

India reaches out with food aid to shortage-hit African countries

NEW DELHI, Apr 5 (IANS)

INDIA has emerged as an important supplier of food aid to shortage-hit African countries like Mozambique, Malawi and Burkina Faso as part of New Delhi's humanitarian outreach and commitment to the development of the Global South, the Ministry of External affairs said on Sunday. India has sent 1,000 metric tonnes of rice to drought-hit Malawi, another 1,000 metric tonnes to Burkina Faso, and 500 metric tonnes to flood-affected Mozambique, along with relief supplies.

India's External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said, "India has sent a consignment of 1,000 metric tons of rice to Burkina Faso as humanitarian assistance. This is aimed at

supporting food security for vulnerable communities and internally displaced persons. The gesture reflects India's continued commitment as a reliable developmental and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief partner to Global South countries.

The humanitarian angle comes as several African countries are under severe strain.

Burkina Faso is facing one of the region's gravest humanitarian emergencies, with millions in need of assistance, on top of years of violence linked to Islamist armed groups and political upheavals since the 2022 coup.

Malawi has been struggling with food shortages tied to El Nino-linked drought, while Mozambique has faced destructive flooding, according to an article in the Jerusalem Post.

Oman, Iran start discussions on opening Straits of Hormuz

MUSCAT, Apr 5 (AND)

THE Foreign Ministry of Oman on Sunday stated that the Sultanate and the Islamic Republic of Iran have initiated discussions on ensuring the smooth flow of maritime transit through the strategically significant Strait of Hormuz amid prevailing regional conflict, which is currently in its second month.

According to a statement issued by the Ministry on X, the two sides held a meeting on Saturday, April 4, at the level of deputy foreign ministers, with participation from specialists representing both countries.

The statement noted that the discussions focused on “possible options for ensuring the smooth flow of transit” through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global energy corridor that handles a significant share of the world’s energy shipments.

After frantic US rescue op...

US pilot missing after Iran shot down jet has been rescued: Trump



■ Trump threatens to unleash 'all Hell' if Strait of Hormuz isn't opened by Monday

■ In Bahrain, the national oil company said that a drone attack caused a fire at one of its storage facilities

■ In Kuwait, an Iranian drone attack caused significant damage to two power plants and put a water desalination station out of service

■ In UAE, multiple fires at the Borouge petrochemicals plant

WASHINGTON, Apr 5 (AP)

A US service member who has been missing since Iran shot down a fighter jet has been rescued, President Donald Trump wrote in a social media post early on Sunday.

Iran showed no signs of backing down, striking economic and infrastructure targets in neighbouring Gulf Arab countries. A frantic US search-and-

rescue operation unfolded after the crash of the F-15E Strike Eagle on Friday, as Iran also promised a reward for anyone who turned in the "enemy pilot."

A second crew member was rescued earlier. As Iran continues to exert control over the Strait of Hormuz, Trump, in a weekend social media post, threatened to unleash 'all Hell' if it isn't opened by Monday. He has issued such threats before and extended them when mediators have claimed progress toward ending the war on agreeable terms. "This brave warrior was behind enemy lines in the treacherous mountains of Iran, being hunted down by our enemies, who were getting closer and closer by the hour," Trump wrote. Trump said that the aviator is injured but "will be just fine," adding that the rescue involved "dozens of aircraft" and that the US had been monitoring his location "24 hours a day, and diligently planning for his rescue." The fighter jet was the first US aircraft to have crashed in Iranian territory since the conflict in late February.

Trump said last week that the US had "decimated" Iran and would finish the
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IAF plans heavy-lift airship at 30,000 feet for border watch

Surendra.Singh@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Aiming to boost the country's intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities, the Indian Air Force (IAF) has started work on a plan to build an unmanned airship for carrying out long-endurance monitoring missions.

The IAF has invited bids from domestic defence companies to design, develop and manufacture a 'Medium Altitude Heavy Lift Airship' that can operate at an altitude of "10,000 feet from sea level (up to 30,000 ft above mean sea level) and can carry payload at least 2,000 kg (up to 5,000 kg desirable)".

Such an airship should be capable of operating in Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS), Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System, NAVIC (desi navigation system) and also under GNSS-denied environment. In the future, such an airship can be a launch platform for projectiles and drones.

The induction of such a platform will be a force-multiplier for the IAF as it will boost monitoring of India's sensitive and long borders, and alert forces against in-

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ursions and drone threats.

The platform "should be a multi-utility airship, preferably operating on hydrogen and will be used towards carrying out persistent ISR, communication akin to airborne radars like AWACS and AEW&C, and having capability to operate special payloads as well as act as a launch platform for projectiles or drones", the proposal stated, adding such an airship should have "either line-of-sight communication of at least 250 km or the ability to operate via satellite links".

Hydrogen is preferred as it is lighter than air, cheap and non-toxic gas, abundantly available. The bid proposed an initial minimum order of 10 such platforms.

OPEC+ agrees on symbolic oil quota hike amid war, claim delegates

Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC+) members agreed to raise their oil production quotas for May, a symbolic move as the Iran war constrains output and shipments from several of the alliance's largest members.

Key producers led by Saudi Arabia and Russia agreed to increase targets by about 206,000 barrels a day during a video conference on Sunday, according to delegates who asked not to be identified discussing private deliberations. With oil flows from the Persian Gulf throttled by the ongoing Iran war, such a move by the group is theoretical.

Oil prices have been roiled by five weeks of conflict, climbing to almost \$120 a barrel last month, and soaring costs for products such as jet fuel and diesel are threatening inflation. Brent futures settled near \$109 on Friday after Trump vowed an escalation in the war. Before the conflict erupted, eight major Gulf countries had been gradually restoring supply halted back in 2023. They held production steady for the first three months of this year, then on March 1 they agreed to an increase of 206,000 barrels a day for April. BLOOMBERG

HOW US PULLED OFF HIGH-RISK RESCUE AFTER IRAN DOWNED F-15E

US rescues airman deep inside Iran; both sides dispute scale of losses

WHAT HAPPENED

Iran shoots down US F-15 fighter jet on Friday over southern Iran. The pilot is rescued, but the weapons officer of the jet goes missing. US begins search-and-rescue op as Iran promises a reward for anyone who turns in an 'enemy pilot'

1. BEHIND ENEMY LINES

After ejecting, the airman, evades Iranian forces for over 48 hours hiding in the mountains. Equipped with a beacon and a secure communication device, airman fights for survival, at one point hiking up a 7,000-foot ridgeline. Jet shot down in a region of Iran where there is significant opposition to govt, so airman may have been able to rely on locals for shelter and assistance

2. DECEPTION CAMPAIGN

Before locating airman, CIA spreads word inside Iran that US forces have found the airman and were moving him on the ground for exfiltration. The campaign confuses Iranian officials while the agency conducts its search and rescue operations

Photo: Bloomberg



C-130, HC-130J, MC-130, Black Hawk copters used in op

SURVIVAL, EVASION, RESISTANCE, ESCAPE

US aviators undergo so-called SERE training in the event they have to eject over hostile territory – Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape. They wear a combat vest which contains a radio/GPS-coded beacon to transmit their position, while they also carry water, food, first-aid material and a pistol in order to survive



File photo



US F-15E jet shot down over Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province

3. HOW RESCUE OP UNFOLDED

- CIA traces airman's location, US aircraft drops bombs & opens fire on Iranian convoys to keep them at bay
- US Navy Seal Team 6 commandos carry on mission involving hundreds of special op troops and military personnel working deep inside Iran
- Possibly 2 C-130-class aircraft, each costing over \$100m, rendered inoperable. US forces destroy aircraft on-site before exfiltrating
- Each C-130 can carrying between around 90 personnel, suggesting the deployment of 200+ special forces

WHAT US SAYS

US military 'pulled off one of the most daring Search and Rescue Operations' in its history. The officer is 'now SAFE and SOUND!' The US prez says military sent dozens of aircraft into Iran and claimed the operation was carried out without any Americans being killed or wounded

WHAT IRAN SAYS

Iran's state TV airs video showing 'parts of American aircraft' shot down by Iranian forces. The broadcaster says Iran shoots down an American transport plane and two helicopters that were part of the rescue operation. Iran's military joint command claims 4 US aircraft destroyed



A handout photo from IRGC official website Sepah News on Sunday shows the wreckage and remains of targeted and crashed aircraft in central Iran