese state media has been on the offensive since the recent breakdown of talks, publishing fiercely nationalistic opinion pieces and articles proclaiming China's resilience.

Facebook vice-president of integrity Guy Rosen said in a statement.

Ardern and Macron will later issue the Christchurch Call to fight the spread of hateful and terror-related content along with leaders from Britain, Canada, Norway, Jordan and Senegal, who will also be in Paris.

The largely symbolic initiative is intended to keep up the pressure on social media companies who face growing calls from politicians across the world to stop their platforms being abused.

"It's an action plan, it's the start of something," Ardern told CNN in an interview yesterday.

First-time offenders will be suspended from using Live for set periods of time, Facebook said in a statement.

Many countries have already tightened legislation to introduce penalties for companies that fail to take down offensive content once it is flagged by authorities.

Facebook announced yesterday it would tighten access to its live streaming feature as New Zealand's premier Jacinda Ardern and French leader Emmanuel Macron prepared to launch the global "Christchurch Call" initiative to tackle the spread of extremism online.

Facebook boss Mark Zuckerberg has been under intense pressure since March when a white supremacist gunman used Facebook Live to stream his rampage at two mosques in the New Zealand city of Christchurch, which left 51 people dead.

The California-based platform said it

would ban Facebook Live users who shared extremist content and seek to reinforce its own internal controls to stop the spread of offensive videos.

Following the horrific recent terrorist attacks in New Zealand, we've been

reviewing what more we can do to limit our services from being used to cause harm

once it is flagged by authorities.

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