

Saudi shoots down 'smuggled' Yemen rebel missiles

A damaged school building in the Yemeni port city of Hodeidah after a missile attack

Riyadh

Saudi Arabia intercepted four missiles fired by Yemeni rebels yesterday, a Saudi-led coalition said, in what it described as evidence of arms smuggling through a rebel-held Red Sea port.

The coalition has said previously that it destroyed much of the Shiite rebels' missile capability early in its two-year-old bombing campaign and says persistent launches show they are receiving new deliveries from abroad.

"Early this morning, four missiles were intercepted," the coalition said.

"The ongoing missile attacks on Saudi cities provide clear evidence of the arms smuggling that continues to take place in Yemen, notably through the port of Hodeida."

The coalition said that the missiles targeted Khamis Mushait, which houses the

coalition's main airbase for its operations in Yemen, and Abha, another city close to the Yemeni border.

It said they were intercepted without casualties or damage.

The coalition has previously accused Shiite Iran of smuggling weapons to its coreligionists, a charge Tehran denies.

The coalition has enforced an air and sea blockade of rebel-held areas since the start of its intervention in March 2015.

Hodeida is the main port of entry for UN-supervised aid deliveries to rebel areas.

The UN World Food Programme said on Friday that a third of Yemen's 22 provinces were on the brink of famine.

It said it was providing food to around seven million people each month but that was less than half the 17 million who were going

hungry.

Earlier this month, the coalition called on the United Nations to take full control of Hodeida to facilitate "ending the use of the port for weapons smuggling."

The UN rejected the request, saying the responsibility to protect infrastructure and civilians could not be shifted to other parties.

Sunday marked the second anniversary of the launch of the coalition's intervention.

Hundreds of thousands poured into the streets of Sanaa in a show of support for the Shiite rebels, who still control the capital as well as most of the north and the Red Sea coast.

More than 7,700 people have been killed since the intervention began, most of them civilians, according to World Health Organization figures.
-(AFP)

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Proposing taxes not our job: MP

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On his part, MP Isa Al Kooheji rejected the proposal, stating that "introducing taxes isn't our job".

"As citizens, it is not our duty to think on behalf of the Government on how to increase its revenues. The government has ministers, experts and consultants. They should come up with means to increase the incomes of the state, not us," Al Kooheji remarked.

Another opposing voice, Ali Al Muqla, commented, "Imposing this new tax

harms employers and puts unnecessary burdens during this economic crisis. We must keep in mind that any taxes imposed on traders and business owners will definitely reflect on citizens."

Not in the right place

A representative of Industry, Commerce and Tourism Ministry said that Law 21 of 2001 with regards to commercial companies isn't the concerned law to introduce new taxes.

The official said the law only regulates the operation of companies.

"Such proposals should be referred to Finance Ministry and not Industry, Commerce and Tourism Ministry," he added.

Shura Council and Representatives Council Affairs Minister Ghanem Al Buainain also supported the official's statements, saying that imposing taxes couldn't be made by amending existing laws that are not concerned.

The MPs finally voted for referring the five per cent tax proposal back to the committee so it could be studied and reviewed in a more appropriate manner.