

# Saudi says east-west pipeline, energy facilities restored

AFP | Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia's energy ministry said yesterday that its key east-west oil pipeline and other facilities had been restored following attacks by Iran on targets across the Gulf.

"Energy facilities and the east-west pipeline damaged by attacks have recovered and regained their operational capacity, enhancing the reliability of supplies," the official Saudi Press Agency reported, citing an energy ministry statement.



**The East-West Oil Pipeline in Saudi Arabia stretches about 1,200 kilometres, linking oil fields in the east to the Red Sea port of Yanbu in the west—allowing exports to bypass the Strait of Hormuz.**

ity, enhancing the reliability of supplies," the official Saudi Press Agency reported, citing an energy ministry statement.

Before Tuesday's start of a fragile, two-week truce between Iran and the United States, the Islamic republic had targeted critical energy infrastructure belonging to its oil-rich neighbours.

Saudi Arabia said operational and technical work had led to "restoring full pumping capacity through the east-west pipeline, amounting to approximately seven million barrels per day".

The energy ministry explained the prior attacks had led to the "loss of approximately 700,000 barrels per day of pumping capacity through the east-west pipeline".

An energy ministry official told the SPA news agency that one of the pumping stations on a vital east-west pipeline was hit in the attacks.

Saudi Arabia's Petroline proved an economic lifeline during the war, with the 750-mile network of pipes connecting the Red Sea to the west with the Gulf in the east.

Facilities in Riyadh, the Eastern Province and the industrial city of Yanbu as well as infrastructure for oil and gas production, transport and refining, and petrochemical plants and power facilities were targeted in the Iranian attacks on Saudi Arabia, the official said.

## Imagine Dragons frontman chases childhood video game dream

AFP | Paris, France

A childhood dream of making video games is becoming a reality this week for Imagine Dragons' singer Dan Reynolds, as his company's debut title "Last Flag" is released Tuesday.

Games had been a passion of Reynolds and his brother and band manager Mac long before the group became a global name.

Now the pair have used some time away from music to build a team-based shooter inspired by the games of Capture the Flag they played in the woods as young Boy Scouts.

"Last Flag" is "not a passion project, (we've) been working on it now for five-plus years," Reynolds told journalists during a virtual news conference.

Their roughly 30-strong studio, Night Street Games, has been working on "Last Flag" since its 2020 founding.

The game sorts players into two teams of five who can battle online, competing to hide their own flag and snatch the oppos-



American singer Dan Reynolds

ing team's banner.

"I grew up in a family of eight boys and one girl, and we were all nerdy kids," 38-year-old Dan Reynolds remembered.

Creating their own game had been "this dream that we talked about all the time" as they learned skills such as programming and 3D modelling.

But when Imagine Dragons "just blew up" while they were at university, Dan, a fan

of "Starcraft" and "League of Legends", went with the flow, enlisting Mac along the way as manager.

Tracks such as "Believer", "Thunder" and "Radioactive" have made the band one of the most popular pop rock groups worldwide.

It has sold 74 million albums and racked up 160 billion streams, according to record label Warner Music Group.

The band's ride has been "just incredible", Dan said.

"But we talked all the time during that about 'what if?'" the brothers had gone through with their gaming dream, he added.

When the time finally came, they devised a brightly coloured world filled with seventies stylings.

"Last Flag" bears visual similarities to the genre juggernaut "Fortnite", but the Reynolds say their title stands out from the pack with a focus on playing the objective -- not simply eliminating opponents.

Several high-value productions in the team shooter genre have fallen flat in recent years, with titles such as "Concord" or "Highguard" quickly taken offline after failing to win a loyal player base.

"Even though there's a ton of competition, I think we've seen even recently that a new game... can break through if it provides something different," Mac Reynolds said.

## Boarded Panama-flagged vessel released: Swedish coast guard

AFP | Stockholm, Sweden



The Panama-registered bulk carrier Hui Yuan

guard aircraft monitoring mission in a violation of the Nordic country's Environmental Code.

A Panama-flagged vessel which the Swedish coast guard boarded yesterday morning suspecting it of an environmental offence has been released after the master of the vessel admitted to a crime, the coast guard said.

The Panama-registered bulk carrier Hui Yuan had been on its way from Russia to Las Palmas in Spain when it was boarded off the southern port of Ystad, the coast guard said in a statement.

The 225-metre-long vessel had been discovered flushing coal residues into the Baltic Sea on Saturday during a coast

guard aircraft monitoring mission in a violation of the Nordic country's Environmental Code.

A preliminary investigation was launched and the master of the ship interviewed.

Later Sunday, the coast guard said the ship master "has admitted violating the Swedish Environmental Code" and "has deposited money for future fines."

"The ship is therefore allowed to leave Sweden," it said.

"The shipping industry should know that Swedish authorities are working close together to maintain order at sea," said Daniel Stenling, deputy head of the coast guard's operations department.

## 'Stop hiring humans'? Silicon Valley confronts AI job panic

AFP | San Francisco, United States

AI industry insiders want workers to code smarter, think harder and lean into their humanity -- but still dodge the question of how many jobs artificial intelligence will destroy.

The reassurance rang out across HumanX, a four-day conference drawing some 6,500 investors, entrepreneurs and tech executives, even as a blunt advertisement at the entrance set the tone: "Stop hiring humans."

On the main stage, May Habib, chief executive of an AI platform called Writer, told the audience that Fortune 500 bosses are having a "collective panic attack" on the subject.

The anxiety is well-founded. More and more companies are directly citing AI in announcing job cuts.

High-profile examples are on the rise: Salesforce laid off 4,000 customer support workers, saying AI now handles 50 percent of its work.



Praveen Neppalli Naga speaks during the "Q&A with Praveen Neppalli Naga, CTO at Uber" segment at the HumanX Conference San Francisco 2026 at Moscone Center South

Block chief Jack Dorsey announced plans to cut the company's headcount nearly in half, citing "intelligence tools" that have fundamentally changed how companies operate.

Not all claims have gone uncontested -- some economists say firms are pointing to AI to rationalize layoffs that are really about past overhiring or cost-cutting ahead of massive

infrastructure investments.

OpenAI's Sam Altman has spoken of "AI-washing," and most speakers at the San Francisco event similarly dismissed the invocation of AI as a false pretext for job cuts -- even as they freely predicted disruption was just around the corner.

AI is going to "transform every single company, every single job, every single way that we do

work," said Matt Garman, chief executive of cloud computing giant Amazon Web Services.

### 'Pretty unsettling'

The debate remains heated. Two years ago, Nvidia chief Jensen Huang declared that the ultimate goal was to make it so "nobody has to program" or code.

"We will look back on that as some of the worst career advice ever given," Andrew Ng, founder of training platform DeepLearning.AI, shot back on Tuesday.

In his view, coding is not an obsolete skill -- AI has simply made it available to more people.

Another argument has taken hold in Silicon Valley: interpersonal skills will become more valuable than ever, with some voices going so far as to tout a humanities education as sound tech career preparation.

"As AI can do more of a job, the things that will distinguish and differentiate a given employee are going to be the human skills -- critical thinking,

communication, teamwork," said Greg Hart, chief executive of training platform Coursera, which has seen enrollment in its critical thinking courses triple over the past year.

Florian Douetteau, chief executive of Dataiku, a French company specializing in enterprise AI, agreed.

The real human added value, he told AFP, is the "capacity for judgment."

He described a world in which an AI agent works through the night, its human counterpart reviews the results in the morning, and then the agent resumes working autonomously during the lunch break.

But the entrepreneur nevertheless expressed unease.

"We are going to have a generation of people who will never have written anything from start to finish in their entire lives," he said. "That's pretty unsettling."

### 'Mistake was not preparing'

All of this advice risks ringing hollow for a generation already struggling to land a first job.

AI has automated entry-level tasks that once served as on-the-job training. Hiring of candidates with less than one year of experience fell 50 percent between 2019 and 2024 among America's major tech companies, according to a study by investment fund SignalFire.

"We should be preparing for the loss of knowledge work jobs in a number of categories," warned former US vice president Al Gore.

As the week's lone genuinely dissenting voice, Gore called for a real action plan to map threatened jobs and prepare workers for career transitions, so as not to repeat the mistakes of the globalization era.

"The mistake was not globalization. The mistake was in not preparing for the consequences of globalization," he said, drawing a parallel with the de-industrialization that followed the offshoring wave of the 2000s.

"Maybe we don't want to talk about it," he added, "because it may slow down the enthusiasm for the technology."