

# US conducts 22 airstrikes against Houthis in Yemen

SANAA, Apr 8 (IANS)

THE US military conducted 22 airstrikes targeting several Houthi sites across northern Yemen on Tuesday, the Houthi-run al-Masirah TV and residents reported.

The strikes hit areas east and south of the capital Sanaa, the Island of Kamaran in the Red Sea, and areas both north and south of the oil-rich Marib province. No casualties have been reported so far. Residents described the airstrikes as very powerful and violent.

The latest wave of airstrikes came a day after US airstrikes killed four children and wound-

The action comes after Yemen's Houthi group said that it had launched a drone attack on a "military target" in Israel's Tel Aviv and fired cruise missiles at two US warships in the Red Sea

ed 25 others in Sanaa on Sunday night. On March 15, the United States resumed airstrikes against the Houthis to deter the group from attacking Israeli ships following the collapse of the Gaza ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas, Xinhua news agency reported.

The Houthis repeatedly claim that their attacks are in retaliation to US airstrikes on Yemen

and aim to pressure the US-backed Israel to stop its offensive on Gaza and allow aid into the besieged Palestinian enclave.

This comes after Yemen's Houthi group said that it had launched a drone attack on a "military target" in Israel's Tel Aviv and fired cruise missiles at two US warships in the Red Sea.

"We carried out an operation against a military target in Tel Aviv,

using a Jaffa drone," Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Sarea said in a televised statement aired by al-Masirah TV.

"Our naval and air forces also conducted a joint military operation targeting two US destroyers in the Red Sea with several cruise missiles and drones," Sarea added.

He noted that the strikes on US warships were "in response to the ongoing US aggression and crimes against Yemeni people," referring to the latest US airstrikes on a house in Sanaa Sunday night, which killed at least four people and wounded over 20 others, including 11 women and children.

# India becomes 3rd-largest generator of wind, solar power: Report

NEW DELHI, Apr 8 (PTI)

INDIA became the world's third-largest producer of electricity from wind and solar energy in 2024, overtaking Germany, to according to a new report published on Tuesday.

The sixth edition of global energy think tank Ember's Global Electricity Review said wind and solar together generated 15 per cent of global electricity last year. India's share stood at 10 per cent.

The report said low-carbon sources, including renewables and nuclear power, together provided 40.9 per cent of the world's electricity in 2024. This is the first time the 40 per cent mark has been crossed since the 1940s.

In India, clean sources accounted for 22 per cent of the electricity generation. Hydropower contributed the



most at 8 per cent, while wind and solar together accounted for 10 per cent.

Globally, renewables led the growth in clean electricity, adding a record 858 terawatt hours (TWh) in 2024 -- 49 per cent more than the previous record in 2022.

Solar was the largest source of new electricity for the third straight year, adding 474 TWh in

2024. It was also the fastest-growing power source for the 20th year in a row.

In just three years, global solar power generation doubled to 6.9 per cent of the electricity mix.

India, too, saw a rapid increase in solar power. Solar contributed 7 per cent of the country's electricity in 2024, the generation doubling since 2021.

# Trump claims US, Iran set for direct N-talks; Tehran says it'll be indirect

Iran is approaching weekend talks with the US over its nuclear programme warily, with little confidence in progress and deep suspicions over US intentions, Iranian officials said.

The talks were announced on Monday by US President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly threatened Iran with military action if it does not agree to a deal since he returned to White House in Jan. Trump has said talks in Oman will be direct but Iran's foreign minister Abbas Araqchi repeated Tehran's position they should be indirect, citing what he called US pressure and threats. "Indirect negotiations can guarantee a genuine and effective dialogue." Araqchi said the talks would be led by him and Trump's West Asia envoy Steve Witkoff, mediated by Oman FM Badr al-Busaidi. Dismissing Iran's insistence the discussions will be indirect, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt also said the talks in Oman will be direct.

Tehran would want to see concrete gestures before any face-to-face talks, sources said. "Iranians told us direct talks are possible but there has to be a goodwill gesture. Lift some sanctions or unfreeze some money," a regional diplomat said. In Tehran, a senior official said: "Trump wants a new deal: end Iran's regional influence, dismantle its nuclear programme, and halt its missile work. These are unacceptable to Tehran." REUTERS

# No specific mention of trade pact in US readout on Rubio-EAM talks

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** Secretary of State Marco Rubio and external affairs minister S Jaishankar affirmed the strength of US-India strategic partnership and discussed opportunities to deepen collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region, said State Department in its own readout of the conversation that took place Monday.

While the US account didn't specifically mention the Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) India is negotiating with the Americans to resolve the tariff issue, it did say



Rubio and Jaishankar affirmed the strength of US-India strategic partnership and discussed opportunities to deepen ties in the Indo-Pacific region

that Rubio and Jaishankar discussed US reciprocal tariffs on India and "how to make progress toward a fair and balanced trade relationship".

On Monday, Jaishankar in a post on X said he and Ru-

bio agreed on the importance of the early conclusion of BTA: "Exchanged perspectives on the Indo-Pacific, the Indian Sub-continent, Europe, Middle East/West Asia and the Caribbean."

Govt has chosen to not retaliate against the 26% reciprocal tariff imposed by the Trump administration on India, as it negotiates with the US a trade agreement that is focused on increasing market access, reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers and deepening supply chain integration. Govt has said it is negotiating similar agreements with the EU and the UK.

# UK court junks India plea, arms dealer Bhandari now free man

## Delhi Exhausts Appeals Against Fugitive Who's Been In London Since '16

Naomi Canton

**London:** Indian govt's hopes of extraditing arms dealer Sanjay Bhandari from Britain were dealt a final crushing blow Tuesday when UK high court refused Delhi permission to appeal in Supreme Court its decision to refuse Bhandari's extradition.

Bhandari (62), who has been living in London since he fled India in 2016, is now a free man. There are no further appeals that Delhi can make.

Bhandari's lawyer, Edward Fitzgerald KC, an extradition barrister, told TOI: "We are relieved that the appeal has succeeded and that India's application for leave to appeal further to Supreme Court has been finally refused. In the absence of a certificate from the high court, Indian govt can now appeal no further. It is all over. So now, at last, Bhandari can get on with his life."

On Feb 28, the high court had overturned the lower court's decision to extradite Bhandari, ruling instead it would be unlawful to extradite him and discharged him. Lord Justice Holroyde and Justice Steyn ruled Bhandari would be at real risk of extortion, torture or

### BHANDARI OWED I-T DEPT ₹198CR TAX

**April 27-30, 2016:** Searches at Sanjay Bhandari's home in India by I-T authorities yield documentary evidence that he owned several foreign assets, bought using undisclosed foreign income

**Sept 22, 2016:** I-T dept issues notice to Bhandari; total value of his undisclosed foreign income and assets determined as ₹665.6cr and amount of tax he owed ₹197.7cr

**2016:** Bhandari flees to London

**April 15, 2020:** Govt of India issues a request to UK govt for Bhandari's extradition in money laundering case

**June 2, 2021:** India issues 2nd extradition request to UK govt

**Nov 7, 2022:** Westminster magistrate court sends Bhandari's case to home secy,

saying there is no bar to his extradition

**Jan 12, 2023:** UK home secretary Suella Braverman orders Bhandari's extradition to India

**Oct 24, 2023:** Bhandari granted permission to appeal his extradition on three grounds: torture and inhuman treatment in Tihar Jail, reverse burden of proof in Black Money Act, and possibility of trial facing long delays

**March 14, 2024:** HC grants permission to Bhandari to appeal his extradition

**Feb 28, 2025:** Lower court's judgment overturned, Bhandari discharged

**April 8, 2025:** HC bench refuses permission to Govt of India to appeal against Feb 28 decision in the Supreme Court



violence in Tihar jail and at risk of a flagrant denial of justice at trial (breach of article 6 of the ECHR) in India.

On March 12 Indian govt put in an application to the high court to certify two points of law of general public importance in the case and to receive

leave to appeal to Supreme Court the decision to refuse Bhandari's extradition.

On Tuesday Holroyde and Steyn refused to certify Indian govt's requested points of law and also refused to grant New Delhi leave to appeal to Supreme Court. The judges

said "neither of the suggested points merits consideration by Supreme Court" and that neither of the suggested points of law of general public importance had been involved in the court's decision.

Bhandari is accused of wilfully evading taxes in India by not declaring foreign assets and foreign income amounting to Rs 665 crore on his Indian tax returns, meaning he allegedly evaded Rs 197 crore in taxes. He is also charged with money laundering.

The first point of law that India wanted to be certified was in relation to the judges' decision that requiring Bhandari to prove the attempt to evade taxes was not wilful, rather than Indian authorities having to prove it was wilful, as per Black Money Act, was a flagrant denial of justice. The judges ruled this "fundamentally destroys the fairness of the prospective trial".

India argued that this did not amount to flagrant denial of justice. The second point it wanted certified was it should have been asked to provide further sovereign assurances about Bhandari's treatment in Tihar rather than the extradition being turned down.

# Trump ups China tariff to 104% as Beijing digs in heels

## Country-Specific Levies Set To Kick In Today

US said Tuesday that 104% duties on imports from China will take effect shortly after midnight, even as Trump administration moved to start talks with other trading partners targeted by the president's sweeping tariff plan.

► **EDIT PAGE: Tariffs: Picture Abhi Baki Hai**

US stocks fell on the news. Global markets had previously posted gains on hopes that Trump may negotiate down the country and product-specific trade barriers set to kick in from Wednesday.

Trump ratcheted up duties on Chinese imports to 104% in response to counter-tariffs Beijing announced last week. China has vowed to "fight to the end".

EU, meanwhile, is mulling counter-tariffs of 25% on a range of US goods. **P 22**

## 'US corporate body plans to sue Trump'

The US Chamber of Commerce, the biggest lobby for corporate America, is mulling suing Trump administration to block rollout of the new tariffs announced by the US president, Fortune magazine reported, citing two sources with "direct knowledge of the discussions". The chamber represents millions of US businesses of all sizes. **P 22**

## Sensex rebounds while Re weakens

Sensex made an impressive comeback after Monday's rout, gaining 1,089 points (1.5%) on Monday, on the back of a recovery in US markets following reports that several countries had reached out to the US to negotiate trade terms. The rupee fell to a two-week low at 86.27, pressured by a weaker yuan and recovery in the dollar index. **P 21**