

China's economy slows to 4.8% annual growth, hit by tariffs, slack demand

HONG KONG, Oct 20 (AP)

CHINA'S economy expanded at the slowest annual pace in a year in July-September, growing 4.8 per cent, weighed down by trade tensions with the United States and slack domestic demand.

The July-September data was the weakest pace of growth since the third quarter of 2024, and compares with a 5.2 per cent pace of growth in the previous quarter, the Government said in a report Monday.

In January-September, the world's second largest economy grew at a 5.2 per cent annual pace. Despite US President Donald Trump's higher tariffs on imports from China, the country's exports have remained relatively strong as companies shifted their sales to other world markets. Tensions between Beijing and Washington remain elevated, and it's unclear if Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping will go ahead with a proposed meeting during a regional summit at the end of this month.

Xi and other ruling Communist Party members are convening one of China's most important political meetings for the year on Monday, where they will



map out economic and social policy goals for the country for the next five years.

The economy slowed in the last quarter as the authorities moved to curb fierce price wars in sectors such as the auto industry that resulted from overcapacity.

China is also facing challenges including a prolonged property sector downturn which has been affecting consumption and demand.

Ratings agency S&P estimates nationwide new home sales will fall by 8 per cent in 2025 from the year before and by 6 per cent to 7 per cent in 2026.

The World Bank expects China's economy to grow at a 4.8 per cent annual rate this year. The Government's official growth target is around 5 per cent.

China's stronger economic growth in the first half of this year has given it "some buffer" to achieve the growth target, said Lynn Song, chief economist for Greater China at ING Bank. However, spending during China's eight-day Golden Week national holiday in October was "mildly disappointing," reflecting sluggish consumer confidence and demand, Morningstar analysts said in a note this month.

India going to pay 'massive tariffs' if it continues to buy Russian oil: Trump

WASHINGTON, Oct 20 (PTI)

US President Donald Trump said that India is going to pay "massive tariffs" if it continues to



buy oil from Russia while reiterating that he got assurance from Prime Minister Narendra Modi

that New Delhi is going to halt its oil purchases from Moscow.

Speaking to reporters onboard Air Force One, Trump said India will "continue to pay massive tariffs" if they do not cease buying oil from Russia, adding that "they (India) don't want to do that."

Trump was replying to a question about India's recent remarks on oil purchases from Russia.

India last week said it is "broad-basing and diversifying" its sourcing of energy to meet market conditions, hours after Trump claimed that Modi assured him that New Delhi will stop procuring Russian crude oil. Trump said he does not believe India made such remarks. "But I don't believe they said that. No, I spoke with Prime Minister Modi, and he said he's not going to be doing the Russian oil thing," the US President added. Washington has been maintaining that India is helping Putin to finance the war

Donbas region will have to be 'cut up' to end Russian invasion

ABOARD AIR FORCE ONE, Oct 20 (AP)

PRESIDENT Trump said that the Donbas region of Ukraine should be "cut up", leaving most of it in Russian hands, to end a war that has dragged on for nearly four years.

"Let it be cut the way it is," he told reporters aboard Air Force One. "It's cut up right now," adding that you can "leave it the way it is right now." "They can negotiate something later on down the line," he said. But for now, both sides of the conflict should "stop at the battle line -- go home, stop fighting, stop killing people."

through its purchase of Russian crude oil. The relations between New Delhi and Washington have been reeling under severe stress after Trump doubled tariffs on Indian goods to a whopping 50 per cent, including a 25 per cent additional duty for India's purchase of Russian crude oil.

US envoys arrive in Israel to shore up Gaza truce after major flareup

TEL AVIV, Oct 20 (AP)

SPECIAL envoy Steve Witkoff and the US President's son-in-law Jared Kushner were in Israel Monday to shore up the tenuous ceasefire that's holding in Gaza, a day after the fragile deal faced its first major flareup with Israel threatening to halt aid transfers after it said Hamas militants had killed two soldiers.

The US Embassy said the two envoys had landed in Tel Aviv. The Israeli military later said it resumed enforcing the ceasefire, and the official confirmed that aid deliveries would resume on

Monday. By early afternoon, it was not immediately clear if the flow of aid had restarted.

More than a week has passed since the start of the US-proposed truce aimed at ending two years of war. US President Donald Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One on Sunday that Hamas has been "quite rambunctious" and "they've been doing some shooting." He also suggested that the violence might be the fault of "rebels" within the organisation rather than its leadership.

Since the ceasefire started, Hamas security forces have returned to the streets in Gaza,

clashing with armed groups and killing alleged gangsters in what the militant group says is an attempt to restore law and order in areas where Israeli troops have withdrawn. On Sunday, Israel's military said militants had fired at troops in areas of Rafah city that are Israeli-controlled according to agreed-upon ceasefire lines. Hamas, which continued to accuse Israel of multiple ceasefire violations, said communication with its remaining units in Rafah had been cut off for months and "we are not responsible for any incidents occurring in those areas."

EU COUNCIL APPROVES STEPS TO conclude FTA with India by yr-end

LONDON, Oct 20 (IANS)

THE Council of the European Union on Monday approved conclusions on a new strategic EU-India agenda which include efforts to conclude a balanced, ambitious, mutually beneficial and economically meaningful free trade agreement, which the European Commission and the Indian Government aim to finalise by the end of the year.

“Such agreement must include enhanced market access, removal of trade barriers, and provisions on sustainable devel-

opment,” the Council said in a statement on its website.

The Council also emphasised the joint capacity and responsibility of the EU and India to safeguard multilateralism and the rules-based international order with the UN Charter at its core, as well as the multilateral trading system, in particular the WTO.

The promotion and protection of democratic values and norms, international law and human rights, including the rights of women and children, is an intrinsic part of the EU-India strategic agenda.

IMD issues 'cyclone alert' in Andaman & Nicobar Islands

PORT BLAIR, Oct 20 (PTI)

THE India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a 'cyclone alert' in Andaman and Nicobar Islands due to a cyclonic circulation over the Bay of Bengal, which is likely to intensify from October 21, officials said on Monday. Local port warnings have been issued in the wake of the weather system, which is likely to cause heavy rainfall till October 23, they said.

"Heavy rain (7-11 cm) is very likely to occur at one or two places over Nicobar Islands. Thunderstorms with gusty wind (40-50 kmph) and lightning are very likely to occur," an official said. Thunderstorms with gusty wind (40-50 kmph) and lightning are very likely to occur at one or two places over Andaman and Nicobar Islands on October 24 and 25, he said. "Squally weather with surface wind speed reaching 35-45 kmph gusting to 55 kmph is very likely over the

Heavy rain lashes high ranges of Kerala; orange alert in 4 districts

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, Oct 20 (PTI)

INTERMITTENT heavy rain accompanied by strong winds lashed several parts of Kerala causing inundation and traffic snarls there on Monday.

The high ranges of southern Thiruvananthapuram and northern Kozhikode districts experienced widespread rains and overcast climate throughout the day. Heavy downpour that lasted for nearly an hour caused waterlogging in Thiruvananthapuram - Thenkasi road.

Road traffic was interrupted

in Elavattom in Palode road also for some time due to inundation in the evening.

Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued an orange alert in four districts - Ernakulam, Idukki, Malappuram and Kozhikode - predicting very heavy rainfall. The rest of the districts were placed under a yellow alert. In the wake of heavy rain, the State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) asked people living in areas prone to landslides, mudslides, and flash floods to move to safer locations as directed by officials concerned.

Andaman Sea from October 22 to 23. In the coming five days, sea conditions are likely to be rough and fishermen have been

advised not to venture into the sea along and off the Andaman Sea and Andaman and Nicobar coast till October 24," he said.