

S Korean firm signs \$253.6 million deal to export K9 howitzer to India

SEOUL/NEW DELHI, Apr 3 (IANS)

SOUTH KOREAN defence giant Hanwha Aerospace said on Thursday it has signed a 371.4 billion-won (\$253.6 million) deal to export homegrown K9 self-propelled howitzers to India.

Under the agreement, the company will deliver the K9 howitzers to the Indian Army by September 2030, in cooperation with Mumbai-based company Larsen & Toubro, according to Hanwha Aerospace.

The deal aligns with India's ongoing efforts to modernise its military, the company added, reports Yonhap news agency.

This agreement follows a 2017 contract, under which Hanwha supplied 372.7 billion won worth of K9 howitzers to India by 2020.

Hanwha Aerospace said this additional contract reflects the K9's proven reliability in meeting the Indian Army's operational needs.

The company's strong performance under the first contract also helped solidify its rep-

utation as a trusted partner in India's defence market, it added.

Hanwha Aerospace expects the latest deal to further expand

Aerospace Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Son Jae-il.

Late last month, the Government signed two con-



sales of the K9 howitzer beyond Europe and into Asia. The K9 has already been adopted by countries such as Romania and Poland, said the report.

"We will further enhance our cooperation with countries in Asia, including India, by leveraging the K9's outstanding performance and our proven delivery record," said Hanwha

tracts worth Rs 62,700 crore with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the supply of 156 Light Combat Helicopters (LCH) -- Prachand. The first contract is for supply of 66 LCHs to the Indian Air Force (IAF) and second is for supply of 90 LCHs to the Indian Army, according to the Ministry of Defence.

nothing for years and years and decades

61% 31%

27% LEVY ON INDIA; PHARMA, CHIPS, COPPER EXEMPTED

India Gets Slapped With Tariff, Others Punched

Chidanand Rajghatta & Sidhartha

At a White House Rose Garden event on Wednesday on what he called "Liberation Day" for the US, India became a middling victim in Trump's take-no-prisoner approach that treated friend and foe alike with a two-tier tariff: a baseline tax of 10% on all countries that will go into effect on April 5, and additional tariffs on some countries that he considers to be the "worst offenders", which will be imposed on April 9.

India, described by Trump as the 'tariff king', makes the US President's 'worst offender' checklist because, by his calculation, New Delhi taxes US imports to the tune of 52%, a dubious figure arrived at by adding perceived non-monetary, non-tariff barriers, 'currency manipulation' etc. China was assessed at 67%, Taiwan at 64%, and South Korea at 50%.

But out of the 'kindness of his heart' he would impose not a 'commonsense reciprocal tariff' but give a 50% 'discount,' Trump said, thus making it 27% tariff on imports from India.

For decades, our country has been looted, pillaged, raped and plundered by nations near and far – both friend and foe alike. Foreign cheaters have ransacked our factories, and foreign scavengers have torn apart our once beautiful American dream," the president of the richest country on earth raged in remarks that were borderline offensive and distasteful.

Financial markets plunged in response. Some \$2tn of market value was wiped out in S&P 500 stocks alone as

► **5 Ways Tariffs Could Hit (And Help) India, INSIDE FLAP**

► **Full Coverage, P 17, 22-24, EDIT PAGE**

the index fell 4%, its worst day since Sept 2022. The dollar recorded its largest single-day decline ever, dropping 2.1% against major currencies.

The ripple effect of Trump's sweeping tariffs will reshape global trade flows, disrupt supply chains, and test long-standing diplomatic alliances. As countries scramble to respond, the economic and geopolitical fallout is likely to be deep and enduring.

INDIA'S REACTION: The govt said it would seek to "expeditiously" clinch a "mutually beneficial" bilateral trade deal with the US and reiterated its commitment to strong strategic relations.

Sources said the commerce department is consulting export councils and ministries to gauge the fallout and explore support for affected businesses.

With PM Modi and Trump agreeing to a bilateral trade agreement later this year, India and the US have finalised the broad contours of detailed discussions with technical negotiations expected to be launched this month. This, sources said, gave India a lead over others who will now begin an engagement with the US to seek tariff cuts. "India was an early mover and over the last 50 days a lot of work has been done. The idea is to settle all outstanding bilateral trade issues," an official said. The assessment is that the Trump administration too is keen to engage and a deal can be crafted by lowering a few duties in India.

Here's a quick look at what the tariffs mean, who's hit hardest, and why India may feel mildly relieved – for now.

After LS, waqf bill debate goes beyond midnight in RS too

YSRCP, BJD Ask Their MPs To 'Go By Conscience'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Just like in Lok Sabha the previous day, the debate in Rajya Saba on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill on Thursday stretched well past midnight and was continuing at the time of going to press.

The debate, again like in Lok Sabha, followed a partisan alignment. The NDA, with support from its 'secular' allies, appeared to hold a clear edge, and was likely to prevail in the showdown — an outcome that would clear the way for enactment of the new waqf law to regulate Islamic endowments spanning lakhs of acres and other assets across the country worth lakhs of crore.

Although the proceedings followed the 'secular-communal' faultline, it was

TRIGGERS REVOLT

► CM M K Stalin says TN will initiate legal action against Waqf (Amendment) Bill. 'Tamil Nadu will fight, Tamil Nadu will win' | P 17

► NDA ally All-Jharkhand Students Union Party's central joint secretary Ashraf Khan quits party, accusing it of taking a position against Muslim interests

► JD(U)'s Mohd Qasim Ansari resigns, says party's stance has shattered trust of millions of Indian Muslims. Party dismisses him as a non-entity

not bereft of a surprise element — YSRCP and BJD's decision to withdraw its whip to leave its seven members to vote as "per their conscience" — a move which should potentially clear the way for a couple of unexpected votes for the governing side.

► **Related report, P 17**

Lok Sabha adopts resolution on Manipur well past 1am Thursday

New Delhi: In proceedings that started after the waqf bill was passed in LS around 1am Thursday, the House adopted a resolution confirming the imposition of President's rule in Manipur. Home minister Amit Shah said the situation in the state was largely under control as there had been no death in the last four months but it couldn't be considered satisfactory with displaced people still living in relief camps.

Shah also said after the imposition of President's rule, discussions were held with Meiteis and Kukis, and separate meetings were conducted with organisations from both communities.

► **'Want peace', P 24**

Flight Lieutenant Siddharth Yadav saves countless lives during jet crash in Guj

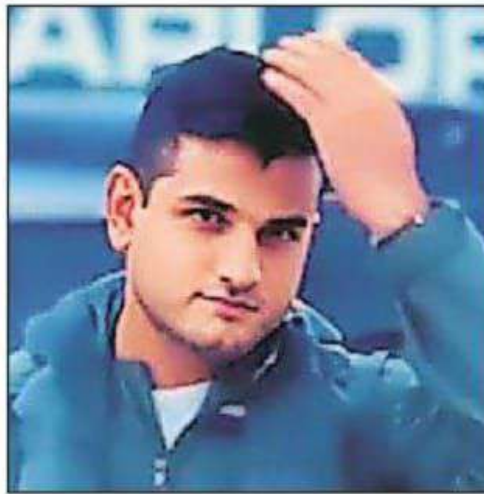
JAMNAGAR, Apr 3 (IANS)

IN A remarkable act of bravery, Flight Lieutenant Siddharth Yadav saved countless lives during the tragic crash of a Jaguar fighter jet in Jamnagar, Gujarat. Amid a critical technical malfunction, Siddharth displayed extraordinary courage by steering the crashing aircraft away from a densely populated area.

In his final moments, he also ejected his fellow pilot, ensuring his safety before tragically losing his own life.

Flight Lieutenant Siddharth Yadav, a resident of Rewari, was killed when his Jaguar fighter jet crashed near Jamnagar, Gujarat on Wednesday night shortly after the jet took off from the Jamnagar Air Force Station. The 28-year-old pilot had recently returned to duty after a brief leave and was involved in a routine sortie when the crash occurred.

During the flight, the aircraft encountered a technical malfunction. Despite the pilot's best



efforts to safely land the jet, it became clear that a crash was inevitable.

In his final moments, Siddharth displayed extraordinary bravery. He ejected his fellow pilot from the aircraft to save his life and steered the plane away from a densely populated area, ultimately guiding it into an open field. Siddharth was martyred in the crash, but his actions ensured that no civilian lives were lost. His colleague, Manoj Kumar Singh, was injured and is currently receiving treatment in a hospital.

Siddharth Yadav, the only son of Sushil and Neelam Yadav, had completed his training as a fighter pilot and joined the Indian Air Force after passing the NDA exam in 2016.

He was promoted to Flight Lieutenant just two years ago. His family, who hails from Bhalkhi-Majra village in Rewari, was eagerly anticipating his wedding, which was scheduled for November 2. Siddharth had gotten engaged on March 23, just days before returning to his duties.

The news of his martyrdom has sent shockwaves through his family and the entire town of Rewari. Siddharth's father, Sushil Yadav, who is a retired Air Force personnel and currently working with LIC, said that his son's bravery in the face of danger would always be a source of pride. Siddharth's body is expected to arrive in Rewari on Friday morning, where it will be taken to his ancestral village for his final rites with full military honours.

LS confirms imposition of President's Rule in Manipur

NEW DELHI, Apr 3 (PTI)

THE Lok Sabha early Thursday adopted a Statutory Resolution confirming the imposition of President's rule in Manipur with opposition supporting the decision but slamming the Centre for the situation in the state.

Replying to a short debate, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the Government has taken all possible steps to bring back normalcy in the restive north-eastern State.

He said there has been no violence in Manipur in the last four months, adding that talks were



Home Minister Amit Shah speaks in the Lok Sabha during the Budget session of Parliament in New Delhi. (PTI)

on with both Meitei and Kuki communities for a peaceful solution. "By and large the situation is peaceful. As long as people are in camps, I would not say the situation is satisfactory. The government is taking all possible steps to restore peace in Manipur," he said.

The home minister said the ethnic violence in Manipur had started following an order of the State's High Court.

"The day the order came, we sent the central forces by air. There was no delay on our part (in taking action)," he said.

He said, so far, 260 people have

died in the violence that started in May 2023 and 80 per cent of them lost their lives within the first month.

Shah said he did not want to compare the violence that had taken place during the tenure of the previous governments but wanted to tell the House about the clashes between the Naga and Kuki communities that took place in the 1990s over five years.

"Sporadic violence continued for a decade where 750 people lost their lives. There were Kuki-Paite clashes in 1997-98 when 352 people were killed. In the Meitei-Pangal clashes in the 1990s, over

100 people died. Neither the then prime minister nor the then home minister visited Manipur," he said.

The Home Minister said an impression has been given that violence erupted only during the BJP rule, which is not correct.

Earlier, participating in the debate, Congress leader Shashi Tharoor said his party supported the resolution but wanted the restoration of peace and stability in the state.

"End insurgency, restore peace and stability, promote dialogue with each other, promote inclusivity," he said.

Defence firm inks MoU with Israeli company to bring advanced drone camera technology

NEW DELHI, Apr 3 (PTI)

AN INDIAN defence firm has signed an MoU with an Israeli company to bring advanced drone camera technology to the country, officials said on Thursday.

The pact has been inked between Paras Defence and Space Technologies and MicroCon Vision of Israel, part of Controp and the Rafael Group, an official statement said.

The collaboration will position Paras Defence as the exclusive supplier of advanced drone camera technology in India at "much lower cost", it said.

The Indian firm will bring indigenous content in these drone cameras and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance

(ISR) payloads, improving the country's self-reliance while lowering costs, the statement said.

It will offer two models, whose usual import price is "around Rs 20 lakh and Rs 40 lakh per unit", the statement said.



Paras Defence "anticipates 50-60 per cent price reduction for each model", making advanced surveillance technology more accessible to Indian defence forces and for commercial applications. "MicroCon will serve as

Paras Defence's exclusive supplier for drone cameras, which include ISR payloads and electro-optical/infrared (EO/IR) seekers, while Paras Defence becomes MicroCon's exclusive partner for ISR operations in

India. "This aligns with MicroCon's strategy to expand its footprint in the country, which is witnessing accelerated growth in its drone market," the statement said.

"This collaboration represents a major leap forward in India's defence capabilities," the statement quoted Munjal Sharad Shah, managing director at Paras Defence, as saying.

"We are committed to supporting India's strategic goals and are proud to partner with MicroCon in this groundbreaking endeavour," Shah added.