



By: TA | AP Brief

Saudi Arabia shuts down a major pipeline



Saudi Arabia said Friday it shut down a major pipeline a day after it was attacked by drones, and Yemen's Iranian-backed **Houthi rebels** captured a strategic island at the southern entrance to the Red Sea, two officials said, opening a new front in the Iran war.

The Houthis made their biggest territorial gains in years along the **Bab el-Mandeb Strait**, one of the world's key shipping lanes.

The advance could boost **Iran's strategy** of driving up world oil and gas prices to pressure the United States.

Saudi Arabia said it had shut down the East-West pipeline after it was attacked the day before. The Saudi Ministry of Energy called the shutdown "a precautionary measure."

The Saudi Foreign Ministry blamed the attack on several drones that came from Iraq.

In a statement carried by the state-run Saudi Press Agency, the kingdom said it would not respond to give the Iraqi government "an opportunity to take the necessary measures."

The Houthis helped the Iraqi militias plan

Iraq's Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi, who is also commander-in-chief of the military, ordered an investigation into the Maysan province operations command and dismissed its commander after authorities determined that attacks targeting Saudi Arabia were launched from a site in the province, government spokesperson Sabah al-Numan said in a statement early Saturday.

Saudi Arabia and the United States bombed **Iranian-backed militias** in Iraq in July, after blaming them for drone attacks on Saudi oil facilities that had been claimed by the Houthis.

Regional officials told The Associated Press that the Houthis helped the Iraqi militias plan and execute the attacks.

Built in the 1980s, the East-West pipeline has played an important role in Saudi Arabia's ability to export oil following the disruption of the Strait of Hormuz during the Iran war.

By early June, Saudi Arabia had more than doubled oil exports from the Red Sea port at the pipeline's end to more than 5 million barrels per day, according to the **International Energy Agency**.

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