

# It's Journalistic Malpractice to Say Gazans Are Starving Without Saying Israel Is Starving Them

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[Caitlin's Newsletter](#)

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*The mass media are printing some amazingly depraved headlines about a [new UN-backed report](#) on starvation in Gaza from the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, who says half the enclave's population is now at the highest-possible threat level for starvation.*

The New York Times has a real corker out titled "[Famine Is Projected for Northern Gaza, Experts Say](#)", subtitled "A global authority on food security said that in the coming months, as many as 1.1 million people in Gaza could face the severest levels of hunger."

A casual news consumer could get multiple paragraphs into this article assuming that people in a place called Gaza are suffering from some kind of famine caused by natural events, like a drought or something. Not until paragraph four would they encounter the word "Israeli", and not until paragraph five would they encounter the line "Israeli's bombardment and a near-total blockade."

At a time when [only 20 percent of news readers](#) ever make it past the headline of a given story, this is an extremely destructive and propagandistic act of journalistic malpractice. The editors of The New York Times know exactly what they're doing packaging a story about Israel's [deliberate starvation](#) of Palestinian civilians like it's a troubling prediction about the weather.

Just when you think [@nytimes](#) coverage of Gaza couldn't get worse, they sink to new lows. Now they're describing famine in Gaza as if it's an inclement weather projection, rather than a weapon of war deployed by Israel to collectively punish Gaza's entire population. [pic.twitter.com/nAIZPQdmjg](https://pic.twitter.com/nAIZPQdmjg)

— Tariq Kenney-Shawa (@tksshawa) [March 18, 2024](#)

Contrast the New York Times' headline with that of Al Jazeera's report on the same story: "[Gaza headed towards famine amid Israeli aid curbs: What to know](#)". That's the normal way to present a story about a deliberately inflicted famine upon an imperiled population. If a population was being deliberately starved by siege warfare from a nation like Russia, China or Iran, we may be absolutely certain that the name of that nation would appear in the headline.

But because the western media exist to generate propaganda and not to report the news, we get headlines like "[Gaza faces famine during Ramadan, the holy month of fasting](#)" from the BBC, and "[Famine in northern Gaza is imminent as more than 1 million people face 'catastrophic' levels of hunger, new report warns](#)" from CNN, and "[Famine imminent in northern Gaza, says UN-backed report](#)" from Reuters, and "['Catastrophic levels of hunger' in Gaza mean famine is imminent, says aid coalition](#)" from The Guardian.

We saw this with Saudi Arabia's [US-backed starvation of Yemen](#) as well. When the mass media talked about Yemen at all (usually [they just ignored it](#)), editors consistently obfuscated the fact that this was a population being deliberately starved by a cruel blockade and the deliberate targeting of food infrastructure. The fact that it was being made possible by the United States was almost never mentioned.

This is a very good example of [how western propaganda works](#), by the way. The mainstream western press don't generally make up whole-cloth lies (though they will uncritically print claims made by western government agencies who have an extensive history of lying); what they do is rely on half-truths, distortions and lies by omission to give their audiences a wildly slanted picture of what's going on in the world. By always going out of their way to tell you an enemy of the US-centralized empire is committing an atrocity the millisecond it looks like they might be, while being furtive and obfuscatory about the crimes of the US and its allies, they give their audience a skewed understanding of who is and is not committing the real evils in our world.

This [doesn't typically happen](#) as a result of any grand monolithic conspiracy; it's mostly just the natural consequence of having all the major news platforms controlled by wealthy and powerful people who each have a vested interest in manufacturing consent for the status quo upon which their wealth and power are premised. The oligarchs control the media, and they hire the executives who run the media, and the executives hire the editors who write the headlines and guide the reporters to report a certain way, and this gives rise to a system where everyone working for the outlet conducts themselves in a way that just so happens to suit the powerful people on top.

Then before you know it you've got editors at The New York Times—a paper that's been [published by the same family for over a century](#)—packaging a story about starvation caused by an Israeli siege to look like it's a story about an innocent crop failure. Odds are nobody told them to do that; they just learned over the years that that's how you rise to the top in an outlet like The New York Times.

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