

The Islamic Republic of Yemen

How did the Yemeni resistance manage to achieve high deterrence capabilities against Israel by drawing inspiration from the Islamic Republic of Iran?



The group known as Ansarullah (the Houthis) are Zaidis from the northern region of Yemen, particularly in the province of Saada, where they have lived for centuries. They follow the teachings of Zaid bin Ali bin Hussein (PBUH). Zaid bin Ali is regarded by both Sunni and Shia scholars as a righteous man who fought corruption.

In the 1930s, with the rise of the Al Saud family and their incursion into Zaidi territories, the Houthis entered into conflict with the Saudis. In 1962, with the support of Gamal Abdel Nasser, a revolution took place against the Zaidi imam, leading to the formation of an Arab nationalist state with its capital in Sanaa.

Subsequently, Ali Abdullah Saleh, a Zaidi military officer, came to power in 1978 and remained in power until 2011. In the 1990s, the Houthi movement, led by Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi, rose against Ali Abdullah Saleh. In 2003, during the period of the American invasion of Iraq, the Ansarullah movement, led by Hussein al-Houthi, was reformed. They engaged in several rounds of warfare against the dictatorial government of Abdullah Saleh. Ultimately, in 2004, Hussein al-Houthi and 300 of his comrades attained martyrdom. Afterward, the leadership of Ansarullah fell into the hands of Hussein al-Houthi's younger brother, Abdul-Malik Badreddin al-Houthi. In four wars in Saada, they defeated the Saudi-led coalition and the central government.

Finally, in 2014, due to the inefficiency of the Saudi-backed government, the Houthis captured Sanaa and, along with other groups and parties, formed a government of national unity. The rise of Ansarullah in Yemen, with its Shia-oriented thinking and anti-hegemony stance against the United States and Saudi Arabia, led to a seismic shift in the governments of Arab Gulf states. Eventually, an Arab coalition, led by Saudi Arabia, launched an attack on Yemen. After 8 years of war, they were defeated by Ansarullah and its allies, and peace was reinstated in Yemen in 2021.

Under Hussein al-Houthi's leadership, the organization evolved from focusing primarily on cultural matters to embracing a more explicit political dimension, while still serving as an educational and cultural institution. Due to the proximity of Ansarullah's leadership to the grassroots and revolutionary aspirations, the presentation of a clear plan and program, and their non-opportunistic approach in refusing government positions while ensuring the success of the uprising, the revolutionaries rallied under a single leadership and ensured the uprising's success. Although Ansarullah initially formed a joint government with the Abdullah Saleh party to prevent a bloodbath, as time went by and Saleh betrayed by joining the Saudi coalition, he was cast aside by the revolutionaries.