EUROPE EXPLAINED

SCAN TO READ & PLAY

“News that helps you think like a global thinker.”

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TOP STORY • FRANCE

France Investigates False Bomb Threats Against Flights

Paris prosecutors are trying to find who sent the hoax emails that targeted dozens of flights across Europe, and whether a foreign power is involved.

Written and fact-checked by AI · News Pebbles

Paris prosecutors have opened an investigation into bogus bomb threats that targeted dozens of commercial flights across Europe over the past week. A hoax is a false alarm made on purpose. The investigators want to identify “the authors of the emails” and to check for possible links to foreign powers.

France is involved because several of the threats concerned flights passing over French territory. The French government says it is also looking into where the threats came from. Ireland has reached a similar view: its government said on Friday that hoax bomb claims sent to Irish media were “likely” part of a “co-ordinated campaign of disruption” linked to the airline threats.

The scale shows why governments are worried. Nearly 30 passenger flights were targeted on Thursday alone, including flights bound for London, Madrid and Copenhagen. On Friday, four flights bound for Madrid-Barajas were targeted, according to the Spanish airport operator AENA. Four aircraft flying over France were also targeted and landed without incident, the French prime minister’s office said.

Some planes were rerouted and others were escorted by fighter jets. So far, no explosives have been found in any incident.

Who is behind it is still unknown. Some emails were signed “fighters of the Male State”, a name that matches a Russian radical misogynist group. The news agency AFP has not confirmed any link, and the group’s founder denies involvement. The Paris investigation continues, and the article reports no timeline or suspects.



Paris prosecutors are investigating threats that touched flights over France and flights bound for Spain, the UK and Denmark.

WHY THIS MATTERS

A hoax costs almost nothing to send, but it can divert planes and strain airports, airlines and security services, and investigators now ask whether a foreign power is behind it.

WORLD • IRAN

Mediators Push for US-Iran Deal as Ships Are Hit Near Hormuz

Qatar and others keep working for peace while ships come under attack in the Strait of Hormuz.

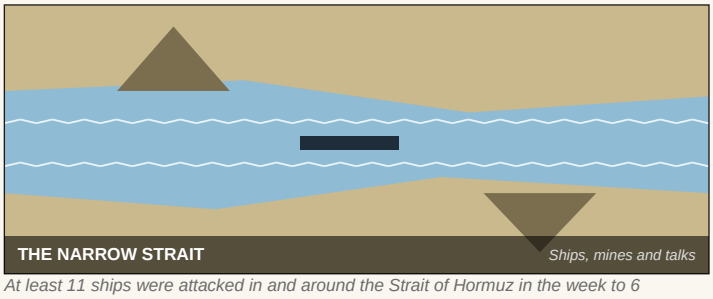
The war between Iran and the United States and Israel began on 28 February. Iran effectively shut the Strait of Hormuz early in the war, and in July the United States reimposed a naval blockade on Iran’s southern ports. A blockade is when ships are stopped from entering or leaving.

On Friday night two projectiles hit Iran’s Qeshm island, the latest of a series of air strikes aimed at Iranian air defences and launchers. President Trump called them “minor strikes”. Meanwhile, the UK Maritime Trade Operations centre said at least 11 ships were attacked in and around the strait in the week to 6 November, and three of them sank.

Traffic through the strait is far below normal: its weekly report counted 170 outbound and 155 inbound transits, about 65 percent below pre-conflict levels. Iran’s navy said a tanker caught fire in the eastern strait after hitting a mine, while Washington says the mines have been cleared.

Diplomats are still trying. Iran’s foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, said he spoke with 12 foreign ministers in 48 hours, including those of Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, and restated Tehran’s seven demands to reopen the strait. Qatar’s prime minister said the two sides should not wait for a “perfect moment” to reach a deal. Trump said “we’ve made a lot of progress” and that he was “in no rush” to decide on resuming strikes. Mediators have so far made limited gains.

Iran has also said some countries’ ships may pass. Amir Hayat Moqaddam, a senior member of Iran’s parliamentary national security committee, said ships from India, China, Iraq and Qatar can cross the strait, with Indian and Chinese ships paying transit fees and Qatari ships passing free. Exemptions do not guarantee safety: on 30 October the Qatari gas carrier Al Mayeda was struck by unidentified objects, and more than 120 commercial ships have been hit in the region since the war began.



At least 11 ships were attacked in and around the Strait of Hormuz in the week to 6 November.

CONNECT THE DOTS

Geography and economics meet in the strait: it is a narrow sea route for oil and gas, so attacks on ships there affect fuel prices far away.

UNITED KINGDOM • ENGLISH CHANNEL

UK Holds an Indian Captain Over a Sanctioned Tanker

Captain Ajay Pant faces charges of breaking UK sanctions on Russia after Royal Marines seized his ship.

Captain Ajay Pant, an Indian merchant navy officer with 18 years at sea, was arrested in the UK after British forces seized the crude oil tanker MT Smyrtos in the English Channel. The ship is under Western sanctions for allegedly being part of Russia's "shadow fleet".

The Smyrtos left Paradip Port in India on 25 April carrying Russian oil. On 14 June Royal Marines Commandos intercepted it in international waters. Captain Pant faces charges of breaching UK sanctions on Russia. Bail was denied and a trial is upcoming. He has not been sentenced, but faces up to 10 years in prison if convicted.

The case raises a legal question. The UK says a stateless vessel can be subject to its domestic Policing and Crime Act. Whether states can enforce sanctions in international waters is contested.

Pant's wife, Ritu, is campaigning for his release. Other European countries have seized sanctioned ships but released the sailors, often with fines.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The case tests how far a country can go in enforcing sanctions at sea, and it affects the sailors who crew these ships.

Also in United Kingdom

• Flights: flights bound for London were among nearly 30 targeted by hoax bomb threats on Thursday.

• Shipping: the UK Defence Ministry says Russia sells about 75% of its oil using shadow tankers.

ONE-LINE BRIEFS

• Ukraine: Russia hit Kyiv and nearby areas overnight into Saturday, damaging energy sites and a major Dnipro River bridge.

• Israel: President Isaac Herzog asked former army chief Gadi Eisenkot to try to form a government, with 28 days to do it.

VOCABULARY BUILDER

Words that unlock today's news

Hoax
A false alarm or trick made on purpose. Today: bomb threats against flights that turned out to be false.

Prosecutor
A lawyer who brings a case against people accused of crimes. Today: Paris prosecutors are investigating who sent the emails.

Blockade
Stopping ships from entering or leaving a place. Today: the US blockade of Iran's southern ports.

Cost of living
How much people must pay for everyday things like fuel, housing and food. Today: it is a main reason people marched in France.

DID YOU KNOW?

Two giant pandas flew from Chengdu, China, to Atlanta in September on a FedEx plane nicknamed the "Panda Express".

EUROPE • FRANCE

Tens of Thousands March in France as Living Costs Bite

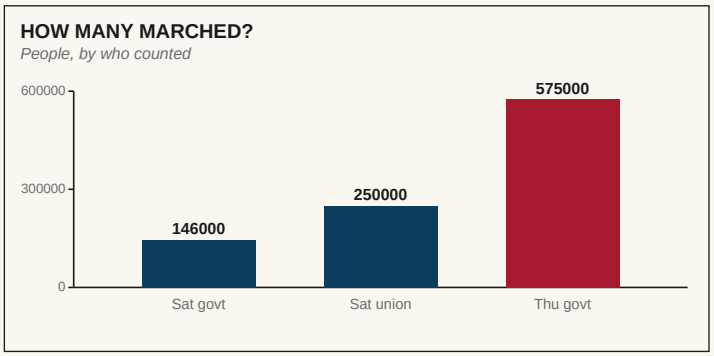
Student unions say 250,000 joined Saturday's protests, but the Interior Ministry counted about 146,000.

On Saturday 7 November, protesters marched across France for the fourth weekend in a row. Student unions said about 250,000 people took part, including roughly 75,000 in Paris. The Interior Ministry put the national figure at about 146,000.

The marchers are angry about the cost of living, meaning the price of everyday needs. They point to rising fuel prices, worse conditions in schools, teacher shortages, unaffordable housing and strained public services.

Interior Minister Laurent Nuñez deployed 70,000 police and security forces, and by 6pm police had arrested 232 people.

The movement is building. Thursday's strike drew 575,000 people according to the Interior Ministry, while unions claimed close to 1.6 million. Student and teacher groups have now called another strike for Tuesday 10 November.



Saturday's figures come from the Interior Ministry and student unions; Thursday's is the Interior Ministry's count of the strike.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Rising prices for fuel, housing and services are pushing people onto the streets in several European countries, and governments must decide how to answer.

THINK LIKE AN ANALYST

Why might unions and the government count the same crowd differently? What independent evidence could help decide which number is closer?

SPORTS CORNER

SPORT • FOOTBALL AND RUGBY

Arsenal edged past Hull to stretch their lead at the top of the Premier League, while **Wales** beat Japan in the Nations Championship.

WHAT TO WATCH NEXT

• Abu Dhabi: Ukrainian and Russian officials are due to hold new three-way talks there within days, with the US.

• France: student and teacher groups have called a new strike for Tuesday 10 November.

"A false alarm still costs real time, and real attention." — Europe Explained

You are not just reading the news — you are learning to think about it. See you in two days.