

Trump seeks record \$1.5 tn defence budget

WASHINGTON, Apr 4 (IANS)

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump has proposed a record \$1.5 trillion defence budget for fiscal 2027, a 44 per cent jump that would sharply expand Pentagon spending while cutting several domestic programmes.

“The Budget builds upon the historic \$1 trillion topline provided for the national defence by requesting \$1.5 trillion for 2027, a 44-per cent increase,” the White House said in its official budget document proposal for the fiscal 2027.

The administration said the request would ensure that the United States maintains military dominance at a time of rising security pressures. “The 2027 Budget upholds this promise and would ensure that the United States continues to maintain the world’s most powerful and capable military,” the document said.

The proposal includes about \$1.1 trillion in base discretionary defence spending and another

\$350 billion tied to priority programmes, including munitions production and expansion of the defence industrial base.

A major centrepiece is the “Golden Dome” missile defence shield. The White House budget says it would be “robustly funded”, while related reports said the programme is expected to

receive strong backing as part of a broader homeland defence push.

The budget also seeks \$65.8 billion for shipbuilding, including new battle force ships and support vessels, and

proposes pay rises for service members, with a 7 per cent wage increase for personnel ranked E-5 and below, according to media reports and the budget summary.

At the same time, the White House is pairing the defence increase with cuts across non-defence spending. “The Budget proposes a 10-per cent cut compared to 2026 non-defence levels,” the official document said.



IMD issues orange alert across multiple States

NEW DELHI, Apr 4 (ANI)

THE India Meteorological Department on Saturday issued an orange warning across several States, forecasting widespread hailstorms, thunderstorms, lightning, and gusty to squally winds reaching speeds of 60-70 kmph.

The warning covers Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, East Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Marathwada, Vidarbha, East Uttar Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh. According to the IMD, these regions are likely to witness



Vehicles queue up in a traffic jam after fresh snowfall at the Atal Tunnel, at Rohtang, in Kullu, HP on Saturday. (PTI)

intense weather activity, including hailstorms and strong winds, over the next 24 hours.

An orange alert has also been issued for Jammu and Kashmir, with forecasts of isolated heavy rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning. In the

southern peninsular region, heavy rainfall is expected at isolated places in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Meanwhile, a yellow warning remains in place across these regions for continued thunderstorm-related activity.

If West Asia crisis continues Indian exports to other parts of world will get impacted: Official

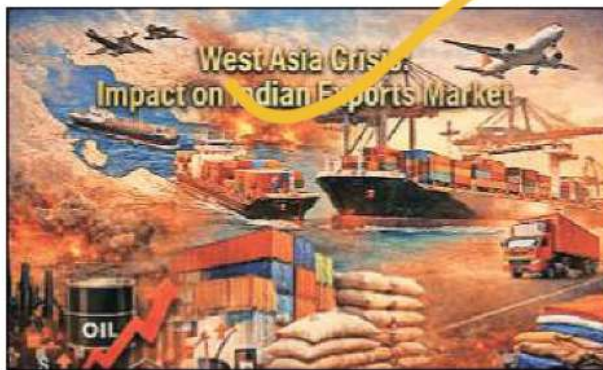
HYDERABAD, Apr 4 (PTI)

IF THE West Asia conflict continues, India's exports to other parts of the world will also be impacted, Central Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said on Saturday.

Indian exports during the last financial year were expected to remain on a positive trajectory despite the crisis, he added.

Addressing a press conference on the sidelines of 'Chintan Shivir - Scaling Up Pharma Exports', Agrawal said that because of the West Asia crisis, there was definitely an impact last month on both imports and exports, as energy is a major part of the Indian import market.

"West Asia is also an important market. Around 12-13 per cent of our exports go to the



region. So, that will directly get impacted. And if it goes on for long, maybe our exports to other parts of the world will also get impacted as some of the value chains will rotate back. We are cognizant of it," the official told reporters.

Replying to a query, he said the exact impact of the West Asia crisis on Indian exports will be known in a couple of weeks.

He said the Centre is trying to see that the supply chains get minimum impact as far as possible, even as the Government is

ready with some numbers going down, as far as export and import are concerned.

"And I assume, it will not only be a one-way traffic, in terms of export going down, but it will also be imports having some downfall," he said.

He further said that even if the war ends, the impact of the crisis will be there for the next few months or years, depending on which supply chain or which infrastructure has been impacted.

"So, at this juncture, it will be very difficult to take a very long-term view on it," the official said.

The idea was that the industry should become self-reliant to combat these external challenges, which may keep coming, he opined.

Agrawal said that there has

been some impact coming to pharma sector in terms of some of the important intermediates and solvents as the supply chain is getting impacted.

All arms of the Government are engaged to see how they can prioritise the limited supply of LPG, and it is being resolved to the largest extent possible by even diversifying imports, buying from other sources also, he said.

"So, as we are able to resolve that overall supply, we will try to alleviate some of the pain in every sector. The Pharma sector will be one of the priority sectors," he said.

The commerce secretary said that the industry and the Government are sitting and trying to figure out what can be done to make the supply chains more resilient.

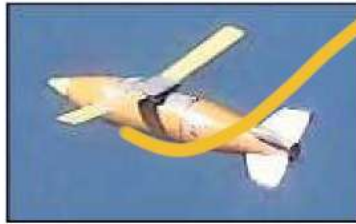
MoD issues EoI for indigenous 1000-kg aerial bomb for IAF

NEW DELHI, Apr 4 (PTI)

THE Defence Ministry has initiated the process for the indigenous design and development of a 1000-kg aerial bomb akin to Mk-84 for the IAF, aiming to boost India's 'Aatmanirbharta' in the sector, according to senior officials.

The project is structured in two phases. The first involves design and development of six prototypes (live and inert), including associated tail units and equipment, they said.

The second is the procurement phase, which will commence with the issuance of a commercial Request for Proposal (RFP) to the



qualifying development agencies. The system is intended to be "compatible with both Russian and Western-origin aircraft" currently operated by the Indian Air Force (IAF), a senior official said.

The Ministry of Defence has "issued an Expression of Interest (EoI) for design, development and procurement of 1,000-kg aerial bombs (akin to Mk-84) along with

tail units and associated equipment under the provisions of the Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020", the official said. The project will be executed under the 'Make-II' (industry-funded) sub-category, followed by procurement under the 'Buy (Indian-IDDMM)' category.

IDDMM stands for Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured.

A total of "600 aerial bombs are planned to be procured" under the 'Buy (Indian-IDDMM)' category in accordance with the DAP 2020 provisions, the officials said.

At present, Mk-84 class general-purpose bombs are procured

from foreign original equipment manufacturers and are in service with the IAF.

The proposed aerial bomb is described as a "natural fragmentation, high-calibre munition capable of generating high blast effect and significant peak overpressure (PoP) against enemy targets", officials said.

The first phase of the project will be undertaken by the selected development agencies, and it includes single-stage composite trials (SSCT), after which preliminary staff qualitative requirements (PSQRs) will be converted into air staff qualitative requirements (ASQRs), the official said.

Bahrain postpones vote on UN resolution to next week

The draft resolution aims at ending Iran's stranglehold on Strait of Hormuz

DUBAI, Apr 4 (AP)

THE Gulf nation of Bahrain, which holds the presidency of the UN Security Council this month, postponed the vote on a resolution aimed at reopening the Strait of Hormuz that had been watered down significantly because of opposition from Russia and China, two UN diplomats said.

The diplomats, speaking on

condition of anonymity because council consultations have been private, said the vote will now be held sometime next week.

The draft resolution that had been expected to be put to a vote on Saturday would authorise defensive measures - not offensive action that Gulf nations and US initially supported - to ensure oil vessels can safely transit the waterway.

Iran 'no' to Pak's peace broker attempt

TEHRAN, Apr 4 (ANI)

ISLAMABAD'S attempt to position itself as a mediator in the West Asia conflict has come to naught with the Iranian side refusing to meet any US led delegation in Pakistan, reports the 'Wall Street Journal'.

Iran has also called the list of demands from the US as unacceptable, pushing the possibility of an early resolution to the crisis to the back burner. Pakistan had staked its diplomatic heft by pitching itself as a mediator claiming to have been behind messaging to both the Iranian and US sides. However, it appears that with this significant trust deficit the Iranians are reluctant to let Islamabad play any role in negotiations.

However, some hope was ignited as reports suggested that Iran could move towards a mediation effort brokered by Qatar, another key player in the region.

The Iranians say their forces

Pak rejects media reports of collapse of initiative to facilitate US-Iran talks

■ By Sajjad Hussain

ISLAMABAD, Apr 4 (PTI)

PAKISTAN on Saturday rejected media reports that its initiative to facilitate talks between the US and Iran to end the ongoing conflict in West Asia had hit obstacles after the initial exchange of peace proposals.

Speculation emerged after a senior Foreign Ministry official briefed a select group of journalists on Pakistan's efforts to find a negotiated settlement of the ongoing conflict.

Foreign Office spokesperson Tahir Andrabi rejected the media reports as "baseless" and a "figment of imagination." "We have noted several reports in the media, including on social

media, citing so-called official government sources regarding the ongoing conflict in the region and Pakistan's efforts to promote peace and dialogue," he said in a statement.

Similarly, Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi dismissed Western media reports suggesting a stalemate in Pakistan-facilitated talks between Iran and the US, labelling it as "misrepresented."

"We are deeply grateful to Pakistan for its efforts and have never refused to go to Islamabad," he said in a social media post. "What we care about are the terms of a conclusive and lasting END to the illegal war that is imposed on us," Araghchi added.

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have now executed Wave 93 of their retaliatory campaign against US-Israel. IRGC claimed to have dealt precise blows to critical Israeli military staging grounds deep inside the occupied territories.

During this IRGC said that centres of gathering and combat support of the Israelis in Western Galilee, Haifa, Kafr Kanna, and Krayot were precisely hit.

In what will spell further trouble for the US and its allies, Iran said it has the ability to sustain the current situation in the Strait of Hormu for years,

A senior Iranian security official told Press TV that Iran's heightened sensitivity over the strategic waterway stems from the fact that the majority of equipment used to supply US military bases and garrisons across the region has historically been transported by sea.

"Iran has the capability to sustain this situation for years," the official said.