# Houthi rebels' drone strike damages vessel in Red Sea, raising concerns for maritime security



An aerial drone launched by Yemen's Houthi rebels struck and damaged a vessel in the Red Sea on Sunday, according to officials. This incident is the latest in a series of attacks by the group targeting shipping in the crucial maritime corridor. The attack occurred around dawn off the coast of the rebel-held port city of Hodeida, as reported by the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations centre. The center confirmed that the vessel, a Liberian-flagged, Greek-owned bulk carrier named Transworld Navigator, sustained damage, but the mariners on board were reported safe.

Houthi military spokesman Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree claimed responsibility for the attack, stating that the rebels used a drone boat to target the vessel. However, this detail has been contradicted by other reports. The U.S. military's Central Command also confirmed the vessel's identity and noted that several mariners suffered minor injuries.

The Transworld Navigator was en route to Egypt from Malaysia at the time of the attack. This marks the fourth attack on the vessel by Iranian-backed Houthis. Their campaign has considerably reduced shipping traffic through the route crucial to Asian, Middle East, and European markets.

Since November, the Houthis have launched over 60 attacks, resulting in the deaths of four sailors, the seizure of one vessel, and the sinking of two others. The U.S. has conducted airstrikes against the Houthis since January, with a significant series of strikes on May 30 killing at least 16 people and wounding 42, according to the rebels.

The attacks are stated to target ships linked to Israel, the United States, or Britain, but many affected vessels have no connection to the Israel-Hamas conflict, including those bound for Iran, which supports the Houthis.

This attack follows the return of the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower after an eight-month deployment, with the USS Theodore Roosevelt set to replace it following an exercise in the Indo-Pacific. The Roosevelt docked in Busan, South Korea, amid heightened tensions with North Korea.