

Mohammed bin Salman's meteoric rise

Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince is to embark on a round of visits to western capitals as he seeks to consolidate his grip on power and press ahead with his ambitious plans to modernise the ultra-conservative nation

■ **Jan 2015: King Salman**

ascends to throne and names son **Mohammed bin Salman** – known as **MBS** – minister of defence



■ **Mar:** MBS launches military campaign against Houthi rebels in Yemen. **Conflict creates world's worst humanitarian crisis**

■ **Apr 2016:** MBS unveils **Vision 2030** – far-reaching reform plan to diversify economy away from oil

■ **Jun 2017:** MBS seen as driving force behind Saudi-led regional blockade imposed on Qatar over its alleged support of terrorism

■ **King names MBS heir to throne, pushing aside older cousin Prince Mohammed bin Nayef** – veteran head of security services



■ **Sep:** Saudi authorities arrest more than 20 clerics and intellectuals in apparent crackdown on dissent

■ **MBS seen to be behind landmark decision to lift ban on women driving from Jun 2018**

■ **Nov:** Dozens of princes, ministers and businessmen detained in Riyadh's **Ritz-Carlton** hotel in move billed as anti-corruption sweep but widely seen as purge of political foes

■ **Feb 2018:** MBS believed to be behind shake-up of defence establishment in which top military commanders – including chief of staff – are sacked

■ **Mar:** Crown Prince, 32, expected to visit UK, U.S. and France to shore up kingdom's image with investors following recent shakedown of Saudi elite

