

Iran Arabic channel taken off air

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Iran's Arabic language satellite television channel, al-Alam, has been taken off air by two Arab-controlled satellite companies.

The operators of Nilesat and Arabsat cited a breach of contract according to Egypt's MENA news agency, but al-Alam said they had not been given a reason.

Analysts say some Arab governments are worried about the channel's popularity and Iran's growing regional influence.

Saudi Arabia hosted a meeting of Arab information ministers on Tuesday.

The move comes at a time of heightened tensions between Iran and Western-allied Arab governments, particularly Saudi Arabia.

Iran, a predominantly Shia Muslim country, has expressed concerns over the treatment of minority Shia in Saudi Arabia where an austere form of Sunni Islam known as Wahhabism is dominant.

Tehran and Riyadh have exchanged warnings about the treatment and conduct of Shia pilgrims arriving in the Saudi Arabia for the annual Hajj pilgrimage.

Al-Alam's coverage of the war in Yemen including statements from the rebels accusing Saudi Arabia of involvement may also have angered Riyadh, analysts say.

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