

Headlines:

- **Germany: Dresden Mosque Bombed in Xenophobic Attack**
- **OPEC Deal Shows Saudi Oil Strategy has Backfired**
- **India Claims 'Surgical Strikes' in Pakistani-Controlled Kashmir**

Details:

Germany: Dresden Mosque Bombed in Xenophobic Attack

Bomb attacks hit a mosque and a convention centre in the eastern German city of Dresden, police said on Tuesday, adding that the motive appeared to be xenophobia and nationalism. No one was injured in the explosions late on Monday in a city that has become a hotspot for far-right protests and hate crimes following a major influx of migrants and refugees into Germany. The imam, his wife and two sons were in the Fatih Camii Mosque at the time of the blast. Police said they found the remains of homemade explosives at both crime scenes. "Although no one has so far claimed responsibility, we must assume that there was a xenophobic motive," Horst Kretschmar, the Dresden police chief, said. German Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere said the mosque attack was "all the more scandalous" because it happened on the eve of the 10th annual meeting of the German Islam Conference. Police linked the explosion at the congress centre to celebrations due to take place next week in Dresden marking the 26th anniversary of German unification, which is to be attended by German President Joachim Gauck. "We have now switched to crisis mode," Kretschmar said, as police deployed to guard the city's two mosques and an Islamic cultural centre. About 300 worshippers regularly attend Friday prayers at the Fatih Camii mosque, which lies a short distance from Dresden's historic centre. The explosion at the mosque was detonated at 1953 GMT on Monday. The force of the blast pushed the front door of the building inwards and left the building covered with soot, police said. The explosion at the convention centre - about 2 kilometres from the Fatih Camii Mosque on the River Elbe, which runs through Dresden - occurred about half an hour later. Dresden, a Baroque city in Germany's ex-communist east, is also the birthplace of the anti-immigration Pegida street movement, short for Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident. Its members have angrily protested against the influx of refugees and migrants that last year brought one million asylum seekers to Europe's biggest economy. About a dozen demonstrations are planned over the weekend, by both Pegida and by anti-fascist groups. [Source: Aljazeera]

Verbal abuse and demonization of Muslims has given way to physical violence against Muslims living in Dresden. Parts of Germany are now reminiscent of the treatment meted out to the Jews living in Germany in the 1930s. The question arise, how long before such physical violence against Muslims engulfs the whole of Europe.

OPEC Deal Shows Saudi Oil Strategy has Backfired

The concessions offered by Saudi Arabia in its bid to lock down a deal to limit the globe's oil supply show the world's largest crude exporter is getting pinched by its own policy, Again Capital founding partner John Kilduff said Wednesday. Sources told Reuters that OPEC hammered out a deal on Wednesday to reduce the cartel's production to 32.5 million barrels per day from around 33.24 million, with output levels for each member to be determined in

November. Saudi Arabia's foreign exchange reserves have fallen 20 percent over the last two years, to \$587 billion through March, the last month for which IMF data were available. On Monday, the kingdom said it would cut ministers' pay by 20 percent and pare perks for public sector employees, who make up two-thirds of the country's workforce, Reuters reported. The move to squeeze public employees came ahead of an informal gathering of OPEC members and other producers at a previously scheduled meeting in Algeria to discuss a plan to stabilize oil prices, which remain nearly 60 percent below their 2014 peak. "The big takeaway is how into a corner the Saudis have backed themselves. This whole plan has backfired on them. They're going to be bearing most of the cutback if they pull it off, and they've had to really kowtow to the Iranians in this whole thing," Kilduff told CNBC's "Power Lunch." [Source: CNBC]

The Saudis have relented on their oil policy in favor of political stability. The austerity measures implemented by the royal family have provoked strong reactions from Saudis. It appears the recent endeavors to cut salaries accompanied by the huge public outcry have prompted the Saudis to abandon low oil prices. But it might be too little too late, and a social upheaval could be around the corner, as oil price may not recover fast enough to cushion the Kingdom's aggressive austerity policies.

India Claims 'Surgical Strikes' in Pakistani-Controlled Kashmir

India announced on Thursday that it had carried out early morning "surgical strikes" on Pakistani-controlled Kashmir, targeting bases and causing "significant casualties to terrorists" who it said were planning attacks on Indian territory. Pakistan, however, played down the operation, saying that no surgical strike had taken place, only small-arms fire along the border, and that two Pakistani soldiers had been killed and nine wounded. In a statement, a Pakistani military spokesman called India's announcement a "fabrication" and "an illusion being deliberately generated by India to create false effects." "If India tries to do this again, we will respond forcefully," Pakistan's defense minister, Khawaja Asif, said in a statement. "India is doing this only to please their media and public." Much was unclear about the nature of the Indian operation. But if India's infantry or air force did cross the de facto border known as the Line of Control to attack Pakistani positions, it would have broken precedent: Even during the brief conflict in Kargil in 1999, India's military did not declare that it had crossed the Line of Control, apparently wary that such a step would lead to a dangerous escalation between the nuclear-armed neighbors. The announcement suggested that the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India was less concerned about that risk. "They think that the escalation ceiling, beyond which Pakistan will be forced to respond, is higher than previously assessed, and therefore they are willing to do more than India has done previously," said Ashok Malik, a senior fellow at the Observer Research Foundation, a policy organization based in New Delhi. "India was exercising cross-L.O.C. options that were very close to doing nothing," he said, referring to the de facto border. "It is willing to go a little further." The news sent tremors through Indian markets, with the country's benchmark stock index, the Sensex, plunging 555 points, or nearly 2 percent. [Source: New York Times]

After the Kargil debacle, India adopted a new military doctrine known as Cold Start, which it is now testing. Pakistan should exploit India's surgical strike claims to mobilize its tactical nuclear weapons and openly foment the uprising in Kashmir and elsewhere in heavily Muslim populated states in India. What remains to be seen is how far Pakistan is prepared to go or are we witnessing another Pakistani fiasco?