

Former US employee in Yemen dies under Houthi detention: State Department



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Joseph Haboush, Al Arabiya English

A former US government employee has died [under Houthi detention in Yemen](#), the State Department announced on Wednesday.

“This individual passed away in Houthi detention with no contact with his family during the last six months of his life,” State Department Spokesman Ned Price said, without providing the victim’s name.

US Special Envoy for Yemen Tim Lenderking previously told Al Arabiya English that the Iran-backed Houthis were detaining 13 individuals who are or were employees at the US Embassy in Yemen.

On Wednesday, Price was asked if the recently deceased Yemeni was taken hostage because of his former work with the US. “I couldn’t speak to the motivations [of why he was detained], but of course, the former affiliation [with the US government] is a commonality that many of these detainees share.”

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The Biden administration removed the Houthis from the US terror blacklist in one of its first foreign policy moves last year. But after the group repeatedly attacked Saudi Arabia, the UAE and civilians inside Yemen, in addition to detaining several former and current US employees, Biden said he was considering re-designating the group. Despite a fragile ceasefire being agreed to between warring sides last month, Biden has asked US officials to keep the possibility of re-designating the Houthis “under review.”

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