

Fresh Saudi Blitz Kills 13 Civilians in Yemen

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At least 13 civilians have lost their lives in a series of air strikes by Saudi military air planes along the border between Yemen and the oil-rich kingdom, Houthi fighters say.

The Saudi Air Force continued to bomb along the Yemeni-Saudi border, including Jebel al-Dukhan, Jebel al-Rumayh, Jebel al-Madoud and al-Jabiri as well as other border towns.

More than 70 air strikes were conducted by Saudi warplanes over the past 24 hours. The beleaguered regions were struck by around 165 air-to-surface missiles. Some thirteen civilians were killed and scores of others sustained wounds in the air raids, according to the Houthis.

The conflict in northern Yemen began in 2004 between Sana'a and Houthi fighters but it intensified in August 2009 when the Yemeni army launched 'Operation Scorched Earth' in an attempt to crush the fighters in the northern province of Sa'ada.

The Houthis accuse the Yemeni government of violation of their civil rights, political, economic and religious marginalization as well as large-scale corruption.

The Saudi and US air forces have further complicated the conflict by launching their own operations against Shia resistance fighters.

Houthi fighters say that Riyadh and Washington pound their positions and that Saudi forces strike Yemeni villages and indiscriminately target civilians. According to the fighters, Saudis use toxic materials, including white phosphorus bombs, against civilians in northern Yemen.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that since 2004, up to 175,000 people have been forced to leave their homes in Sa'ada and take refuge at overcrowded camps set up by the United Nations.

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