

## Xi, Macron Exchange Congratulations on Successful Launch of Jointly Developed Satellite

BEIJING - Chinese President Xi Jinping and his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron on Monday exchanged congratulations on the successful launch earlier in the day of a jointly developed ocean-observing satellite.

The China-France Oceanography Satellite (CFOSat), atop a Long March-2C carrier rocket, took off at 8:43 a.m. (0043 GMT) from Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center, in northwest China's Gobi Desert, and entered a sun-synchronous orbit 520 km above the Earth.

The joint mission between the China National Space Administration (CNSA) and the Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales, the French space agency, will enable 24-hour observations of global wave spectrum, effective



wave height and ocean surface wind field. In his congratulatory message to Macron, Xi said space cooperation is an important part of the China-France comprehensive strategic

partnership, and the successful launch of the jointly developed oceanography satellite represents the latest result, which will play a significant role in global marine environment

monitoring, disaster management and reduction, and fight against climate change, among others. (Xinhua)

## Neighbor News

### Turkmenistan Committed to Step up Co-Op with Turkey: President

ASHGABAT - Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov has sent a congratulatory letter to his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan and all Turkish people on the occasion of the Republic Day of Turkey, celebrated Oct. 29, the Turkmen government said in a message.

The letter reads that the traditionally friendly and fraternal relations between Turkmenistan and Turkey are distinguished by a high level of mutual understanding and cooperation. Turkmen president expressed firm confidence in the further development and strengthening of relations in the interests of the peoples of the two

countries. Turkey is one of the largest trade partners of Turkmenistan: about 600 Turkish companies operating in trade, investment, construction, energy, transport, communications, textile and processing industries have been registered in Turkmenistan. Turkmenistan exports the products of textile, energy, chemical, agricultural industries. Metals and products made of metals, household goods, equipment, building materials, electrical goods, products of chemical and light industries, food products, vehicles, and medicines are imported from Turkey. (Trend)

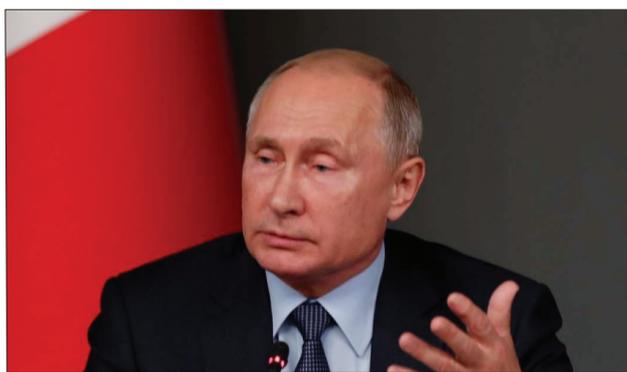
### India's Modi and Japan's Abe Draw Closer as Tokyo Woos Beijing

TOKYO - Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe agreed to seek closer economic and military ties on Monday as the Japanese leader extended a diplomatic charm offensive that last week took him to India's regional rival, China. In a joint statement, the two leaders said they would begin regular talks between their foreign and defense ministers and committed to extending cooperation

in areas ranging from agriculture and digital technology to investment in Indian rail projects and infrastructure. Abe and Modi also said they would conclude a \$75 billion bilateral currency swap agreement and welcomed an agreement to deepen cooperation between their two navies. "A strong India benefits Japan and a strong Japan benefits India," Abe told reporters after he and Modi signed the statement. (Reuters)

### Putin Wants to Discuss U.S. Exit from Nuclear Pact with Trump in Paris: Kremlin

MOSCOW - Russian President Vladimir Putin wants to discuss U.S. plans to exit the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) arms treaty with Donald Trump when the two meet in Paris on Nov. 11, the Kremlin said on Monday. Trump and Putin plan to hold a bilateral meeting in Paris on the sidelines of events to commemorate the centenary of the end of World War One. "There are still a lot of questions concerning strategic stability, even



more so in the context of the stated U.S. intention to leave the INF. All

of this will of course be on the agenda," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry

Peskov told reporters on a conference call. (Reuters)

### Merkel will not Seek Re-Election as CDU Chair after Hesse Election Debacle



BERLIN - Angela Merkel will not seek re-election as party chair of CDU, which she has headed for 18 years. The information comes a day after her party

suffered another major setback in a local election. The German chancellor, who has chaired the ruling Christian Democratic Union since 2000, was ex-

pected to compete again at the party congress in Hamburg in early December. On Sunday, her party suffered another major set-

back in local elections, this time in the state of Hesse. The CDU managed to get 28 percent of the vote, which marks a massive drop from the 38.3 percent won during Hesse's last election in 2013. The 64-year-old Merkel has decided not to stand for re-election as well as to give up the chancellorship. She said on Monday that she wants to serve her full term as German chancellor until 2021. Merkel also ruled out running for any senior positions in the European Union. (Russia Today)

### Khashoggi Body Not Found Yet: Turkish FM

ISTANBUL - The body of slain Saudi Arabian journalist Jamal Khashoggi has not been found yet, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Monday. The minister also told the press in Istanbul that Saudi Arabia's Chief Prosecutor Sheikh Saud al-Mojeb met with Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor Irfan Fidan in the city earlier in the day and had "very beneficial" exchange of information about the death of Khashoggi. According to broadcaster CNNTurk, the pair exchanged pieces of evidence and information about the

murder of Khashoggi, who has not been seen since he entered the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on Oct. 2. Press reports said the meeting between the chief prosecutors lasted an hour and 15 minutes, and al-Mojeb is expected to conduct an investigation at the Saudi consulate later in the day. Saudi Arabia admitted that the journalist was killed inside the kingdom's consulate and 18 people were arrested over their alleged connections to the killing as a result of an internal investigation into the case. (Xinhua)

### Philippines Doubts ASEAN, China can come up with Legally Binding South China Sea Code

MANILA - The Philippines' new foreign minister said on Monday the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations and China would unlikely be able to arrive at a legally binding code of conduct for the South China Sea. ASEAN and China this year started formal negotiations for a code of conduct to ease tensions brought by conflicting claims over a strategic waterway where about \$3 trillion worth of sea-borne goods passes every year. "Perhaps we will not be able to arrive at a legally binding code of conduct," Foreign Secretary Teodoro Locsin told a news conference in southern Davao City after holding talks with his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi. (Reuters)

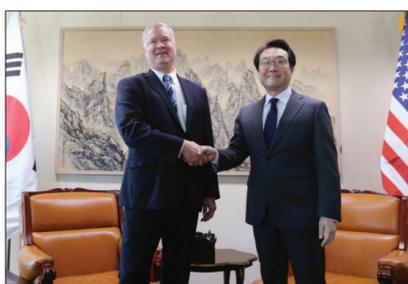
### Sweden Closer to Snap Election as Lofven Drops Bid to Form Government

STOCKHOLM - Sweden's Social Democrat leader Stefan Lofven gave up an attempt to form a government on Monday, making a snap national election more likely. The country has been run by a caretaker administration under Lofven after voters delivered a hung parliament on Sept. 9 that left the anti-immigration Sweden Democrats holding the balance of power.

Neither Lofven's center-left bloc nor the center-right group of parties has been willing to do a deal that gives them a say in policy. "In light of the responses I have had so far, in the current situation, the possibility does not exist for me to build a government that can be accepted by parliament," Lofven told reporters. (Reuters)

### US Envoy Confidant about Achieving N. Korea Denuclearization

SEOUL, South Korea - The top U.S. envoy for North Korea on Monday expressed confidence about achieving North Korea's nuclear disarmament, despite worries about the slow pace of nuclear diplomacy in recent weeks. Meeting with his South Korean counterpart in Seoul, Stephen Biegun said that Washington and Seoul have a shared goal of ending seven decades of hostility on the Korean Peninsula. "The primary requirement for us to get to that endpoint is to achieve the final, fully verified denuclearization of North Korea," Biegun said. "So I am absolutely confident that this is within the reach, and I



think our two presidents are singularly focused on this goal." South Korea's chief nuclear envoy Lee Do-hoon said that "denuclearization process is at a critical juncture and we need to meet up as often as possible." Since entering nuclear talks earlier this year, North Korea has taken some measures like

halting nuclear and missile tests and dismantling his nuclear testing sites. The United States suspended some of its annual military drills with South Korea, but is reluctant to provide the North with big political or economic benefits unless it takes more serious disarmament steps. (Fox News)

### Russia 'Tests' Key Piece of Nuclear Space Engine to Revolutionize Long-Range Missions

MOSCOW - A key component of Russia's future nuclear space propulsion system, which may revolutionize long-range exploration of the solar system, has been successfully tested, RIA Novosti reported. Since at least 2009, Russian space and atomic engineers have been developing a special space propulsion system, which uses a 1

megawatt nuclear fusion reactor as source of energy. According to a work competition report, published on a website tracing public spending in Russia and reviewed by the news agency, one of the crucial elements of the system, which is responsible for cooling down the reactor, has been successfully tested. (Russia Today)

### Georgia Presidential Vote Held On 'Unlevel Playing Field': International Observers

TBILISI - International observers said on Monday that Georgia's presidential election had been competitive, but had been held on "an unlevel playing field" with state resources misused, private media biased, and some phoney candidates taking part. The country's Central Election Commission (CEC) said earlier on Monday that the election would go to a second round runoff between two former foreign ministers after no single candidate won outright in the first round of voting on Sunday. International observers, including representatives from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, said on Monday that voters had been given a genuine choice and that the election's 25 candidates had been able to campaign freely. But they said there had also been problems.

"...There were instances of the misuse of state resources, and the involvement of senior state officials from the ruling party in campaigning was not always in line with the law," they said in a statement.

"It became clear during the campaign that a significant number of candidates had registered so they could use public funding and free air time to support other contestants, giving those an unfair advantage." (Reuters)

### Uzbekistan, Japan to Share Experience in Tourism Sector

TASHKENT - On October 24, the State Committee for Tourism Development of Uzbekistan hosted a meeting with representatives of the Uzbekistan-Japan Center, Uzbek media reported. During the meeting, an agreement on cooperation between the committee and the Uzbekistan-Japan Center was signed.

The agreement provides for the holding of seminars and other forms of training pro-

grams that facilitate the implementation of processes for the exchange of experience between Uzbekistan and Japan in the tourism sector. During the meeting, the Japanese side noted positive changes in the field of tourism and the development of cooperation between the countries. The parties also offered to develop cooperation between the representatives of business tourism of the two countries. (Trend)

### US Blanket Support for Saudi Arabia, Israel Enabled Them to Carry out Atrocities: Zarif

TEHRAN - Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif tells CBS News that the United States' choices are to blame for the Middle East's disasters. "The United States' choices in the Middle East are wrong, and these wrong choices led to the disaster in our region," Zarif told the American network on Sunday.

"We knew that the invasion of Iraq was the wrong choice, although Saddam Hussein was our enemy," he added. "We know that the invasion and attack, bombardment of Yemen are wrong choices," Zarif noted, referring to Washington's support for the 2015-present Saudi Arabia-led war on the Arab world's poorest nation.

"But the United States is continuously and persistently on the wrong side," the Iranian top diplomat asserted. Zarif said US had emboldened Saudi Arabia and Israel to stage their atrocities by providing the regimes with "blanket support." "I think the blanket support that the US provides to Saudi Arabia and to Israel has enabled them to carry out atrocities that would not have happened, had there not existed this blanket support," he said. The remarks came as the kingdom has come under mounting criticism for the killing of Jamal Khashoggi, Washington Post columnist and notable critic of Riyadh's policies, who was murdered after entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on October 2. Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said recently that the kingdom would not have proceeded with the killing had it not been in receipt of US support. (Press TV)