

US confirms Huthis shot down American drone off Yemen

November 9, 2023

Online Desk: Yemen's Huthi rebels shot down an American MQ-9 Reaper drone, a senior US defense official said Wednesday, confirming an earlier claim by the Iran-backed group.

The Huthis — who have downed an American drone before — said the MQ-9 was spying as part of US support for Israel in its war against Hamas.

“A US military MQ-9 remotely-piloted aircraft was shot down off the coast of Yemen by Huthi forces,” the official said.

The Huthis — who seized Yemen's capital Sanaa in 2014 and control large swathes of the country — claimed the shootdown earlier in the day.

“Our air defences were able to down an American MQ-9 while it was carrying out hostile surveillance and espionage activities in Yemeni territorial waters as part of American military support” for Israel, the Huthis said in a statement.

The United States rushed military support to Israel and bolstered American forces in the region after Hamas militants carried out a shock cross-border attack from Gaza on October 7 that Israeli officials say killed more than 1,400 people.

Israel's military responded with a relentless air, land and naval assault on Gaza that the territory's health ministry says has left more than 10,500 people dead, sparking widespread anger in the region.

The Huthis have targeted Israel on multiple occasions in recent weeks, and the US Navy intercepted several missiles fired by the Huthis last month.