US Jets Shot Down in Iran - Special Forces: Leave No One Behind.

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TEHRAN / JERUSALEM – The silence of the white rock hills in Iranian territory is shattered by the roar of low-flying engines and the frantic beat of helicopter blades. After the downing of a US **F-15E Strike Eagle**, one of the most dangerous rescue operations in modern history was launched. While one crew member has already been rescued by American forces, the fate of the second pilot – the weapons systems operator – hangs by a thread, as Tehran has already issued a bounty for his capture.

The Elite Unit: The Night Stalkers

At the heart of the operation are not just conventional units. According to defense sources, the **Night Stalkers** (160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment) have been deployed. This unit, specialized in impossible infiltrations, is known for using modified "black helicopters" to evade radar.

The Rescue Task Force

The mission features a lethal combination of assets:

- **MH-60 Black Hawk:** Spotted at low altitude near the wreckage of the jet, they are the armored "taxis" of the special forces.
- **C-130 Hercules:** The "sky mule," capable of landing on improvised runways, serves as a command center and fire support with its rotary cannons.
- **MH-47 Chinook & Apache:** Heavy protection and transport for Delta Force commandos ready for rapid exfiltration.

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CSAR Protocol: Extract Under Fire

The mission follows the strict rules of **Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR)**. Here the letter "C" (Combat) makes all the difference: it's not a simple roadside rescue, but a military operation where shooting is involved to protect the fugitive.

> *"There are no permanently stationed American troops in Iran. This makes the mission infinitely more complex compared to recovering pilots in declared war zones like Afghanistan," analysts comment.*

A crucial detail emerges from *Channel 12* reports: the Israeli army (**IDF**) has **suspended air raids** in the area to avoid the risk of friendly fire and allow American helicopters to operate

without interference, while drones scan every inch of terrain.

Survival Behind Enemy Lines: The SERE Code

For the pilot still missing, every minute is a psychological and physical battle. The training received is summarized in the acronym **SERE**:

1. **Survival:** Managing scarce resources in an arid environment.
2. **Evasion:** Moving only at night, avoiding populated areas and enemy patrols.
3. **Resistance:** Preparing for the possibility of capture and interrogation.
4. **Escape:** Reaching the agreed extraction point via radio.

Admiral **William J. Fallon** (former head of Centcom) explained to the *New York Times* that the vastness and wilderness of Iranian territory might be the pilot's only true defense: hiding in such a rugged area is difficult, but finding him is even more so.

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Precedents and Symbols: From O'Grady to McCain

American military history is filled with heroic successes and dramatic failures in recovery missions:

- **The success:** In 1995, in Bosnia, **Scott O'Grady** survived 6 days eating insects before being rescued by the Marines.

- **The warning: John McCain** and **James Stockdale** became symbols of the failure of CSAR in Vietnam, spending over 7 years in captivity at the infamous "Hanoi Hilton."

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A Geopolitical Challenge

Today, the stakes in Iran are extremely high. Since September 11, 2001, CSAR units have brought home over 470 military personnel, but the capture of an F-15E pilot by Tehran would represent a political and image disaster for Washington.

While the Iranian bounty hangs over the American aviator's head, the Night Stalkers' helicopters continue to challenge enemy air defenses. The order is clear: **leave no one behind.**

News link: https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/guerra/ipotesi-night-stalkers-iran-ecco-lunit-d-lite-che-pu-salvare-2646907.html