



SAUDI ARABIA OIL FACILITY DRONE ATTACK

Update issued by Skytek: at 12:00 GMT on March 28th, 2022

SUMMARY

In the Middle East, the oil facilities in Saudi Arabia have frequently been targeted by Yemen's Houthi rebels with weaponised drones and short-range ballistic missiles.

Royal Saudi Air Defense Forces (RSADF) reportedly intercepted and destroyed six suspected Al-Houthi-launched weaponised drones, targeting the country's southern region in early March 25th. Yemen's Houthis claim responsibility for this latest drones attack hitting an oil storage tank of Saudi Aramco's North Jeddah Bulk Plant, sending oil prices higher.

North Jeddah Bulk Plant oil storage is the Saudi's state oil operator Aramco, constituting a project that links the refining hub of Yanbu to Jeddah via two pipelines transporting oil products, including gasoline, diesel and jet fuel, along the coasts of the Red Sea.

From the high resolution satellite imagery depicted in Figure 1, Skytek analysed the storage plant on March 22nd, before the attack. From the analysis it is worth noting that the floating roof tanks are empty and not in use, while there are no assets operating flammable products in the plant in the trucking facility.



Figure 1 - Saudi Aramco's North Jeddah storage facility on March 22nd 2022

Very high resolution satellite imagery acquired on March 26th at 8 AM UTC (Figure 2) shows a large number of trucks waiting for loading, indicating that oil product (i.e. gasoline) was present in some of the fixed roof tanks during the attack on the March 25th. Despite this, the automatically activated fixed fire-fighting system appears to have managed to put the fire out rapidly and reportedly without casualties.



Figure 2 - Saudi Aramco's North Jeddah storage facility on March 26th, 2022, showing a storage tank hit by a weaponized drone

Very high resolution satellite imagery captured just three hours after the previous image (11 AM UTC on March 26th – Figure 3) shows the hit oil storage tank with the fire almost extinguished and no apparent significant damage to the nearby storage tanks and infrastructure.



Figure 3 - Saudi Aramco's North Jeddah storage facility on March 26th, 2022, shortly after being hit, with the fire put out



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