



Dario Amodei

Anthropic, OpenAI chiefs call for slowing AI development

NEW YORK

ANTHROPIC CEO Dario Amodei on Saturday called on artificial intelligence (AI) firms to slow down the development of the powerful technology, amid mounting worries over the risks of "superintelligent" computer systems.

His comments came a few days after AI researcher Jacob Coxon, who left OpenAI to join Anthropic, decided to leave the industry, accusing both US companies of "gambling with our lives" in the race to develop models capable of self-improvement.

"We must slow the pace at which we improve the capabilities of AI models. Progress will still seem fast, and we must make wise use of the time we gain," Amodei wrote in a post on his personal website.

"Not building the technology deprives humanity of benefits or simply places AI in the hands of authoritarian powers, while building it too fast is reckless. We have sought a middle way," said Amodei. OpenAI's CEO Sam Altman backed him.

"I agree with Dario that we need to pace the frontier. This has been a primary topic of discussions we've had at OpenAI in recent weeks. Committing to having independent evaluators with employee-like access is a great idea, and we will do the same," he wrote on X. Agencies

Saudi shuts Red Sea oil pipeline after drone attack

Iran-backed militias blamed for attack on pipeline serving as alternative to Strait of Hormuz route

BAGHDAD

SAUDI Arabia's Ministry of Energy said on Friday that it had shut down a major cross-country oil pipeline leading from major oil fields in the east to the Red Sea in the west because of drone attacks originating in Iraq, where Iran supports powerful militias.

Built in the 1980s, the East-West pipeline has played a key role in Saudi Arabia's ability to continue exporting oil following the disruption of the Strait of Hormuz by Iran's war with the US and Israel.

The shutdown comes as Houthi rebels in Yemen have seized coastal territory near the Bab el Mandeb Strait, threatening Saudi oil exports through a key shipping lanes.

"The East-West pipeline in the Riyadh and Medina regions was subjected to several attacks on Thursday," the official told the SPA news agency, adding: "The pipeline was stopped as a precaution, and the attacks resulted in some injuries."

Several Arab countries including Kuwait, the UAE, Oman and Egypt, condemned the attack, according to the Saudi state news agency.

Iraq's government reacted Saturday to contain the fallout of the attack by Iran-backed militias. Though an umbrella group of Iran-backed militias in Iraq denied involvement, Iraq's government confirmed the attacks had originated from its territory, pledged to investigate and dismissed two senior officials.

Iran said a regional meeting is planned between Iran and other Gulf nations about talks between Tehran and Oman on managing shipping there.

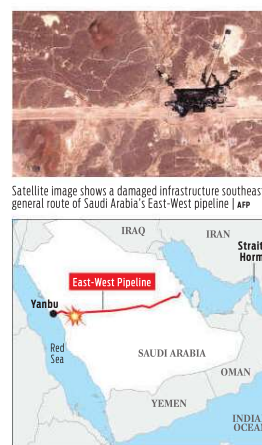
Commercial ship traffic remains low on what had been considered an international waterway before the war. Iran has expressed interest in having ships pay fees for transit. It has said traffic into the Persian Gulf from the Gulf of Oman would pass entirely through Iranian waters, while the ship-bound route would pass partly through Iranian waters and partly through Oman's territorial waters. Agencies

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Satellite image shows a damaged infrastructure southeast of Medina along the general route of Saudi Arabia's East-West pipeline | AFP

CHINESE SAT IMAGES HELPED IRAN STRIKE U.S. FORCES: REPORT

WASHINGTON

CHINESE entities supplied Iran with satellite images of a base in Jordan before and after an attack that killed three US soldiers, The Wall Street Journal reported — an incident that could deepen tensions between Washington and Beijing.

On July 17, Iran launched missile strikes on the Muwaffaq Salti Air Base in Jordan, which houses US forces. In the US Army soldiers were killed.

The unnamed US officials quoted by The Wall Street Journal did not name the Chinese entities involved, and did not suggest that Beijing was directly to blame.

But US officials have raised the matter with their Chinese counterparts, and it could come up again when US President Donald Trump welcomes Chinese President Xi Jinping to the White House in September 24.

Chinese officials asked for proof of the transfer of satellite imagery when prodded by the US officials, and refused to acknowledge that Chinese companies were involved in providing satellite images. The Journal reported that the US had warned Beijing not to sell weapons to Iran, and in May, Washington sanctioned three China-based satellite firms for enabling Iran's military operations.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio met Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's Agencies

Death toll in Philippine ferry fire rises to 76

CORON

RESCUERS retrieved more remains from a passenger ferry in the Philippine that was gutted by fire, bringing the death toll on Saturday to 76.

Forty-three people survived the fire on Wednesday night among the 132 on board.

The ferry sailed from the capital, Manila, and was some 38 kilometres from its destination in Coron, in southwestern Palawan province, when the fire erupted.

The cause has not been determined but the coast guard spokesperson quoted a survivor as saying it may have started from the cargo hold. The survivor recounted hearing a blast, with smoke and fire

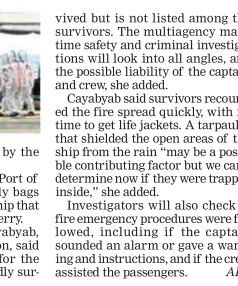
quickly spreading, fanned by the winds, officials said.

Tents were put up in the Port of Borac in Coron, where body bags were brought from the ship that transported them from the ferry.

Commander Noemie Cayabab, the coast guard spokesperson, said authorities were looking for the ship's captain, who reportedly survived but is not listed among the survivors. The multitenancy maritime safety and criminal investigations will look into all angles, and the possible liability of the captain and crew, she added.

Cayabab said survivors recounted the fire spread quickly, with no time to get life jackets. A tarpaulin that shielded the open areas of the ship from the rain "may be a possible contributing factor but we can't determine now if they were trapped inside," she added.

Investigators will also check if fire emergency procedures were followed, including if the captain sounded an alarm or gave a warning and instructions, and if the crew assisted the passengers. AFP



Russian strikes killed seven, wounded dozens in Ukraine

KYIV

RUSSIAN strikes killed at least seven people and wounded almost 60 across Ukraine on Saturday, Kyiv said, as Moscow steps up attacks ahead of another winter of war.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the country has been "under almost constant attack since last night", calling for an adequate reaction from allies.

US envoys visited both Moscow and Kyiv last week but announced no breakthrough in talks to end Russia's dragging invasion, now in its fifth year. Ukrainian officials said two people were killed in the southern Zaporizhzhia region.

Steelmaker ArcelorMittal said two others were also killed at its plant in the central city of Kryvyi Rih.

"ArcelorMittal Kryvyi Rih reports that our plant was struck by a missile from the aggressor country last night," the global steel giant's subsidiary said in a statement on Telegram, adding that two bodies had been found.

"We emphasise our plant is a civilian facility in the mining and metallurgical industry, and we strongly condemn these insidious enemy attacks," the company went on, saying production facilities had also been damaged.

Fire at a multi-storey residential building in the Ukrainian city of Odesa after Russian attacks on Saturday | AFP

Meanwhile, Zelenskyy said he would be willing to meet Russian leader Vladimir Putin at the G20 summit in Miami for talks on ending the war, in a media interview released Saturday.

But the Kremlin said it had not yet made a decision on whether Putin would attend the gathering of world leaders on December 14-15, and repeated the Russian leader's demand that Zelenskyy come to Russia for talks.

Putin has repeatedly rejected offers for a face-to-face meeting with Zelenskyy aimed at brokering an end to more than four years of war. AFP



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Danish WWII drama takes Golden Lion at Venice fest

Kvinde Ukendt (Woman Unknown) won the best actress award for her role as a maid sheltering a dark WWII soldier.

"This is my first lead role in a movie and it's my first time at a film festival and my first time to win a film award," said Aareel, adding that "If it's a dream I really don't want to wake up."

The Venice Film Festival wrapped up Saturday after 10 days of world premieres, celeb-heavy red carpets and a slew of hard-hitting films that have made this year one of the most political yet. War, failure and dysfunction and female oppression all played out on the screen.

The programming was often dark, with many films presenting characters either struggling with their consciences, or choosing to compromise themselves in the pursuit of money and power or to escape repression. AFP



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