

CHINA RARE EARTH CONTROL EU working with G7 partners on response

AFP, Brussels
The EU is coordinating with G7 partners on a response to China's "unjustified" export controls on rare earths, the bloc's trade commissioner Maros Sefcovic said yesterday.

China last week announced new controls on the export of rare-earth technologies. It is the world's leading producer of the minerals used to make magnets crucial to the auto, electronics and defence industries.

"Such restrictions have already forced some EU companies to halt production, causing real economic harm. This is not about security or non-proliferation. These controls are targeting civilian industries directly," Sefcovic said.



Protesters hold a slogan reading "Right to have pension at the age of 65" as they take part in a demonstration during a national day of action against the austerity of the federal Arizona government, in Brussels on October 14, 2025. The strike is the last in a series to hit the European country since Flemish nationalist Bart De Wever took office as prime minister in February. Grappling with a budget deficit whose size violates European Union rules, the government is looking to reform pensions and make other savings that have infuriated trade unions.

UN aid for Rohingya refugee children faces 'funding cliff'

AFP, Geneva
The United Nations warned yesterday that its ability to help children in the sprawling Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh was rapidly shrivelling and would soon fall off a "funding cliff".

The UN children's agency UNICEF said conditions in the camps were already dire and would only get worse in 2026 as financial support dries up.

Around a million largely Muslim Rohingya fled a military crackdown in neighbouring Myanmar's Rakhine state, launched in 2017, and now live in the beachside town of Cox's Bazar.

"A funding crisis is unfolding, and it's threatening to erase years of progress for the Rohingya children," said Carla Haddad Mardini, UNICEF's private fundraising and partnerships chief, after returning from Cox's Bazar.

"It was disheartening to watch classrooms close, services shrink, and the futures of hundreds of thousands of children that are hanging by a thread.

"We're doing everything possible to really stretch every dollar -- but we're running out of options."

She said education, water, sanitation and hygiene assistance were among the services hardest hit.

Bangladesh has recorded a surge of refugees from Myanmar since early 2024, with 150,000 more Rohingya arriving.

But the surge comes at a time when the United States --



Rohingya refugee children wait to receive food outside the distribution center at Palong Khali refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, on November 17, 2017.

traditionally the world's top donor -- has slashed foreign aid, causing havoc in the humanitarian sector across the globe.

Other major donor countries are also tightening their belts.

Successive aid cuts have already caused severe hardship among Rohingya in the overcrowded settlements, where many rely on aid and suffer from rampant malnutrition.

"Indications are that the situation will be even more dire next year," said Haddad Mardini.

"The overall Rohingya response faces a funding cliff in early 2026.

"We're progressing towards this funding cliff at high speed -- with worst-case projections

suggesting that already-insufficient contributions could fall by half."

She said that despite efficiency savings, merging aid programmes and localising support, "no amount of cost-cutting can offset such a deep decline".

Haddad Mardini said there were several armed groups operating in the region, with 685 cases of child recruitment recorded so far this year -- more than five times the number for all of 2024.

"Seeing an increase in recruitment is extremely worrying for the future," she said.

Haddad Mardini said severe acute malnutrition among children was now at its highest level since the crisis spilt over in 2017.

SPYING CHARGES Iran hands down prison sentences to 2 French people

AFP, Tehran
Iranian authorities yesterday handed down lengthy prison sentences to two French nationals after convicting them on multiple charges, including spying for Israel, the judiciary said.

The judiciary's Mizan Online website did not identify the two French nationals, but two sources close to the case told AFP that academics Cecile Kohler, 40, and Jacques Paris, 72, were the citizens sentenced.

The date of their arrest in May 2022, on the final day of their holiday, does not tally with the date noted by Mizan, March 2023.

Mizan said one of the defendants was sentenced "to six years in prison for spying for the French intelligence services, five years for association to commit a crime against national security, and 20 years in exile for intelligence cooperation with the Zionist regime".

The other defendant was "sentenced to 10 years in prison for spying for the French intelligence services, five years for assisting in intelligence cooperation with the Zionist regime", Mizan added. Under Iranian law, jail sentences run concurrently.

Madagascar's military takes power, president impeached

REUTERS, Antananarivo
Madagascar's military has taken charge of the Indian Ocean island, an army colonel said yesterday, after President Andry Rajoelina fled abroad during a standoff with youth-led protesters and security forces.

"We have taken the power," Colonel Michael Randrianirina, who led a mutiny of soldiers joining anti-government Gen Z demonstrators, said on national radio.

Randrianirina added that the military was dissolving all institutions except the lower house of parliament or National Assembly, which voted to impeach Rajoelina minutes earlier.

In a day of turmoil for the nation off east Africa, the 51-year-old leader had sought to dissolve the assembly by decree. Despite flying out on a French military jet, Rajoelina is refusing to step down in defiance of weeks of Gen Z protests demanding his resignation and widespread defections in the army.

The presidency did not immediately react to Randrianirina's comments but earlier said the assembly meeting was unconstitutional and thus any resolution "null and void."

Rajoelina has said he has moved to a safe place because of threats to his life. An opposition official, a military source and a foreign diplomat told Reuters he had fled the country on Sunday aboard a French military plane.

ESCALATING DEMOS
Demonstrations erupted in the country on September 25 over water and power shortages and quickly escalated into an uprising over broader grievances, including corruption, bad governance and a lack of basic services.

The anger mirrored recent protests against ruling elites elsewhere, including Nepal and Morocco.

On Tuesday, at Antananarivo's 13 May Square, along the main drag lined with palm trees and French colonial buildings, thousands of protesters danced, marched, sang songs and waved banners denouncing Rajoelina as a French stooge because of his dual citizenship and support from Madagascar's former coloniser.

Many were waving Malagasy flags and the signature Gen Z protest banner of a skull and crossbones from the Japanese "One Piece" anime series.

Russia strikes aid convoy in Ukraine: UN

AFP, Kyiv
Russian forces struck a UN aid convoy in the partially occupied southern Kherson region of Ukraine yesterday, Kyiv and the UN said, adding there were no casualties in the attack.

The United Nations said its convoy of four vehicles was clearly marked and came under attack from Russian drones and artillery while delivering aid to the frontline town of Bilozerkha.

"Such attacks are utterly unacceptable. Aid workers are protected by international humanitarian law and should never be attacked," said the UN's Humanitarian Coordinator for Ukraine Matthias Schmale.

He added that two World Food Programme trucks were damaged in the strike, while local authorities said the remaining two were unscathed.



A cat walks on debris in a church damaged by Russian military strike, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in the frontline town of Kostiantynivka in Donetsk region, Ukraine October 13, 2025.

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1.	46.06.2000.000.315.31.0122.25	Supply and Installation of LS Vacuum Contactor Switch (VCS) Controller Card under Nasirabad Water Management Control & Booster.	OTM	1159820	26-Oct-2025 12:00:00

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SPR 161/14/10/25

Abdullah Muhammad Shaker
Executive Engineer (C. C.)
Nasirabad Water Management Control & Booster
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