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Saudis Order North Yemen Civilians to Flee as They Escalate Airstrikes

By Jason Ditz

May 8, 2015



Saudi warplanes pounded the northern Yemeni city of Saada today, hours after blanketing the city with leaflets ordering all civilians out of the Shi'ite-dominated city.

Saada is the traditional base of operations for the Houthis in Yemen, though they have since expanded dramatically, taking almost the entire western coast of Yemen, as well as the major southern port city of Aden.

The Saudis seem to be using the leaflet drop to argue that the massive civilian tolls their strikes on cities are causing aren't their fault, though aid group Doctors Without Borders warned that the fuel shortages caused by the Saudi naval blockade are keeping many civilians from being able to flee the cities at all.

Doctors Without Borders emergency coordinator Llanos Ortiz added that even if it weren't for the fuel shortages, it'd be impossible to evacuate the whole Saada Province in just a few hours. The toll from the latest series of airstrikes has not been released.