

Media Distortions regarding Iran

By [Global Research](#)

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

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CASMII UK Press Release

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CASMII calls on journalists and the public to challenge dangerous distortion of news on Iran

The Campaign Against Sanctions and Military Intervention in Iran has strongly criticised the Financial Times and launched a complaint with the Press Complaint Commission over the publication by the FT of a story [1] making incriminating and unfounded allegations about Iranian government's complicity with Al-Qaeda launching terrorist operations in Iraq, using Iranian territory.

The story by Stephen Fidler in the Financial Times, "Al-Qaeda linked to operations from Iran" , 6 July, makes serious allegations about Al-Qaeda and Sunni extremists linked to Al-Qaeda using Iranian territory as a base for launching terrorist operations in Iraq with the possible knowledge and cooperation of the Iranian government. The FT uses unsubstantiated allegations, invariably attributed to anonymous "officials" or "analysts", without questioning the plausibility of these dangerously incriminating claims.

Mehrnaz Shahabi of CASMII said today: "With brazen disregard for accuracy and truth, the FT fails to draw on the established evidence of the ongoing and irreconcilable hostilities between Iran and Al-Qaeda: Firstly, the hostilities between Wahabiism and Shiism is well known. The Al-Qaeda's virulent anti-Shiia ideology and Taliban's massacring of thousands of Shiiat in northern Afghanistan and executing Iranian diplomats in Mazar-e Sharif in 1998 , make an alliance between the two extremely unlikely. Secondly, there is a wealth of evidence of current and intensified hostilities directed at Iran by Sunni extremists, in which the US and the UK are known to be implicated. Pulitzer prize-winning investigative journalist Seymour Hersh, in New Yorker magazine of 5th March, discloses [2] a new strategy and major shift in American foreign policy, which is to contain a Shiite resurgence through covert alliances with and funding operations by Sunni extremists and Al-Qaeda, with the intention to undermine Iran. Hersh refers to secret funds being funneled into these operations which are totally unauthorised by the US Congress!"

The FT fails to make any reference to the ample evidence that Jundullah is one such group, which is linked to Al-Qaeda and is waging a major terrorist campaign inside Iran. Jundullah, a separatist group in Baluchistan, is thought to be trained and armed by the US, as part of the US policy of destabilisation and regime change in Iran. Also, The audio-taped announcement

[3] last week by Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, the leader of an Al-Qaeda umbrella group in Iraq, threatens to wage war against Iran unless Iran stops supporting the Shiia government in Iraq. He says Al-Qaeda has been waiting for four years to wage a war with Iran. Notably the US which has remained silent on Al-Qaeda announcement, has made a similar announcement by the passage of an amendment to the Defence Authorization Act censuring Iran for proxy killing of American soldiers and destabilisation in Iraq and given Iran, a “stern warning”, concurrent with the warning by Al-Qaeda. Sen. Lieberman, the author of the legislation is a vociferous advocate of war with Iran.

These confirm the convergence of interests between the US and Al-Qaeda around their deep enmity towards Iran and negate the spurious assertion that Iran is a beneficiary of continuing mayhem in Iraq.

Alarminglly, the FT’s accusation of Iran’s cooperation with Al-Qaeda is in chorus with the current US war propaganda against Iran, that is, Iran’s complicity with Al-Qaeda, which according to the current US legislation can be used by President Bush as a pretext for a military attack on Iran without further recourse to the Congress. This outrageous accusation is the exact repetition of the accusation leveled against the Iraqi regime in US’s “War on Terror” before the 2003 illegal invasion of Iraq.

CASMII campaigns for ethical journalism on news coverage about Iran and calls on all responsible journalists and concerned individuals to challenge these dangerous inaccuracies and distortions.

Complaints should be directed to the FT editor, on letters.editor@ft.com

For more information or to contact CASMII please visit <http://www.campaigniran.org>

Notes:

- [1] <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/9cc4d5f4-2be3-11dc-b498-000b5df10621.html>
- [2] http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/03/05/070305fa_fact_hersh
- [3] http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20070708/ap_on_re_mi_ea/iraq_al_qaida_1

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