



USA OUTLOOK

Weekly newsletter | January 07 to 11



Foto: The New York Times

World Bank President Abruptly Resigns

The World Bank said on Monday that its president, Jim Yong Kim, would step down from his post in February to join a private infrastructure investment firm, an unexpected departure that comes nearly three years before the end of his term. The abrupt resignation, which is effective Feb. 1, could prompt a clash between the Trump administration and other governments over the future of the international body. The United States traditionally selects the president of the World Bank, which is made up of more than 100 countries, but Mr. Trump has taken a skeptical view about the importance of multilateral institutions. The World Bank's priorities — like combating climate change and engaging in foreign aid — also tend to be at odds with those of the Trump administration. Last month, the bank announced it would invest \$200 billion toward fighting climate change over a five-year period.

The Trump administration did surprise some development experts last year when it supported a \$13 billion capital increase for the World Bank, the first such boost since 2010. The increase, which the White House had initially resisted, was conditional on the bank putting cost controls in place and came with the understanding that lending to China would be expected to decline. The bank lent \$64 billion to developing countries last year, a figure that included China. Mr. Kim was first appointed by the Obama administration in 2012, on the recommendation of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and was reappointed by President Barack Obama in 2016 to serve a second five-year term.

During his time at the helm of the bank, Mr. Kim worked to overhaul its structure, which historically was built around a model of rich countries financing the development of poor countries. Mr. Kim sought new sources of financing, encouraging private investors such as sovereign wealth funds, private equity firms and insurance companies to contribute trillions of dollars for projects in places like Indonesia, Zambia and India. The strategy rankled some traditionalists at the bank.

Fuente
<https://edition.cnn.com/2019/01/08/investing/amazon-most-valuable-company-microsoft-google-apple/index.html>



Foto: USA Today

USA had world's 3 costliest natural disasters in 2018, and Camp Fire was the worst

Racking up an overall damage cost of \$16.5 billion, the devastating and deadly Camp Fire that ravaged California in November was the world's costliest natural disaster in 2018. The data come from a report issued Tuesday by Munich Re, a reinsurance firm.

In second and third place last year were Hurricanes Michael (\$16 billion) and Florence (\$14 billion). Florence dumped heavy rain across the Carolinas in September, and Michael tore into the Florida Panhandle in October. Michael, which had a wind speed of 155 mph at landfall, was the fourth-strongest hurricane on record to hit the USA. It reduced the small town of Mexico Beach, Florida, to rubble.

The disastrous Camp Fire, California's deadliest on record with 86 fatalities, stood out for its ferocity: "Such massive wildfires appear to be occurring more frequently as a result of climate change," said Munich Re's Torsten Jeworrek. "Action is urgently needed on building codes and land use to help prevent losses." Ernst Rauch, Munich Re's head of climate and geosciences, said, "Our data shows that the losses from wildfires in California have risen dramatically in recent years. At the same time, we have experienced a significant increase in hot, dry summers, which has been a major factor in the formation of wildfires. Many scientists see a link between these developments and advancing climate change."

As for the hurricanes, since most of the property destroyed by Michael was caused by wind, a large part of the damage was insured. Since the destruction from Florence was due to rain and floods, a large portion of the damage was not insured. Flooding is not normally covered under standard homeowners' insurance policies in the USA.

The total cost for all the natural catastrophes globally in 2018 was \$160 billion. Though far below the extreme total of \$350 billion in 2017, it's above the long-term average of \$140 billion.

Fuente
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2019/01/08/natural-disasters-camp-fire-worlds-costliest-catastrophe-2018/2504865002/>

IBM CEO Ginni Rometty at CES 2019: Better weather forecast, food safety are coming soon

Racking up an overall damage cost of \$16.5 billion, the devastating and deadly Camp Fire that ravaged California in November was the world's costliest natural disaster in 2018. The data come from a report issued Tuesday by Munich Re, a reinsurance firm. A more accurate weather forecasting model. Technology that may help ensure that the foods you eat are safe and fresh, or that can pinpoint the genesis of a problem in the case of a recall. And an artificial intelligence system that can take a pro-con position on a hotly-debated topic in which you argue the other side.

It is a mouthful. But IBM's new Global High-Resolution Atmospheric Forecasting System, or GRAF for short, is a global weather forecasting system that uses IBM supercomputers and taps into millions of previously untapped crowd-sourced data to more accurately forecast the weather around the world, by what IBM claims represents a nearly 200 percent improvement.

The new model can draw on sensor readings from aircraft and may in fact help airlines better manage turbulence. "That's the most important thing for us," says Ed Bastian, CEO of Delta. "There continues to be a lot of volatility in the air and while we've done a lot of work ourselves with our meteorology group and our weather forecasting capabilities, to be able to access additional insight from their weather group would be fabulous. You may have heard about "blockchain," the technology behind Bitcoin and other so-called cryptocurrencies. IBM is leveraging blockchain as part of a Food Trust platform it has established to help food safety and freshness.

Rometty attempts to simplify the blockchain concept this way: "Pretend that we have one set of books (among rival businesses) and there's no erasers. It is a way that people who don't trust each other can actually transact with each other."

When we started in food safety, she adds, "Walmart, Carrefour, Kroger – they're competitors. Yet they're going to share the data that shows where all of their romaine lettuce is, in addition to farmers who produce the romaine lettuce. ... This is for the good of all of us because if there's a romaine breakout it hurts everyone. ... If we can pinpoint where it's from, we don't waste food and we save lives by quickly getting that data. If I'm Kroger, (say), it's OK for the farmer to see that data; I just don't want Walmart to see it."



Foto: USA Today

Fuente

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/columnist/baig/2019/01/08/ces-2019-ibm-ceo-says-weather-forecasts-get-better/2483702002/>

Amazon is now the most valuable Company on the planet

It passed Microsoft (MSFT) Monday to take over the top spot. Amazon's stock rallied another 1% Tuesday and the company is now worth nearly \$810 billion, compared to about \$790 billion for Microsoft.

Amazon is up 10% already this year. And Bezos, thanks largely to his 16% ownership stake in Amazon, is worth about \$135 billion, according to Forbes and Bloomberg. Bezos also owns space exploration company Blue Origin and The Washington Post. Bezos has a more-than-\$40-billion lead over the world's second richest person, Microsoft cofounder Bill Gates.

Still, Amazon's rise to the top of the world's most valuable rankings doesn't mean that Amazon is trading at its highest price ever. The company briefly topped the trillion-dollar mark last September.

But Amazon (AMZN) and other tech stocks have all tumbled from their peaks in the past few months along with the broader market. Amazon's shares are still nearly 20% below their record high.

Apple has fallen even further. Not too long ago, Apple was the most valuable company on Earth with a market cap that peaked above \$1.1 trillion. It's down more than 35% from its all-time high.

Investors have punished Apple (AAPL) because of slowing demand for smartphones. The company's stock plunged last week when it warned its iPhone sales would be lower than forecast for its most recent quarter, largely because of weakness in China.

The company's market cap is now \$710 billion. It's fallen to fourth place behind Amazon, Microsoft and Google owner Alphabet (GOOGL), which has a market value of about \$750 billion.



Foto: KYW Newsradio

Fuente

<https://edition.cnn.com/2019/01/08/tech/stock/index.html>



Foto: CNN.com

Surgeries in Mexico linked to antibiotic-resistant infections in US, CDC says

Some Americans who had surgery in Tijuana, Mexico, have returned home with dangerous antibiotic-resistant infections, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Wednesday.

All of the travelers diagnosed with the life-threatening bacteria, carbapenem-resistant *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* or CRPA, had undergone invasive medical procedures. The most common procedure was weight-loss surgery, the CDC said. The agency did not say when the surgeries took place or how many patients were infected.

"Infections caused by this particular drug-resistant *Pseudomonas* are rare in the United States and difficult to treat," the CDC said. Patients typically require long and "complex antibacterial drug combinations and courses" to defeat the infection.

The CDC says the Mexican government has closed Grand View Hospital "until further notice," but the agency still suggests that travelers not have surgery there until the authorities have confirmed that the drug-resistant bacteria are no longer present.

"Medical tourism," or traveling to another country for medical care, is a growing trend around the world. Between 11 million and 14 million people travel each year for medical care, according to industry estimates. Top destinations include Costa Rica, India, Israel, Malaysia, Mexico, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey and the United States, according to *Patients Beyond Borders*, a guide to medical tourism. Many people are drawn by the potential for lower costs.

According to its latest survey of providers, about 72% of the patients who used medical tourism traveled for cancer, spine and other orthopedic treatments, followed by cosmetic and

plastic surgery procedures, and cardiovascular and neurosurgeries.

Over 50% of the surgeries cost between \$10,000 and \$50,000, while 16% were between \$50,000 and \$100,000, the survey said.

The CDC has a number of suggestions for anyone thinking about medical tourism, including researching the health care provider or surgeon, as well as the clinic or hospital. Choose internationally credentialed facilities, and be aware that standards for providers and clinics in other countries may be different than those in the United States.



Fuente

<https://edition.cnn.com/2019/01/10/health/mexico-surgery-antibiotic-resistant-infection-cdc/index.html>