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## WAR & CONFLICT

# Saudi Arabia vs Iran: Who is to blame for the row?

We debate the roots of the current feud, and discuss the use of starvation as a weapon in Syria.

16 Jan 2016 09:12 GMT | [War & Conflict](#), [Middle East](#), [Iran](#), [Saudi Arabia](#), [Syria](#)

As tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran continue to escalate, who is to blame for the feud and is there an end in sight? In this episode of *UpFront*, a close ally to the Iranian president debates a former adviser to the Saudi royal family.

Mehdi Hasan also looks at Latin America beyond the stereotypes, and speaks to a top Human Rights Watch official about the use of starvation as a weapon of war in Syria.

### **Saudi Arabia vs Iran: Is the Middle East cold war heating up?**

Tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran continue to escalate. The current row erupted earlier this month after Saudi Arabia executed Shia religious leader Nimr al-Nimr and the Saudi embassy in Tehran was burned.

So, is the Middle East cold war between Saudi Arabia and Iran about to turn hot? And who is to blame for the current tension?

In this week's special Arena, Seyed Hossein Mousavian, the former head of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Iranian National Security Council and a close ally of President Hassan Rouhani, debates with Jamal Khashoggi, a former adviser to Saudi Prince Turki al-Faisal.

## Latin America: Beyond the stereotypes

Drugs, corruption and violence often mar any news coming from Latin America.

While no one can deny there is a huge problem with inequality and violence, the region is also home to a diverse mix of sophisticated cultures, progressive social change, hundreds of languages, and more than a dozen Nobel Laureates.

In this week's Reality Check, Mehdi Hasan highlights Latin America beyond the stereotypes.

## Syria: Starvation as a weapon of war

Images of malnourished children and old people from the Syrian town of Madaya gripped the world last week. A UN aid convoy finally reached the besieged town on Monday, with officials describing “horrific conditions” for the more than 40,000 people trapped there.

Madaya is one example of the depth of the humanitarian crisis facing the region. According to the UN there are at least 400,000 people living under siege in 15 towns across Syria. Doctors Without Borders estimate that 28 people have died of starvation in Madaya alone since the beginning of December 2015, with more than 250 people suffering from severe acute malnutrition.

On Thursday, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon warned that the use of starvation as a weapon in Syria was a war crime.

Mehdi Hasan speaks to Sarah Leah Whitson, one of the foremost experts in the region and the executive director of Human Rights Watch's Middle East and North Africa division, about the use of starvation as a weapon of war.

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Source: Al Jazeera



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**Edward**

9 minutes ago

In the demise of the Shah the Saudi Kings see their own downfall. The Saudi rulers find themselves in a losing race against time, or history. Although in denial, they cannot but realize the historical reality that the days of ruling by birthright are long past, and that the House of Saud as the ruler of the kingdom by inheritance is obsolete.

This is the main reason for the Saudi's frantically belligerent behavior. The hysteria is tantamount to the frenzy of the proverbial agony of a prolonged death. It explains why they react so harshly to any social or geopolitical development at home or in the region that they perceive as a threat to their rule.

It explains why, for example, they have been so intensely hostile to the Iranian revolution that terminated the rule of their dictatorial counterpart, the Shah of Iran, in that country. - See:

What Accounts for the Saudi Regime's Hysterical Belligerence? The Agony of Death

<http://www.counterpunch.org/2016/01/15/what-accounts-for-the-saudi-regimes-hysterical-belligerence-the-agony-of-death/>

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**Mishel Bengi**

1 hour ago



When there is so much talk on the media on the so called problem there is no problem . Saudia and Iran wi resolve their issues and then Obama will be rememberd as the best president of the USA .

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**warrendarcydown**

2 hours ago



In this interview it is obvious the Saudis are living in a dream world....saying Syria was a dictatorship...what does he think Saudi Arabia is...a democracy? Although they want to deny sectarianism is not behind much of this, it plays an equal part to power mongering. Each of these states is responsible for funding terrorists as well.

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**JohnEllis02**

3 hours ago



In regards to human rights abuse, UpFront, what about your dictatorship?

In regards to the guest from Saudi Arabia, he spoke all lies.

In regards to the guest from Iran, he spoke all truth.

So, UpFront, what is your goal with all this senseless confusion?

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**SpyOgram**

4 hours ago



The Arab and Muslim world is so sick, tired, disgusted and fuming about these two Govs bickering at each others plotting against each other and both are supposedly Muslims nation so rich their money is mostly spent on wars and weapons.

If the huge death toll and misery of the Iraqis Syrians and Yemenis haven't given them a lesson in humanity WHAT DOES?

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**Annie Joye**

4 hours ago



Google gives you a great opportunity to earn 98652\$ at your home. If you are some intelligent you make many more Dollars. I am also earning many more, my relatives wondered to see how I settle my life in few days thank GOD to you for this... You can also make cash I never tell alie you should check this I am sure you shocked to see this amazing offer... I'm Loving it!!!

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**hell\_isra**

5 hours ago



Saudi Inc. those rootless nomad jews of Arabia must be uprooted. ph\*uck Judaism terrorism and ph\*uck KSA Inc.

Reply Share

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2

**Monte Silver Yazamip**

7 hours ago



must be very humiliating to be a muslim and be deemed the world over as a primitive backward culture and religion

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**hell\_isra**

5 hours ago



Next to Judaism kosher best.iality and inbreeding even a pig would feel moral superiority

Reply Share 1 reply

1

3

**Monte Silver Yazamip**

4 hours ago



dont know much about judaism but i know that they sure get a lot of nobel awards - and freud and einstein were jews. Can you name one - yes one single muslim - who made a worldwide positive contribution to mankind in last 100 years and is respected worldwide?

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**Warsame Abdi Warsame**

8 hours ago



Saudi queens are trying to have war between Sunnis and Shias becouse they have orders from their USA kings, the queens are inlove with they kings and do anything they ask them, all of it ther is one evil behind, the biggest evil in the world so call israel, i m sunni and love Iran very and and all Muslims, and there is no way you can foul us, not now,, we se the evil and they tricks now,, i m very glad how Iran keep cool and never play their games but have their own games and goals,,

Reply Share 1 reply

2

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**Logicalthinkin7**

7 hours ago



Ah off course, everything is the fault of the Americans.  
They even convinced Muslims to killing each in every Islamic country.

They probably also convinced Mohammad to marry a 6 year old and chop his enemies head off.  
Sadly as long as Muslims keep blaming everyone, rather than look at their primitive religion for the reason their religion breeds hate and hence terrorists, they won't ever progress or stop killing each other.

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**The**

10 hours ago



the answer to this probing question is Easy - 'Islam' !

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**Michelle**

11 hours ago

Yahoo CEO, Marissa Meyerhas gone some far as to Support the practice "Work at home" that I have been doing since last year. In this year till now I have earned 66kdollars with my pc, despite the fact that I am a college student. Even newbiescan make 39 an hour easily and the average goes up with time. Why not try this.

===== >> [www.workingonline123.tk](http://www.workingonline123.tk)

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**Michelle**

11 hours ago

Yahoo CEO, Marissa Meyerhas gone some far as to Support the practice "Work at home" that I have been doing since last year. In this year till now I have earned 66kdollars with my pc, despite the fact that I am a college student. Even newbiescan make 39 an hour easily and the average goes up with time. Why not try this.

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**Skizziks**

17 hours ago

"...Saudi Arabia v Iran: Who is to blame for the row?..."

..... Mohammed .....

....that psychopath started a misery without end .....

....the world would have been a better place had Mohammed never lived to foist his fake religion on an ignorant age .....

Reply Share 4 replies

4 2

**gfhgfhg**

15 hours ago

we are free to blame anyone. will you blame the college just because the students fight each other?

Reply Share 1 reply

0 0

**Logicalthinkin7**

11 hours ago

@gfhgfhg> Off course. If the college only produces murderers and r a p i s ts, then off course we would have to look at what the hell the college is teaching.

Similarly since Islam hasn't produced anything apart from terrorists and failed countries, you have to look at Islam and its doctrine to figure out what is wrong with Muslims and the Islamic world.

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**hell\_isra**


5 hours ago

Go grab your kosher shofar and enjoy a session of kosher best.iality of torah with romantic torah chants in the background

Reply Share 1 reply

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 **Lectori Saludem** 4 hours ago  
it's not mine muzzie boy. but it is interesting though that you say jewish products are

funny considering how you use jewish invented products ALL THE TIME! and what have the muzzies brought to mankind in the last 100 years besides ISLAMIC TERRORISM?

Share

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**waybec**

20 hours ago

They are both medieval tyrannies who oppress their own people by fear while they conduct terrorist wars to secure their own criminally corrupt and greedy Regimes. So the answer is clear. They are both as bad as each other. With the world for too long having turned a blind eye to their constantly destabilising atrocities and Mafioso like raghead dictatorships all for the sake of oil!

Reply Share 2 replies

1 0



**gfhgfhg**

15 hours ago

they need pure Islamic teaching.

Reply Share 1 reply

0 1



**waybec**

13 hours ago

Man made religions are part of the problem. Especially Religions that say believe in my God or else I'll punish you. Any true God of Good doesn't need to resort to threats or fear to blackmail a belief!

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**Carl Carloponty**

20 hours ago



Al-Saud family have been behind every Muslim terrorists camps for many decades and thanks to petrodollars for that long they managed to shut up all U.S. and most European media. For 70 years they pocketed oil income while leaving rest of that nation live in 7th century WAHABI version of Islam, Of course, most blame should go to Anglo/American governments who handed over reign of Arabia to Al-Saud family and have protected them for over 7 decades just to profit their oil companies.

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**gfhgfhg**

15 hours ago

ISIS have to replace them then.

Reply Share

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**Stefan Bast**

22 hours ago



I know this shouldn't be taken lightly, but when the Saudi representative called out Iran for "supporting a dictator" I had to chuckle. I feel like none of these guys can really win many laurels in a race for the most shining example of representative government.

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**Skizziks**

17 hours ago

....pot calling the kettle black .....

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**Ian Lawson**

23 hours ago

Who is to blame? America of course with their backing of Saudi Arabia against anything Iran does.

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3 4

**TonySchneider28**

22 hours ago

Who is to blame? Russia of coarse with their backing of Iran against anything not in their evil interests.

Reply Share 1 reply

3 2

**Venkat Chavali**

12 hours ago

To :

Mr. Ian Lawson & Mr.Tony Schneider 28

Sir

Why blame USA or Russia

Why do not you blame Saudi Arabia & Iran for allowing others to meddle in their affairs.

You are talking about Saudi Arabia & Iran.But what about the rest of Muslim Countries.There is no peace.

Now China is entering the field which will further complicate the matters.

Whether it is USA / Russia Or China it is the self interest which is the motivating factor.

There is nobody who works purely on Humanitarian grounds.

It is a Muslim problem,accentuated by other's interference.It is wise on Islamic Countries to realize that & find a solution which is acceptable to most if not all.

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**Skizziks**

17 hours ago

".....America of course..."

-----  
....right ..... because Muslims can't think for themselves .....

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