

Pompeo's False Flag Refuted By Japanese Media: Tanker Hit by Flying Object, Not Mine - Confirms Onsite Worker

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The Japanese state news agency NHK has revealed that workers on the tanker saw a plane flying toward the tanker before the explosion. United States is pinning the blame for the tanker attacks on Iran. Tehran denies the accusation.

The Japanese state media agency has taken the line: "Tanker hit by flying object, not mine", in quoting Japanese workers on the vessel. Now the Japanese operator of one of the tankers is providing new details about what happened, in a major revelation which refutes the claims of the U.S's Mike Pompeo.

The president of the Tokyo-based shipping firm Kokuka Sangyo says its tanker was hit by an incoming projectile. He says several crew members witnessed the source of the second blast. Yutaka Katada, president of Kokuka Sangyo said,

"I've received reports that they saw something come flying toward them, then there was an explosion, and then there was a hole in the vessel."

He denied that the tanker was hit by a floating mine, torpedo or an attached explosive as had been previously reported. He said the damage was way above sea level.

POLITICS

Japanese oil tanker owner disagrees with US military that a mine caused blast near Iran

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KEY POINTS

- The Japanese owner of one of the oil tankers attacked near Iran on Thursday says the vessel was struck by a projectile and not by a mine.
- "We received reports that something flew towards the ship," says Yutaka Katada, president of Kokuka Sangyo.

This version of events entirely refutes the claims made by the U.S's Mike Pompeo, who says that Iranian mines are to blame:

"This assessment is based on intelligence, the weapons used, the level of expertise needed to execute the operation, recent similar Iranian attacks on shipping, and the fact that no proxy group operating in the area has the resources and proficiency to act with such a high-degree of sophistication,"

Pompeo for his part has not released any evidence to back his claims.

"Kokuka Courageous" and another tanker owned by a Norwegian shipping company were attacked on Thursday in international waters near the Strait of Hormuz, a key oil shipping route, as reported by FRN.

Crew-members from both vessels were rescued, but one person was injured. The Japanese tanker is now on its way to the United Arab Emirates.

The US is blaming Iran. Its military has released a video which allegedly shows the country's Revolutionary Guard removing an unexploded mine from one of the tankers. It's believed to be a limpet mine which can be detonated remotely.

Tehran is denying any involvement. The Iranian Foreign Minister tweeted that the US is making allegations without a shred of factual or circumstantial evidence, accusing the US of "sabotage diplomacy."

The UN Security Council held an emergency closed-door meeting on Thursday at the request of the US.

Acting US Ambassador Jonathan Cohen said,

"I've asked the Security Council to remain seized of this matter. And I expect that we will have further conversations about it on how to respond in the days ahead."

Kuwait's ambassador, currently the rotating president of the Council, told reporters that they "didn't discuss any evidence" that may have shown Iran was behind the action.

The attacks came as Japan's prime minister was in Iran to try and ease tensions between Tehran and Washington.

Experts speculate that the U.S was behind the attack, and pushed it through in order to sour Japan-Iran relations, and to create a cause for war or further hostile action against the Islamic Republic.

In Tokyo, Japanese ministers are debating what to do next. Transport Minister Keiichi Ishii said,

"We do not know details of the attack, including who is responsible. we are

gathering information from the people concerned and we have alerted the Japanese vessels sailing in the region through a related business association.”

Defense Minister Takeshi Iwaya said,

”At this moment, we haven’t been asked to send Japan’s Self Defense Forces. So, we don’t have a plan to send the units to the region near the Strait of Hormuz to respond to this incident.”

Iwaya added that Japanese citizens are not at risk right now, but if that changes the government would make a different judgment.

NHK’s position in itself reveals that Japan-US relations are strained, as Japanese authorities would neither encourage NHK nor allow workers of the vessel to make public reportage and claims which contradict those of Pompeo and the American administration.

The manner in which the Japanese media-intelligence sphere has handled this event so far lends credence to Japanese Prime Minister Abe’s claim that his mission to Tehran was to look for real solutions, and not to deliver a list proposed or desired by the United States.

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Featured image: Smoke billows from a tanker said to have been attacked off the coast of Oman at an undisclosed location. The crews of two oil tankers were evacuated off the coast of Iran after they were reportedly attacked in the Gulf of Oman.

Image Credit: AFP

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