

Headlines:

- **Saudi Oil Facilities Attack**
- **India and China Face-off**
- **The Taliban in Tehran**

Details:

Saudi Oil Facilities Attack

An attack on Sat 14 September on Saudi Arabia's oil infrastructure jolted international oil markets, with President Donald Trump threatening that the US military is "locked and loaded" to strike back. But days after the attack much still remains unclear, including who carried it out and from where the projectiles or drones that have succeeded in taking half of Saudi Arabia's daily oil production. US officials have released satellite imagery of the attacks' aftermath but have not made public any other intelligence documenting Iran's purported involvement. Other major powers, including the European Union and China, are urging caution and warning against prematurely assigning blame. US officials have described 17 points of impact on the facility, and satellite imagery of the aftermath shows regular, accurate points of impact on the facilities in question. The imagery gives little clear indication as to the location from which the attacks were launched. It's still unclear exactly how the attack was carried out, but signs point to either a missile strike, drone attack, or some combination of the two. What is clear from this whole incident, even though the details are not clear, is that the rise in oil prices definitely benefits the US.

India and China Face-off

Chinese and Indian troops were involved in physical altercations along Pangong Lake, which straddles the disputed border between India's Ladakh and China's Aksai Chin, but a meeting between delegations from each side eventually defused the situation. The most recent faceoff marks the first incident between Indian and Chinese troops since July 2018 and comes just over a month after New Delhi moved to strip Jammu and Kashmir of its autonomous status and split the region into two territories. Beijing immediately criticized the decision. In 2017, Indian and Chinese troops engaged in a 73-day standoff on the Doklam Plateau, a disputed territory between China and Bhutan. New Delhi and Beijing each administer territories that the other side claims, which includes Chinese-administered Aksai Chin and Indian-administered Arunachal Pradesh. China needed to respond ever since India annexed 60% of Kashmir, this area directly sits parallel to China.

The Taliban in Tehran

Following a visit to Moscow, delegates from the Afghan Taliban are now in Tehran for talks with Iranian officials. Their conversations have focused on the Afghan peace deal and, in particular, why talks with the US broke down. The Taliban also sought to reassure Tehran that Iranian projects in Afghanistan would remain safe. The Taliban outreach also comes at a time when tensions with the US are at a peak; Tehran is seeking all the leverage it can get to deal with Washington. How times have changed, the Taliban who would never sit with the Russians and Iran do so as the normal course of politics.