

Who Are The Houthis In Yemen Why Are They Getting Involved In The Israel-Hamas War?

Why In The News?

- US & UK Launched Strikes Aimed At Houthi Groups In Yemen On January 11, In Response To The Persistent Houthi **Attacks On Ships Passing Through The Red Sea**, The Narrow Body Of Water That Separates Asia From Africa, And Which Is One Of The World's Busiest And Most Important Maritime Trade Routes.
- Since November 2023, The Houthis Have Attacked Ships In The Red Sea And Gulf Of Aden To **Protest The Israeli Military's Continuing Bombardment Of Gaza**. After Hamas, The Palestinian Militant Group, Launched An Attack Against Israel On October 7, Israel Retaliated With A Disproportionately Heavy Hand.

 Hindustan Times

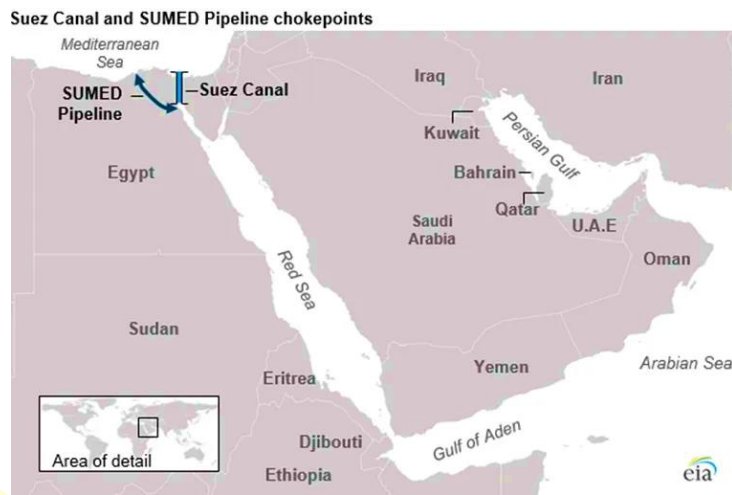
US, UK carry out fresh strikes against Houthis in Yemen's Sanaa: Reports

Why Have US & UK Launched Strikes?

- On January 11, President Joe Biden Said In A Statement That The Strikes Were Conducted With Support From Australia, Bahrain, Canada, And The Netherlands "Against A Number Of Targets In Yemen Used By Houthi Rebels To **Endanger Freedom Of Navigation** In One Of The World's Most Vital Waterways".
- Unprecedented Houthi Attacks Against International Maritime Vessels In The Red Sea **Affected More Than 50 Countries In 27 Attacks**, And Crews From More Than 20 Countries Have Been Threatened Or Taken Hostage In Acts Of Piracy, He Said.

A Cause Of Concern For The West

- Around **12% Of The World's Trade** Passes Through The Red Sea And The Suez Canal That Connects The Arabian Sea To The Mediterranean.
- After The Houthi Attacks Began Around November 19, Several Major Shipping And Oil Companies Announced They Were Pausing Movement On This East-west Passage.



Who Are The Houthis?

- The Houthis Are A **Militant Group** That Has Been Fighting The Civil War In Yemen For A Decade. After They Seized Power In The Capital Sana'a In 2014, A Saudi-UAE Alliance Attempted To Dislodge Them.
- The **Houthis Now Control Northern Yemen**, Including Sana'a, And Have A Presence In Most Regions Of The Country. The Earlier Government Now Operates Out Of The Port Of Aden.



- The **Houthis Are Shia** And Are Backed With Arms And Finances By The Shia Regime In Tehran. Iran's Great Regional Rival, Sunni-Majority Saudi Arabia, Along With Western Allies Like The US, Backs The Yemen Government.

The Houthis & Hamas Nexus?

- Though Hamas Is A Sunni Organisation, It Is Backed By Iran Because Of Their **Mutual Opposition To The US And Israel**. The Houthis' Support For Palestine And The Yemen Conflict Are Both, Therefore, Also A Manifestation Of Existing Regional Rivalries.
- The Iranian Regime Also Backs And Funds The **Shia Militant Group Hezbollah** In Lebanon, Which Has Been Taking On The Israeli Defence Forces In The North Of The Country.

