

Tanker sustains damage as Houthis intensify attacks

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Andromeda Star / Source: VesselFinder

For the first time in over a month, a ship has suffered damage in a Houthi missile attack in the Red Sea, as the Iran-backed rebels step up their assaults.

The US Central Command said that at 5.49 pm Yemen time on 26 April, Houthis launched three anti-ship ballistic missiles (ABSM) near the 2009-built Panama-flagged Aframax tanker, Andromeda Star, which is believed to be owned by unknown UK interests, and a 2002-built Antigua and Barbados-flagged Suezmax tanker, Maisha. The ships were 14 nautical miles southwest of Al Mukha, Yemen.

Andromeda Star departed the Russian port of Primorsk on 4 April, reported mild damage, but continued its voyage towards Mundra, India, and is due to arrive on 2 May.

UK Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO), which was also notified about the incident, said, "The master reported two attacks. In the first attack, the vessel experienced an explosion close to the vessel, which was felt by the crew on board. The second attack.....consisted of what is believed to be two missiles, which resulted in damage to the vessel."

Maisha, whose owner is unknown, was unaffected by the assault. The tanker had departed Cochin, India, on 20 April and was heading to the Suez Canal.

On 6 March, three seafarers on the Greek-owned bulk carrier, True Confidence, were killed and several others injured after a Houthi missile struck the ship.

In the latest Houthi attack, between 10 am and 5.20 pm (Yemen time) on 29 April, Houthis fired three ABSMs and three drones from Yemen into the Red Sea, towards Cyclades, a Malta-flagged, Ultramax bulk carrier owned by Greek owner Eastern Mediterranean. Initial reports indicate there were no injuries and the vessel continued on its way.

The 2017-built Cyclades had departed Saleef, Yemen, on 15 April, and was heading to Djibouti.

Earlier, at 7.49 am, US Central Command destroyed one Houthi-launched drone that was targeting the US warships USS Philippine Sea and USS Laboon in the Red Sea.

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