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Middle East/North Africa - Saudi Arabia

Conflicting accounts

Call for independent probe into journalist's death in police raid

26 February 2014

Reporters Without Borders calls for an investigation into the death of **Hussein Ali Madan Al-Faraj**, a photographer and cameraman known as the "Revolution's Journalist", in the eastern governorate of *Al-Qatif* on 20 February.

Police killed Hussein Al-Faraj during a raid on the town of *Al-Awamiyah* with the aim of locating participants in a long series of anti-government protests in the region. Al-Faraj, who had covered all the protests and funerals of protesters killed by the security forces since 2011, was shot.

The conflicting accounts about the circumstances of his death show the need for an independent investigation.

Hussein Al-Faraj was killed when police stormed the home of a neighbour, **Ahmed Abdelrahim Al-Faraj**, whose brother was on a list of 23 people wanted for participating into anti-government demonstrations. The neighbour's son, **Ali Ahmed Al-Faraj**, 22, was also killed.

The Saudi interior ministry said [the police came under fire from the "trouble-makers" and were forced to return fire](#). Two policemen were also killed, according to the interior ministry.

This account is disputed by neighbours, who said the operation began when around 30 armed policemen with armoured vehicles surrounded the neighbourhood and then stormed Ahmed Abdelrahim Al-Faraj's home.

According to these witness accounts, the police opened fire as they entered Ahmed Abdelrahim Faraj's home, killing his son. The neighbours are emphatic that [Hussein Al-Faraj was there covering the police raid](#) with his camera and was not wearing any top garment so that the police could see he was not armed. His blood-spattered camera was found beside his bullet-riddled body.

This police raid [sparked another anti-government demonstration in Al-Awamiyah](#), where many members of Saudi Arabia's Shiite minority live and where many demonstrations have been staged in support of the protests in neighbouring Bahrain since February 2011.
