



Rumours of Houthi truce with China and Russia fall flat with latest tanker attack

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US Navy

Putting paid to reports last week that Chinese and Russian ships were to be given safe passage through the Red Sea by the Houthis, a Chinese tanker was attacked by missiles fired from Yemen on Saturday.

A total of five missiles were aimed at the *Huang Pu*, a 2009-built aframax. The Chinese manned vessel, carrying a cargo of Russian crude to India, suffered minimal damage and a fire onboard was extinguished within 30 minutes. No casualties were reported. It has since continued its voyage to India.

Bloomberg reported last week that the Houthis would not target Chinese and Russian ships. Citing unnamed sources, the financial newswire said an agreement had been reached following recent talks between Chinese and Russian diplomats with a senior Houthi figure, Mohammed Abdel Salam, in Oman.

The Houthis have been waging a series of attacks aimed at Israeli, US and UK-linked ships, taking sides with Hamas in its near six-month war with Israel. However, the Houthis' selection of targets has often proven to be off, with outdated, or incorrect, shipping databases leading to attacks on ships with no links to Israel, the US or the UK.

Some 70 merchant ships have been targeted to date leading to a massive rerouting of the global merchant fleet to head around the continent of Africa in order to connect between Asia and Europe.