

Why the Khashoggi murder mystery has dominated news headlines

 By Leigh Andrews

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With fake news at an all-time high and trust in the media at an all-time low, the Khashoggi murder case highlights the role of the media as the fourth estate, as killing the journalist does not necessarily mean you've killed the story.



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[News24](#) columnist Howard Feldman says, “Not since the death of JFK has the killing of one man received so much attention.”

It's a murder mystery woven with threads of media freedom, which has held the world enthralled for a few weeks now.

What exactly happened to *Washington Post* journalist Jamal Khashoggi – a Saudi national described as one of the most influential Arab journalists in the world – when he stepped into the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on 2 October to collect a document for his upcoming marriage?

What really happened – and why?

Was it the ‘tragic accident’ resulting from a physical brawl turned bad, as initially claimed by Saudi Arabia in this [Sky News](#) report?

Or, as [Citizen](#) reports, was the killing of 59-year-old Khashoggi premeditated, with the final death order given over Skype, and CNN broadcasting surveillance images of a Saudi official exiting the consulate wearing Khashoggi's clothes, exiting the consulate to put everyone off the case?

Unfortunately, it seems the truth lies more towards the latter.

“ *Jamal Khashoggi: A Profile*

One of the most influential Arab journalists in the world, Jamal Khashoggi, went missing after entering the Saudi Consulate

in Istanbul Oct. 2. pic.twitter.com/Ft1yMWM1sW— seid hassan yayir (@seidyaayir) [October 23, 2018](#) ”

But the facts are few and far between. Feldman adds:

“ *The political murder of anyone is horrendous. The murder of a journalist for his views is outrageous. Killing someone on foreign soil with the aid of a power-tool, nail clippers and a body double has the making of a far-fetched movie. And yet it does seem that this is what happened.* ”

Khashoggi was admittedly a harsh critic of the Saudi government. And according to [EWN](#), when delivering the ‘naked truth’ Erdogan said Turkish investigators had evidence that Khashoggi was the victim of a premeditated “savage murder,” by a 15-man hit squad.

No accidental physical brawl, then.

Who protects the reporters who protect us?

So while [Sky News](#) reports that Khashoggi’s body parts have since been found in a garden 500m from the consulate, the mystery over his killing, and the link to media freedom, is far from over.

In fact, October seems to be the month for media freedom in the spotlight, as it also marks the first anniversary of Maltese investigative journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia's assassination by car bomb.



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Galizia’s famous last words live on: “the situation is desperate, there are crooks everywhere you look”.

[The Citizen](#) adds that instead of blaming Saudi Prince Riyadh directly, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan “preferred to authorise the leak of incriminating information to pro-government media to put pressure on the kingdom.”



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[Click here](#) to read Khashoggi’s last *Washington Post* column, which the publication’s global opinions editor, Karen Attiah, received from Khashoggi’s translator and assistant the day after he was reported missing.

Attiah says, “This column perfectly captures his commitment and passion for freedom in the Arab world. A freedom he apparently gave his life for.”

All the more proof that media freedom remains under threat, but **killing the journalist does not kill the story.**

Reporters Without Borders Sweden's 'Billboards Without Borders' campaign is proof:

Read more

- [Turkey's Erdogan to reveal 'naked truth' about Khashoggi murder](#): *The Citizen*
- [Slain journalist Khashoggi's body parts found: Report](#): *EWN*
- [Are strange factors driving coverage of Khashoggi's murder?](#): *News24*
- [Jamal Khashoggi: Saudi journalist's body parts found, say Sky sources](#): *Sky News*
- [Jamal Khashoggi: What the Arab world needs most is free expression](#): *Washington Post*

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