U.S. 'locked and loaded' after Saudi attacks

President Trump has hinted at a potential military response to the drone strikes on oil infrastructure

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump has said that the U.S. is "locked and loaded" to respond to attacks on Saudi oil infrastructure that Washington blamed on Iran, which have sent oil prices soaring.

It is the first time the President has hinted at a potential American military response to the drone attacks, which slashed Saudi oil production by half and led both the kingdom and the U.S. to announce they may tap their strategic reserves.

"Saudi Arabia oil supply was attacked. There is reason to believe that we know the culprit, are locked and loaded depending on verification, but are waiting to hear from the Kingdom as to who they believe was the cause of this attack, and under what terms we would proceed!" Mr. Trump said in a tweet late on Sunday.

On Monday, claiming that Iran told "a very big lie" in June when it said it downed a U.S. spy drone because it had violated its airspace, he tweeted: "Now they say that they had nothing to do with the attack on Saudi Arabia. We'll see?"

The Tehran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen, where a Saudi-led coalition is bogged down in a five-year war, claimed Saturday's strikes on two plants owned by energy giant Aramco.

But U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo pointed the finger squarely at Tehran.

"The U.S. will work with our partners and allies to ensure that energy markets remain well supplied and Iran is held accountable for its aggression," he said.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Monday that the attacks on Saudi oil facilities were an act of self-defence by Yemeni rebels.

Tough talk: U.S. President Donald Trump. ▪AFP

It's a response: Rouhani

"Yemen is the target of daily bombings... The people of Yemen have been forced to respond, they are only defending themselves," Mr. Rouhani told reporters in Ankara, alongside the leaders of Russia and Turkey.

Baghdad, caught between its two main allies – Tehran and Washington – denied any link to the attacks amid speculation that the drones were launched from Iraq.

Saudi de facto ruler Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has said the kingdom is "willing and able" to respond to this "terrorist aggression."

Weapons came from Iran: coalition

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
RIYADH

The weapons used to strike two Saudi oil plants were provided by the kingdom's arch-foe Iran, the Riyadh-led coalition fighting in Yemen said on Monday.

"The investigation is continuing and all indications are that weapons used in both attacks came from Iran," coalition spokesman Turki al-Maliki told reporters in Riyadh, adding they were now probing "from where they were fired".

"This strike didn't come from Yemen territory as the Houthi militia are pretending," Mr. Maliki added.

No breakthrough in Johnson's Brexit talks with EC's Juncker

U.K. yet to offer any 'legally operational' solution on border issue

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LUXEMBOURG

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker held their first face-to-face talks on Monday, without any visible signs of a breakthrough on an elusive Brexit deal.

The European Commission (EC) said after the meeting that Britain had yet to offer any "legally operational" solutions to the issue of the Irish border, the main roadblock to a deal.

"President Juncker underlined the Commission's continued willingness and openness to examine whether such proposals meet the objectives of the backstop"a border provision rejected by Britain. "Such proposals have not yet been made," the European Commission said in a statement.

Jean-Claude Juncker, left, with Boris Johnson. ▪AFP

Mr. Johnson said the U.K. will leave the EU on the scheduled October 31 date, with or without a withdrawal agreement. But he insists he can strike a revised divorce deal with the bloc in time for an orderly departure. The agreement made by his predecessor, Theresa May, was rejected three times by Parliament.

Mr. Johnson said in a *Daily Telegraph* column on Monday that he believes "passionately" that a deal can be agreed and approved at a summit of EU leaders on October 17-18.

While the EU says it is still waiting for firm proposals from the U.K., Mr. Johnson spokesman James Slack said Britain had "put forward workable solutions in a number of areas."

Solomon Islands ends ties with Taiwan

REUTERS
TAIPEI

The Solomon Islands' government has cut official ties with Taiwan in a new blow to President Tsai Ing-wen, who is seeking re-election in January amid rising tension with China.

Taiwan now has formal relations with only 16 countries worldwide, but China claims Taiwan as its territory and says it has no right to formal ties with any nation.

Taiwan's Foreign Minister Joseph Wu told reporters in Taipei late on Monday that it would immediately close down its embassy in the Solomon Islands.

Mr. Wu said China was aiming to meddle with Taiwan's elections in January with "dollar diplomacy".

"The Chinese government attacked Taiwan purposely before our elections, obviously aiming to meddle with the voting," he said.

Solomon Islands is the sixth country Taiwan will lose as a diplomatic ally since Tsai came to office in 2016 – following Burkina Faso, the Dominican Republic, Sao Tome and Principe, Panama and El Salvador.

The move came after the Solomon Islands' months-long review of the pros and cons of a switch to Beijing, which was offering $8.5 million in development fund.

'6 lakh Rohingya in Myanmar face threat of genocide'

UN mission urges UNSC to refer the country to International Criminal Court

AGENCE FRANC-PRESSE
YANGON

Rohingya Muslims remaining in Myanmar still face a "serious risk of genocide", UN investigators said on Monday, warning the repatriation of a million already driven from the country by the army remains "impossible".

The fact-finding mission to Myanmar, set up by the Human Rights Council, last year branded the army operations in 2017 as "genocide" and called for the prosecution of top generals, including army chief Min Aung Hlaing.

Some 7,40,000 Rohingya fled burning villages, bringing accounts of murder, rape and torture over the border to sprawling refugee camps in Bangladesh, where survivors of previous waves of persecution already languished.

But in a damning report, the United Nations team said the 600,000 Rohingya still inside Myanmar's Rakhine State remain in deteriorating and "deplorable" conditions.

"Myanmar continues to harbour genocidal intent and the Rohingya remain under serious risk of genocide," the investigators said in their final report on Myanmar, due to be presented on Tuesday in Geneva.

Living in terror: A Rohingya woman, who crossed over from Myanmar into Bangladesh, with her children in a camp. ▪AP

The country is "denying wrongdoing, destroying evidence, refusing to conduct effective investigations and clearing, razing, confiscating and building on land from which it displaced Rohingya", it said.

Rohingya were living in "inhumane" conditions, the report continued, adding more than 40,000 structures had been destroyed in the 2017 crackdown.

The mission reiterated calls for the UN Security Council to refer Myanmar to the International Criminal Court (ICC) or to set up a tribunal, like for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

Confidential list

It said it had a confidential list of more than 100 names, including officials, suspected of being involved in genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, in addition to the six generals named publicly last year.

The maligned Muslim community has long been subjected to tight movement restrictions, making it difficult or impossible to access healthcare, work and education.

Turkey holds summit on Syria conflict

ASSOCIATED PRESS
ANKARA

The leaders of Russia, Iran and Turkey met in the Turkish capital, Ankara, on Monday to discuss the situation in Syria, with the aim of halting fighting in the northwestern Idlib province and finding a lasting political solution to the country's civil war.

"We will address first and foremost the situation on the field in Idlib, the developments east of the Euphrates, the stage reached in the political process and the issue of Syrian refugees," Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said.

ELSEWHERE

N. Korea says talks with U.S. could resume soon

SEOUL

North Korea said on Monday that diplomatic talks with the United States could resume in a "few weeks," but that it will not consider abandoning its nuclear weapons unless external threats are fully removed. AP

Russia deploys S-400 missiles in the Arctic

MOSCOW

Russia has placed S-400 missile defence systems at the Novaya Zemlya archipelago as Moscow seeks to increase its military presence in the Arctic, the defence ministry said on Monday. AFP

218 booked in Pak. for damaging Hindu temple

Alleged blasphemy triggered rioting

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KARACHI

Police in Pakistan's Sindh province on Monday registered three cases against 218 rioters for vandalising properties, including a temple, after a school principal from the minority Hindu community was booked on charges of alleged blasphemy, according to media reports.

Widespread protests erupted in Ghotki district on Sunday after an FIR was filed against the principal of Sindh Public School on the complaint of Abdul Aziz Rajput, a student's father who claimed that the teacher had committed blasphemy by his anti-Islam remarks.

Following the riots, protesters demanded the police to arrest the principal, who was identified as Notan Mal.

Ghotki police registered three cases against the rioters who had taken to the streets to protest against the alleged incident of blasphemy.

He also said that the protesters vandalised a Hindu temple.

An FIR was filed against 45 people under various sections of the Pakistan Penal Code.

Another FIR was lodged against 150 people for blocking roads.

A third FIR pertaining to rioting and theft was filed against 23 people.

No double standards in dealing with protesters: Hong Kong police

They denied charges of leniency towards pro-Beijing men

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HONG KONG

Hong Kong police on Monday denied accusations their officers showed comparative lenience towards gangs of pro-Beijing men who attacked pro-democracy supporters during a weekend marked by multiple bloody street brawls.

The once stable international hub has been convulsed by weeks of huge, sometimes violent rallies calling for greater democratic freedoms and police accountability.

On Sunday, riot police fired tear gas and water cannon at hardcore pro-democracy protesters who were hurling rocks and petrol bombs, capping a 15th consecutive weekend of huge peaceful rallies followed by clashes.

Police displayed videos of pro-democracy protesters attacking people. ▪REUTERS

But there was also an uptick in bloody street fights.

At a press conference on Monday, Hong Kong's police displayed videos where individuals were attacked by pro-democracy supporters, including one where a man was kicked unconscious by a mob.

But the police presentation spent little time documenting or condemning attacks by government supporters.

Videos shared online showed some officers seemingly helping government supporters protect their identities or leave the scene.

But the force denied it had exhibited any double standards.

Will return if given chance of fair trial, says Snowden

He faces espionage charges in the U.S.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

Edward Snowden, the National Security Agency contractor living in Russia after leaking information about the U.S. government's mass surveillance programme, has said he would like to return home if he can get a fair trial.

Mr. Snowden, who faces espionage charges, stated his desire to return to the U.S. in an interview with "CBS This Morning" on Monday. "I would like to return to the U.S.," said Mr. Snowden, whose memoir, *Permanent Record*, is to go on sale on Tuesday.

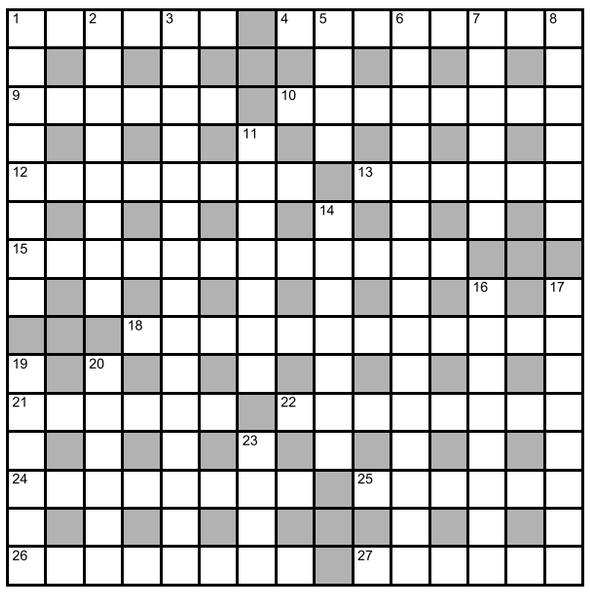
"But if I'm gonna spend the rest of my life in prison,

Edward Snowden

the one bottom line demand that we have to agree to is that at least I get a fair trial," he said. "And that is the one thing the government has refused to guarantee because they won't provide access to what's called a public interest defense," he said.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12732

(set by Arden)



ACROSS

1 Dark periods – start in opposite direction for tourist spots (6)

4 Tape to place in class (8)

9 Idle one gets in tow regularly (6)

10 Arthur gets an arm around me in exchange (8)

12 Painter has a head start over islander (8)

13 Movie called 'Country' (6)

15 Record playing, too much delay makes one sad (12)

18 Correct, let the wobble be seen as being unfair (5,3,4)

21 Sponge rings break in half, perhaps (6)

22 Daughter finds a way to cut onion, as a rule (8)

24 Crazy to combine drugs (8)

25 Moped, half-heartedly for getting duck (6)

26 No direct effect on Philosophy (8)

27 Sell by assuming different rate (6)

DOWN

1 Trouble outside, left inside for privacy (8)

2 Huge cats prowling, not the most elegant (8)

3 Drunk guy left in the rear, runs – he must keep his balance (9,6)

5 Line below central lawn is crooked (4)

6 For example 9 elect rich characters to take up an impossible task (6,3,6)

7 Take a leak after a peg in tent (6)

8 Fulfils initial expectation, leads to growing respect (6)

11 Instrument will swell up, as small becomes twice as large (7)

14 Time to assume tail wagging means happiness (7)

16 In other words is termed as a coalescer (8)

17 Fish will remain outside ring, perhaps (8)

19 Quiet rise in medical practice (6)

20 Pattern of a plant disease (6)

23 Said to be good in France, capital in Germany (4)

SUDOKU

	2		8				5	
					7		9	
					3			4
	7	2		3		9		
8		4				5		1
		9		5		2	4	
4			3					
	3		4					
	9				2		1	

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

Solution to puzzle 12731

	C	O	N	S	T	A	N	T	I	N	O	P	L	E
E		R		U		N		Y		I		A		S
N	I	G	E	R		A	R	R	O	G	A	T	E	S
I		A		G		L		O		H		I		E
G	I	N	S	E	N	G		L	E	T	D	O	W	N
M		L				E				F				C
A	L	O	O	F		S	U	B	M	A	R	I	N	E
		F		L		I		A		L		N		
E	N	T	R	A	N	C	E	D		L	E	G	I	T
N				G				M				E		I
R	I	P	O	S	T	E		I	N	C	I	S	O	R
O		I		T		R		N		H		T		A
B	U	C	H	A	R	E	S	T		A	L	I	G	N
E		K		F		C		O		S		O		A
D	A	Y	O	F	A	T	O	N	E	M	E	N	T	

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

4	7	6	9	3	8	2	1	5
5	1	8	7	4	2	3	6	9
3	9	2	5	6	1	4	7	8
2	5	7	3	8	6	1	9	4
8	4	1	2	7	9	5	3	6
6	3	9	4	1	5	7	8	2
9	6	4	1	2	3	8	5	7
1	2	5	8	9	7	6	4	3
7	8	3	6	5	4	9	2	1

FAITH

Karma Yoga

When one commits wrong actions against the virtuous and holy beings, knowingly or unknowingly, it is known as Sadhu Apachara. This is the main cause of human misery, says the Bhagavata purana and many narratives illustrate the consequences arising from this lapse and also show how to atone for such sins. The righteous Parikshit commits a sin and he undergoes prayaschitta for this by listening to Suka's narration of the Bhagavata Purana. The tendency to commit wrongs is inbuilt in human nature as all beings are held under the spell of Maya. Maya includes karma, habits, tendencies and actions. These prevent one from nearing God, and realising his own atma swaroopa. It is by working out one's karma according to the law of one's nature that one can hope to overcome this spell and proceed towards enlightenment, pointed out Swami Paramasukananda in a discourse. The world is so complex and wonderful and each being is endowed with faculties and senses with which an individual is constantly interacting. Every human birth is occasioned by karma; and it is karma that can help one to nullify its effects. Both good and bad are very much part of life. Just as snake venom extract is used to purge the effect of snake bite, karma becomes the effective path to overcome samsara. This happens when karma is converted into karma yoga. What is the gain one should expect from one's actions in life? With single pointedness one has to dedicate every moment of one's life for God's sake and try to avoid being self-centered and worldly minded. This is the way to attain the long term end which is salvation. The Pandavas always had Krishna as their friend and guide. Andal calls upon people to dedicate everything only for God's sake. One may be a grihasta or a recluse. But the focus has to be God at all times.