

'Saudi oil output to recover in two or three weeks after attack'



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Saudi Arabia sought to calm markets yesterday after an attack on its oil facilities, with sources in the kingdom saying output was recovering much more quickly than initially forecast and could be fully back in two or three weeks.

International oil companies, fellow members of the Opec oil group and global energy policy makers had heard no updates on the impact of the weekend attack from the Saudis for 48 hours, according to sources with knowledge of the situation. And on Monday, sources briefed on state oil giant Aramco's operations had said it could take months for output to recover.

The attack knocked out half of Saudi Arabia's oil production, or 5% of global output, sending prices soaring when trading resumed on Monday.

So the new prediction of a quick return to normal output sent prices down sharply yesterday.

The kingdom is close to restoring 70% of the 5.7mn barrels per day lost due to the attack, a top Saudi official said, adding that Aramco's output would be fully back online in the next two to three weeks.