

'US tells Gulf nations to prepare for possible strike on Iran after midterms'

WASHINGTON, Oct 28 (IANS)

THE United States has told several Gulf countries to prepare for a brief but intense military campaign against Iran after the US midterm elections, 'The Wall Street Journal' reported on Wednesday, citing people briefed on the conversations.

According to the report, the United States and Israel are preparing for another round of intense military operations against Iran. US forces in the Middle East are replenishing ammunition stocks, and bombers and fighter jets are getting ready for potential strikes.

Israel has also drawn up plans and identified targets for a possible new attack, the Journal reported. US President Donald Trump has not made a final decision but is leaning toward a major attack targeting Iranian infrastructure and nuclear sites, the report said, 'Xinhua News Agency' reported.

Trump could also seek a deal with Iran. Last week, he said the United States might launch another

'little Epic Fury,' referring to the US and Israeli bombing campaign in the spring, or Iran could agree to a deal.

The President has said he won't attack Iran before the midterms.

Last week, Trump warned that American forces could launch another round of military strikes against Iran if Tehran fails to reach an agreement with Washington, signalling that further military action remains an option despite his claims that Iran has already suffered a decisive defeat.

Speaking at a Republican campaign rally in Fort Myers, Florida, Trump suggested that the United States could repeat elements of its military campaign against Iran if diplomatic efforts failed to produce an agreement. "We may do another little Epic Fury, or they'll agree. If they're smart, they'll just say, let's get down to business," Trump told supporters. The remarks came as the President sought to portray the military campaign as successful while keeping

pressure on Tehran to accept an agreement that would prevent it from developing nuclear weapons. Trump referred to two American military operations against Iran, Operation Midnight Hammer and Operation Epic Fury, claiming they had destroyed the country's nuclear enrichment capabilities and severely weakened its military and economy.

"We obliterated Iran's nuclear enrichment capacity with Operation Midnight Hammer," he said. The President said subsequent operations had reinforced the initial strikes.

He did not outline the conditions Iran would have to meet to prevent another round of military action. "We defeated them militarily, financially and otherwise and now we are ensuring it's done," Trump said.

His comments suggested that Washington was prepared to maintain military pressure even as the administration considered the possibility of an agreement.

ISRO to launch NVS-03 satellite on Oct 30

SRIHARIKOTA (Andhra Pradesh),
Oct 28 (PTI)

ISRO will launch the much awaited navigation satellite NVS-03 aboard a GSLV rocket on October 30, the premier space agency said on Wednesday.

NVS-03 is the third satellite in the next generation navigation satellite system envisaged for providing continuity of navigation services for IRNSS (Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System) series.

The satellite carries an indigenous atomic clock, along with the procured atomic clocks.

It also includes band L1 in addition to existing L5/S signals

(which provides information including location) with coverage over Indian land mass and a region extending 1500 km around Indian geopolitical boundary.

The GSLV-F18/NVS-03 Mission is scheduled for launch on October 30, 2026, at 11:51 pm from Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. According to ISRO, five second-generation NavIC satellites--NVS-01/02/03/04/05 are envisaged to augment NavIC base layer constellation with enhanced features for ensuring continuity of services. The NVS series of satellites incorporates L1 band signals additionally to widen the services.

Rajnath Singh, Pete Hegseth review progress of India-US defence pact

NEW DELHI, Oct 28 (PTI)

DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh and US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth reviewed the progress of a 10-year India-US defence framework pact that seeks to drive strategic convergence in critical technologies, information sharing, and co-production of military hardware.

In their wide-ranging talks at Cebu in the Philippines, Singh and Hegseth also reviewed the situation in the Indo-Pacific and the fast-evolving regional security dynamics. India and the US inked the defence framework pact in October last year that sets an ambitious roadmap to further bolster the bilateral defence partnership between the two strategic partners.

Hegseth and Singh are in Cebu to attend a meeting of a grouping of nations comprising ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) member states and some of its dialogue partners.



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh during a meeting with US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth on the margins of a multilateral conclave, in Cebu, Philippines.

(PTI)

In a social media post, the Defence Minister described his talks with Hegseth as "excellent".

"We reviewed the progress of our 10-year India-US Defence Framework, driving strategic

convergence across military technology, information sharing, and co-production. Our robust partnership continues to be a cornerstone for a free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific," he said.

The US Secretary of War, on his part, said: "Great meeting with Indian Minister of Defence Singh. We celebrated the one-year anniversary of the Framework for our Major Defense Partnership and explored ways to strengthen cooperation."

Around 11 years back, the US designated India a "Major Defence Partner", paving the way for sharing of critical military equipment and technology.

The two countries have also inked key defence and security pacts over the past few years, including the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016 that allows their militaries to use each other's bases for repair and replenishment of supplies.

India targets 5 MMT annual green hydrogen production capacity by 2030

NEW DELHI, Oct 28 (IANS)

INDIA aims to develop 5 million metric tonnes (MMT) of annual green hydrogen production capacity by 2030, an official factsheet said on Wednesday.

This transition can reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels and strengthen the country's long-term energy security.

The National Green Hydrogen Mission marks an important step towards building a cleaner, more self-reliant and globally competitive energy economy. The Mission is expected to reduce cumulative fossil fuel imports by approximately Rs 1 lakh crore by 2030.

Beyond energy security, the Mission seeks to create new opportunities for industrial growth, investment and employment.

It is expected to mobilise over Rs 8 lakh crore in investments and generate more than 6 lakh jobs across manufacturing, infra-



structure, research, and project development.

The production and use of the targeted green hydrogen quantum could also help avert nearly 50 MMT of carbon dioxide emissions annually, according to the factsheet.

Moreover, six States have notified dedicated green hydrogen policies, complementing the National Green Hydrogen Mission. Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh,

Rajasthan and West Bengal are the States with notified dedicated policies. Four more States are finalising their dedicated green hydrogen policies. Haryana, Punjab, Bihar and Kerala are working on the draft policies.

Seven States have integrated hydrogen into their existing industrial and renewable energy policy frameworks. These include Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana and Chhattisgarh.

Military tech for Pak may reach 3rd country: Rajnath to Hegseth

Raises Delhi's Concerns Over F-16 Support Package To Islamabad

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Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday conveyed India's concern to US secretary of war Pete Hegseth over Washington providing an F-16 fighter jet sustenance package and advanced military technologies to Pakistan, while cautioning against double standards on terrorism.

Rajnath, while reviewing the progress of Indo-US defence partnership with Hegseth, told him that "India is strictly opposed to the US providing advanced fighter jet support package related to F-16 programme to Pakistan", sources told TOI about the talks held on sidelines of the Asean Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus in the Philippine city of Cebu.

Probably hinting at China and Iran, Singh also told

Hegseth that "US providing sensitive technologies to Pakistan could end up in a third country", the sources said.

US's \$649 million F-16 support and upgrade package for Pakistan involved avionics enhancements, cryptographic modules (including AN/APX-126 IFF systems), mission-planning tools, spare parts, simulators, training, and contractor logistics support from Lockheed Martin. With Pakistan harbouring terrorists, Rajnath also categorically told the US secretary of war that America should be wary of "double standards on terrorism".

Both leaders emphasised their joint resolve to eliminate the global menace of terrorism. Rajnath stressed that the global community must maintain an uncompromising, zero-tolerance approach towards nations that support, train or fund



With Pakistan harbouring terrorists, Rajnath categorically told Pete Hegseth that America should be wary of 'double standards on terrorism'

terrorist organisations. Hegseth reaffirmed the US's unwavering solidarity and full support to India in its fight against cross-border terrorism. Rajnath expressed India's deep appreciation for the consistent and strong support extended by the US.

During their bilateral talks, Rajnath and Hegseth reviewed the progress of defence partnership and decid-

ed to expand military collaboration. "Both leaders reviewed the progress of the 10-year India-US Defence Framework and concluded by reaffirming their commitment to further elevate India-US defence ties to strategic convergence," defence ministry said in a statement. Their discussions touched upon advancing military-to-military exchanges, augmenting maritime security collaboration, and integrating robust defence supply chains to further deepen and expand ongoing defence industry collaboration, it said.

During their wide-ranging talks, Rajnath and Hegseth also reviewed the situation in Indo-Pacific and fast-evolving regional security dynamics. Rajnath wrote on X, "Had an excellent meeting with US secretary of war Pete Hegseth on sidelines of 13th ADMM-Plus. We reviewed the progress of our 10-year India-US Defence Framework... Our partnership continues to be a cornerstone for a free, open, & secure Indo-Pacific."

Govt clears ₹10k cr outlay to boost output of containers, cut imports; eyes 15% mkt share

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New Delhi: With a view to countering China's growing monopoly in the container manufacturing sector, the cabinet Wednesday approved the 'container manufacturing promotion scheme' with a budgetary outlay of Rs 10,000 crore. The scheme is aimed at reducing India's dependence on imports to meet domestic demand and ensuring supply security during crises.

China accounts for 95% of global container manufacturing, while India aims to expand capacity to corner 15% share of global market.

I&B minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the scheme, announced in 2026-27 budget, will run for 13 years. India's container traffic is projected to grow from 24 million TEUs in 2024 to 175 million TEUs by 2047.

In a post on X, PM Modi said, "The key benefits of the scheme include 10-fold increase in domestic capacity to 7.5 lakh TEUs annually.

Financial support for new and existing manufacturers. Globally competitive, quality-certified containers. Reduced import dependence and stronger supply chains."

Shipping minister Sarbananda Sonowal said the decision "marks a significant step towards building an *aatmanirbhar* and globally competitive container manufacturing ecosystem in India".

The scheme has three components. First, interest subvention assistance of 3% per annum on eligible capital loans for establishment of greenfield container manufacturing facilities and brownfield expansion of existing container manufacturing capacities. Second, operational expenditure assistance with an outlay of Rs 8,891 crore to improve the competitiveness of domestically manufactured containers. There will also be testing and certification assistance to support establishment of common facilities.

Centre's Diwali gift to pensioners, staff: 3% DA hike

New Delhi: Ahead of Diwali, Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a 3% hike in dearness allowance (DA) for central govt employees and dearness relief (DR) for pensioners. The decision will benefit over 1 crore employees and pensioners, and it will be applicable for the July-Dec 2026 period.

With this, the dearness allowance and DR will increase from the earlier 60% to 63% of the basic pay.

The combined impact on the exchequer on account of this increase would be Rs 10,016 crore per annum. "This increase is in accordance with the accepted formula, which is based on the recommendations of the seventh Central Pay Commission," the govt said. TNN

Cyclone Arnab leaves trail of destruction across AP, Odisha

Five persons killed in Andhra Pradesh

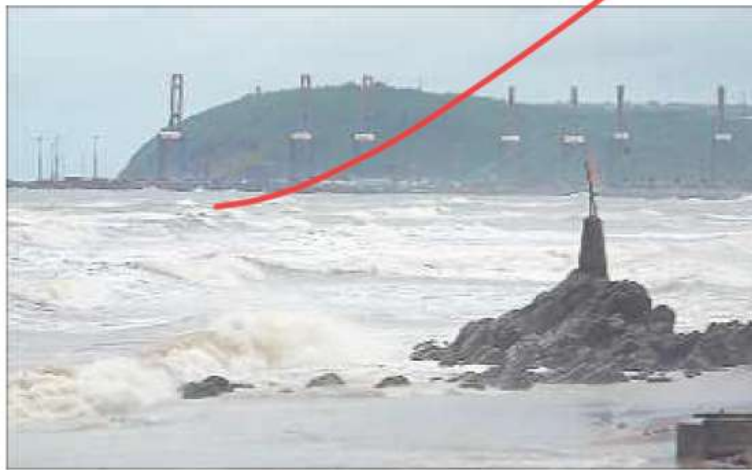
AMARAVATI, Oct 28 (PTI)

CYCLONE Arnab crossed the Andhra coast early on Wednesday, leaving a trail of destruction with uprooted trees and electric poles and damaged roads, while five persons were killed in related incidents including electrocution.

In a 6-hour landfall between 2 am-8 am, the weather system crossed the coast between Andhra Pradesh and Yanam, bringing copious rains to many parts, especially those in the coastal districts.

According to officials, hundreds of villages in over 10 districts, including Eluru, West Godavari and Vizianagaram bore the brunt of the cyclone, with many localities receiving rainfall in excess of 200 mm, with low-lying areas getting inundated.

Heavy to extremely heavy rainfall triggered by cyclone Arnab has battered southern Odisha,



Waves crash at the shore amid strong winds during Cyclone Arnab's landfall in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday. (PTI)

prompting the State Government to evacuate over 30,000 people and place several districts on high alert, Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari said on Wednesday.

The Government expects the cyclone to affect all southern districts, with Malkangiri likely to be the worst hit, Pujari said, adding that evacuation from low-lying and landslide-prone areas

was continuing.

The IMD has forecast heavy rainfall in parts of West Bengal till October 31 under the influence of cyclone 'Arnab', which made landfall in the Andhra Pradesh coast in the early hours of Wednesday.

Moderate to heavy rain lashed the coastal and some southern districts of West Bengal.

Cyclonic Storm Arnab, which

weakened from a severe cyclonic storm, was centred over coastal Andhra Pradesh and the adjoining west central Bay of Bengal on Wednesday evening and is likely to weaken further into a deep depression by midnight, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Wednesday.

The IMD said the storm moved north-northwestwards at a speed of 8 kmph over the past six hours before weakening into a cyclonic storm.

The weather department said the storm is likely to continue moving north-northwestwards over the next 24 hours. It is very likely to weaken into a deep depression by midnight on Wednesday and weaken gradually thereafter.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, detailing the damage caused by the cyclone, said five people were killed in incidents of electrocution and wall collapse.

Standing crops, including paddy, suffered damage over thousands of hectares.