



By: TA | AP Insight

A Saudi-led coalition began a major offensive against the Houthi rebels



Forces of Yemen's internationally recognized government began a **major offensive** Monday against the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels on the country's Red Sea coast, under an intensified air campaign by the Saudi-led coalition.

The offensive came just after the rebels said they had captured more territory in the southwestern part of Yemen, taking a key town in a blow to the Saudi-backed forces as they advanced toward a **strategic provincial capital** in the region.

The Saudi-led coalition spokesman, Maj. Gen. Turki al-Malki, said 100 fighter jets were providing support to the forces of Yemen's internationally recognized government fighting against the Houthis.

He said the coalition has secured "air protection" of the strategic Bab el-Mandeb Strait and destroyed hundreds of Houthi targets as part of the ongoing campaign.

The campaign and its details could not be immediately independently verified.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio told reporters that it was expected that the Saudi-backed government in Yemen would hit back at the rebels to reclaim territory.

Asked if the Saudi-led coalition coordinated the action with the United States, Rubio said that Saudi Arabia and the U.S. have a defense agreement but wouldn't offer more details.

He said the Yemeni government was ousted from some of its territory by a Houthi campaign and the Saudis have come under attack, and "they have a right to defend themselves."

The U.S. has provided support to Saudi Arabia in its ongoing campaign against the Houthis, according to a regional official and a U.S. official.

This U.S. support included intelligence sharing, target identification and planning for the offensive, said the officials who spoke on

condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to speak to reporters.

The U.S. had supported the Saudi-led coalition fighting the Houthis early in the Yemen war, before quitting the coalition in recent years.

The air campaign follows the fall of a key town in Yemen

The Houthi rebels seized the town of Turbah on Sunday, shortly before the internationally recognized government announced a major military operation against them.

The escalation between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis has revived Yemen's civil war after a four-year ceasefire

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Turbah sits on a main road linking the provincial capital of Taiz with the port city of Aden, which serves as an interim seat of Yemen's government.

Over the years, the town was a major post for the government forces defending Taiz against the Houthis.

Earlier, the Houthis seized several villages and areas on Taiz's outskirts in a series of advances, paving the way for the rebels to encircle Taiz, Yemen's third-largest city.

Yemen's flare-up shows the capabilities of the Iran-backed rebels

The Houthis made a swift push on the country's western coast on the Red Sea in early September.

They captured the strategic city of Mokha and several Red Sea islands, gains that enabled them to control the Yemeni side of the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, a crucial chokepoint through which 12% of global trade transits.

In its announcement Sunday, the Saudi-backed government said it was mobilizing troops across government-held areas.

The operations were aiming at recovering the remaining territories controlled by the Houthis

Rashad al-Alimi, head of the ruling Presidential Leadership Council, said in a televised speech that the operations were aiming at “recovering the remaining territories” controlled by the Houthis.

He called on the international community to provide support to his government.

Hours after al-Alimi’s declaration, a Saudi military spokesperson, Maj. Gen. Turki al-Malki, vowed “full operational support” to the Yemeni government forces, until the Houthis are “eliminated.”

Al-Malki also stressed Saudi Arabia’s right to take all necessary measures to deter the rebels who continued to fire missiles and drones at the kingdom as part of the nearly three-month escalation that revived Yemen’s civil war.

Saudi-backed government forces are trying to fight back

On Monday, **factions** allied with the Saudi-backed coalition fighting the Houthis said they launched offensives against the rebels on the eastern flank of the coastal areas that the Houthis had seized in their latest advances.

They attacked Houthi positions in the town of Dhubab, on the coast of the Bab el-Mandeb strait, said Col. Majed al-Nazili, spokesman for the Saudi-backed forces.

The Giants Brigades, a government-allied group, said it began a “decisive military operation against the Houthi militias,” also in the Bab el-Mandeb area.

Al-Alimi said in a post on X on Monday that the operation — dubbed “Yemen Dawn” — has started with the aim of “restoring state institutions, liberating” Sanaa, Yemen’s rebel-controlled capital, and ending “the Houthi terrorist militia coup.”

Al-Nazili said government forces were carrying out a “strategic offensive” on Sanaa.

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The latest flare-up began in mid-July, when the Houthis accused Saudi Arabia of bombing the airport in Sanaa to prevent the landing of an unauthorized Iranian flight.

The rebels responded with missile and drone attacks against Saudi Arabia and the Yemeni government forces in the country.

They also announced a blockade on Saudi shipping in the Red Sea and attacked several Saudi-linked vessels.

Then in September, they intensified their campaign, storming down the Red Sea coast in their biggest land grab in years.

The rebels' taking of Turbah “will likely severely constrain Yemeni government-aligned forces’ ability to reinforce and resupply front-line positions” across Taiz province and the provincial capital of Taiz, according to the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank.

“Disrupting resupply has military value, of course, but controlling all the roads in and out

of areas to the north of Turbah also prevents government forces from retreating out of the city,” the think tank wrote in a Sunday analysis.

are barely partially functioning.

The escalation has revamped Yemen's 12-year civil war

Yemen's civil war began in 2014 when the Houthis descended from their northern stronghold, capturing Sanaa and forcing the government to flee into exile in Saudi Arabia.



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The latest **bout of violence** has killed at least 959 people and wounded over 4,200 others, according to the World Health Organization.

The flare-up forced about 174,097 people to flee their homes inside Yemen, according to the U.N. migration agency.

More than 3,000 others fled across the waters into Djibouti, the agency reported.

Last week, Yemen's health ministry — part of the internationally recognized government — warned about the conflict's impact on health facilities and medical staff across Taiz province.

The ministry said in a statement on Friday that health facilities in coastal, western and southern areas of the province have closed or