Israel Strikes Port of Hodeidah in Retaliation for Houthi Attacks

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Published Sep 29, 2024 6:58 PM by **The Maritime Executive**

On Sunday, dozens of Israeli strike fighters hit Houthi-controlled ports in a massive bombing run, destroying petroleum terminals and other dual-use infrastructure. The strikes are in retaliation for Houthi ballistic missile attacks on central Israel, including an attempted attack on Ben-Gurion International Airport on Saturday.

Houthi-controlled news outlet Al Masirah reported that the strike killed at least four people, including one port employee and three engineers. In addition to damage to tank farms and port infrastructure, the attack also destroyed a power station, plunging most areas of the city into darkness.

"The Israeli aggression will only increase the Yemeni people's determination to continue their stance," Houthi leaders said in a statement.

The Israeli military said that the bombing attack was a response to Houthi aggression in the region. With Iranian assistance, the militant group has attacked dozens of merchant ships and launched multiple ballistic missiles at Israeli territory over the past year. The strikes have effectively shut down commercial traffic at the Port of Eilat and cut Suez Canal transits in half. A coalition of navies have attempted to defend against Houthi antiship capabilities, with mixed results.

The Houthi group says that its attacks are intended to pressure Israel into halting its military operation in Gaza. Spokesman Mohammed Abdulsalam said Sunday that the Israeli counterattack would not force the Houthis to give up on their support for Gaza and Lebanon (where Israel has recently accelerated operations against Hezbollah).

Sunday's strike was the second time that Israel has hit the port of Hodeidah this year. On July 20, Israeli fighters made the 1,000 nautical-mile flight to northwestern Yemen and damaged the tank farm at the port; Sunday's attack appears to have destroyed most of what was left.