News Roundup - October 2, 2026: Floods, Flight, Treaty

Name Date Class

Reading

1 *Floods across Asia.* The monsoon is the lifeblood of farming across much of Asia, but in late September it turned destructive. Torrential rain **inundated** districts of northern India, Nepal, and Thailand within days. In Uttar Pradesh, officials counted 62 deaths by September 29, though some reports put the **toll** as high as 81, and in the eastern state of Odisha more than 75,000 people were evacuated. Nepal recorded at least 21 deaths between September 24 and 27, and because the country had not recovered from August floods that killed more than 1,400 people, this rain **compounded** an existing emergency. In Thailand, flooding since September 16 has reached 41 provinces and more than 580,000 homes, and at least eight people have died, according to the government. Counts differ between reports and are likely to change.

2 *Trouble on a flight.* On September 30, a FlyDubai flight from Dubai to Tel Aviv, carrying more than 170 passengers, made an emergency landing at Tabuk in Saudi Arabia after an **alleged** attack by one pilot on another. Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, said that the attacker had stabbed his colleague and tried to bring the aircraft down. Saudi Arabia's preliminary assessment said only that the co-pilot assaulted the captain, and the airline confirmed an altercation on the flight deck while stressing that the motive was unknown. The jet is reported to have **plunged** thousands of feet before it was brought under control. Both pilots were treated in hospital, and everyone aboard was reported safe. Several countries have opened investigations, and terrorism is one possibility they are examining, but that is a line of inquiry, not a finding. The distinction matters: until a court establishes what happened, the accusation is just that.

3 *A court and the human voice.* A Tokyo court produced a mixed result on September 30 that may matter well beyond Japan. Kenjiro Tsuda, a leading voice actor, had asked it to order TikTok to remove videos that his lawyers say numbered close to 190 and were narrated by an **unauthorized** AI imitation of his distinctive voice. The court dismissed the request because the videos had already been deleted. Yet it also said that a person's voice, like a face, expresses personality and can be protected by publicity rights, and the decision is believed to be the first Japanese ruling to say so. News reports called it a **landmark**, and future plaintiffs may cite it as a **precedent**. However, the court **stopped short of** deciding whether Tsuda's rights had actually been violated. TikTok had argued that the voice was an ordinary male voice and that any resemblance was subjective, and Tsuda's lawyer said that the outcome let both sides look like winners. TikTok has said it will study the judgment.

4 *AI chips in space.* On October 1, a SpaceX rocket carried a refrigerator-sized Google satellite into orbit, the first flight in a **moonshot** called Project Suncatcher. The long-term idea is to put AI data centers in space, where satellites could draw on almost constant sunlight for power. The prototype is far more modest: four of Google's own AI chips, which will run for only 15 minutes at a time. The reason is heat. On Earth, air carries heat away from a chip, but in a vacuum the heat has to **dissipate** through radiators, which are heavy and therefore expensive to launch. In ground tests, the chips withstood more radiation than a five-year mission would deliver, and on launch day Google reported that the satellite was operating as expected. Even so, the **feasibility** of orbital data centers at scale is unproven: the largest AI data centers being built on Earth hold hundreds of thousands of chips, and this satellite holds four. Google plans to launch two more test satellites in 2027 to try laser links between spacecraft.

5 *A very old peace agreement.* The week's gentlest news came from the soil of central Turkey. On September 21, International Day of Peace, Turkey's culture minister announced that a clay fragment found at Hattusa, the Hittite capital, belongs to a copy of the Kadesh treaty, after about a year of scientific examination. The treaty ended a long rivalry between Egypt under Ramesses II and the Hittite king Hattusili III, years after the famous battle at Kadesh ended in a **stalemate**. It is widely regarded as the oldest surviving peace treaty, and unusually, both sides' versions survive: the Egyptian text on temple walls, the Hittite one on clay tablets. Its terms were **reciprocal**, with each kingdom making the same promises to the other, including non-aggression. This fragment covers clauses about **fugitives**, people who fled from one kingdom to the other, and reportedly protects them and their homes. Excavations at the site are continuing in the hope of finding more pieces of this tablet.

Vocabulary Matching

Match each word from the reading with its meaning. Write the letter on the line.

1	**inundated**	_____	**A**	the number of people killed in a disaster
2	**toll**	_____	**B**	a situation where neither side can win
3	**compounded**	_____	**C**	given and received equally by both sides
4	**alleged**	_____	**D**	came close to doing something without doing it
5	**plunged**	_____	**E**	an earlier case used as a guide for later ones
6	**unauthorized**	_____	**F**	people who are escaping from the law or an enemy
7	**landmark**	_____	**G**	dropped suddenly and very steeply downward
8	**precedent**	_____	**H**	made a bad situation worse by adding to it
9	**stopped short of**	_____	**I**	very important because it marks a major change
10	**moonshot**	_____	**J**	to spread out and gradually disappear
11	**dissipate**	_____	**K**	how possible it is to do something in practice
12	**feasibility**	_____	**L**	claimed to have happened, but not yet proved
13	**stalemate**	_____	**M**	done or used without official permission
14	**reciprocal**	_____	**N**	covered an area with a great deal of water
15	**fugitives**	_____	**O**	a very ambitious project with a big, risky goal

Fill in the Blank

Choose a word from the box to complete each sentence. Use each word once. The words are already in the correct form.

alleged	**compounded**	**dissipate**	**feasibility**	**fugitives**	**inundated**	**landmark**	**moonshot**	**plunged**
precedent	**reciprocal**	**stalemate**	**toll**	**unauthorized**				

1 Torrential rain _____ the valley within hours.

2 The death _____ from the earthquake rose to more than 300.

3 The strike _____ the problem of the late trains.

4 The _____ thief is waiting for his trial.

5 Prices _____ when the factory closed.

6 Using her photo without asking was _____ and illegal.

7 The court's _____ decision changed the law for millions of people.

8 One ruling can become a _____ for hundreds of later cases.

9 Curing malaria within a decade is a _____ that few people believed in.

10 The heat from the engine must _____ quickly, or the metal will melt.

11 A study will test the _____ of building a bridge across the bay.

12 The talks ended in a _____, and neither side moved.

13 A _____ agreement means that both sides make the same promises.

14 Police are searching for two _____ who escaped from prison.

Comprehension Questions

Answer in your notebook or discuss with a partner. Questions 10 to 12 are IELTS-style.

1 Which countries does the first story mention, and why does the writer say that the rain in Nepal "compounded" an existing emergency?

2 Why should readers treat the flood figures with care?

3 How do the accounts of the FlyDubai incident differ, and who said what?

4 Why does the writer separate an accusation from a finding in the story about the flight?

5 In what sense was the Tokyo ruling a mixed result for Kenjiro Tsuda?

6 Why might the Tokyo decision matter outside Japan?

7 Why is heat a problem for chips in space, and what is the drawback of the solution described?

8 What makes the Kadesh treaty unusual, and what does this fragment cover?

9 Which of the five stories deserves more attention from the world's media, in your view? Use evidence from the reading.

IELTS-Style Questions

10 **True, False, or Not Given:** *"Investigators have established that the FlyDubai incident was a terrorist attack."* Explain your answer using evidence from the reading.

11 **Yes, No, or Not Given:** *"The writer believes that orbital data centers are already a proven idea."* Explain your answer using evidence from the reading.

12 **Author's purpose:** Why does the writer end the Google story with the plan for two more test satellites? Is the aim to promote Google's products, to show that the idea is being tested step by step, or to prove that space data centers will succeed?

True or False

Circle T (true) or F (false) according to the reading. Write a correction for each false statement on the dotted line.

1 **T / F** The reading says that the rain compounded an existing emergency in Nepal.

2 **T / F** The reading says that officials confirmed 81 deaths in Uttar Pradesh.

3 **T / F** The airline said that the motive for the attack in the cockpit was unknown.

4 **T / F** The reading says that investigators have proved that the attack was terrorism.

5 **T / F** The Tokyo court said that a person's voice can be protected by publicity rights.

6 **T / F** The court decided that the videos had violated Tsuda's rights.

7 **T / F** The prototype satellite carries four of Google's AI chips.

8 **T / F** The reading says that the launch proved that orbital data centers are feasible.

9 **T / F** Versions of the Kadesh treaty from both Egypt and the Hittites survive.

10 **T / F** The reading says that the fragment was found in Egypt.

Discussion Questions

Talk with a partner or in a small group. The questions move from personal to more abstract.

1 How do you usually follow the news, and which sources do you trust most?

2 Which of the five stories stayed with you the most, and why?

3 Have you ever been caught in severe weather or a natural disaster, or known someone who has? What happened?

4 When a news story is still developing, how do you decide how much to believe?

5 After a disaster, should the media publish early and uncertain figures, or wait until they are confirmed?

6 The writer separates an accusation from a finding. How well do headlines in your country make this distinction?

7 Would you be comfortable if a company could create an AI version of your voice? Under what conditions, if any?

8 Should voices, faces, and writing styles be protected by law in the same way? Where would you draw the line?

9 Courts can set precedents that shape technology they have never seen. Is that a strength or a weakness of the legal system?

10 Is it sensible to spend large amounts of money and energy on moonshots such as data centers in orbit while problems like flooding need funding?

11 Disasters can compound one another, as in Nepal this year. Who should help countries prepare for repeated disasters?

12 A peace treaty from more than three thousand years ago is still being pieced together. What can ancient diplomacy teach modern governments?

13 The treaty's terms were reciprocal. Can reciprocity be a reliable basis for peace between unequal powers?

14 Newsrooms tend to focus on certain countries and stories. How should a global audience decide what deserves its attention?

Language Focus: Passive Reporting Structures

Passive reporting structures let a writer pass on information without naming the source. Common patterns are subject + is reported to + infinitive, subject + is believed to be, and subject + is widely regarded as + noun. A perfect infinitive (to have + past participle) refers to something earlier.

In the reading:

- "The jet **is reported to have** plunged thousands of feet before it was brought under control."
- "…the decision **is believed to be** the first Japanese ruling to say so…"
- "It **is widely regarded as** the oldest surviving peace treaty…"

Practice: Rewrite with a passive reporting structure, using "the treaty" as the subject: *"Historians consider the treaty the oldest of its kind."*

Activities and speed challenge
englishbridges.com/lessons/news-roundup-2026-10-02-c1

Notes