

Western Corporate Media ‘Disappears’ over 1.5 Million Syrians and 4,000 Doctors

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As the Syrian Arab Army and Syrian government make more significant advances in restoring security to northern Syria's Aleppo and its population, [war-propagandizing human rights groups](#) posing as neutral, and Western media (and Gulf counterparts like Al Jazeera) churn out recycled and debunked accusations anew.

According to these compromised US government and Soros-funded NGOs and much of the corporate media, there is only one “last” pediatrician and a scarce number of doctors left in Aleppo. They are, of course, referring solely to the terrorist-occupied regions of Aleppo (eastern and some northern quarters) and even then ignore the reality that the Syrian government continues to pay the salaries of doctors in terrorist-occupied areas, including eastern Aleppo.

This “last-pediatrician” assertion was put forth earlier this year as part of a media frenzy attempting to vilify Syria and Russia as “targeting civilians” (when in fact targeting foreign-backed terrorists). Those media and human rights hyenas ignored the following realities about greater Aleppo:

- The presence of terrorists (Jabhat al-Nusra, and what the west calls “moderates” — Ahrar al-Sham, Jaysh al-Fateh, Nour al-Din al-Zenki, and factions of the so-called Free Syrian Army) in eastern and northern Aleppo.
- The presence of over 1.5 million civilians in the government-secured areas of western Aleppo, who are murdered and maimed daily by terrorist-fired, [US/Turkish-made](#) rockets, missiles, mortars and ammunition, as well as explosive bullets, and locally-produced explosive-stuffed [gas canisters](#) and mortars.
- The presence in government-secured Aleppo of civilians from terrorist-occupied areas of Aleppo — many of whom [as early as 2012 fled](#) the influx of terrorists to their districts, others who over the years since have fled west, and a small number of whom have recently been able to flee via humanitarian corridors to safety in western Aleppo.
- The presence of not just one, but over 4,100 doctors (source: Aleppo Medical Association) and numerous functioning hospitals in Aleppo — in spite of the criminal western sanctions on Syria and in spite of hospitals having been targeted by terrorists’ bombings.
- The fact that the terrorists in eastern Aleppo are predominantly non-Syrian (and certainly non-“rebels”), coming “from eighty-one different countries with significant contingents from Turkey, the Gulf Arab states, North Africa, and Russia’s Chechnya and North Caucasus region.” [source: [10 Facts About Aleppo](#)]

- That at least 80% of the terrorists are affiliated with Al-Qaeda and the majority of the remaining otherwise hold the same distorted and ruthless ideologies. [source: [10 Facts About Aleppo](#)]

Doctors In Aleppo Refute Media Lies

In the first week of July 2016 I traveled by car to Aleppo. When entering the southern Ramouseh district of the city, the car sped along a road known for terrorist snipers. Three weeks later in Ramouseh, a [woman was sniped by a terrorist and killed](#).



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Oil barrels line Ramouseh road to protect Syrian civilians against Western-backed terrorist snipers

In Aleppo, I met with doctors from the [Aleppo Medical Association](#) (established in 1959), including Dr. Zahar Buttal, Dr. Tony Sayegh, and Dr. Nabil Antaki.

One question I posed to the doctors was regarding the other oft-repeated lie of the “last pediatrician” in Aleppo, a startling allegation designed to shock western readers and rally them against the Syrian government. And one which has no basis in truth.

Dr. Zahar Buttal, Chairman of the Aleppo Medical Association, refuted such allegations, noting that Aleppo has 180 pediatricians still working in the city. Of one of the alleged lone pediatricians he said: “The media says the only pediatrician in Aleppo was killed in a hospital called Quds. In reality, it was a field hospital, not registered.” As for the pediatrician, “We checked the name of the doctor and didn’t find him registered in Aleppo Medical Association records.”

Indeed, the Quds hospital referenced was central to the April/May frenzy of media lies regarding Aleppo and the Syrian government, and Russian allies. Claims around the building called al-Quds hospital contradicted one another, the fallacies and serious discrepancies outlined [in this article](#).

Also central to the lies were the [bias and propaganda](#) of the very partial, [corporate-financed Medecins Sans Frontiers \(MSF\)](#), which supports areas in Syria controlled by terrorists, specifically Jabhat al-Nusra (whose failed [attempt at re-branding with a new name](#) – Jabhat Fatha al-Sham – does not negate its ties to Al-Qaeda nor erase their crimes).

The next, related, question for the doctors was: If government-secured Aleppo has 180 pediatricians, how many doctors in total are still working there? Lying media have for months claimed the number of doctors are dwindling, including even a late July propaganda piece in [The Intercept](#) which asserted that “the number of doctors in Aleppo City has plummeted into the low dozens. The number of remaining medical specialists is even smaller.”

Yet, according to Dr. Zahar Buttal, until now there are 4,160 doctors registered and active in Aleppo city, in the government-secured areas of over 1.5 million people. Of the 4,160 doctors, 200 have been newly registered since the beginning of this year.

As for the media claims of a lack of specialists in Aleppo, in addition to the 180 mentioned pediatricians, there are of course many more [specialists in Aleppo](#). According to the Aleppo Medical Association’s Dr. Zahar, specialists still practicing in the city include:

- 30 cardiovascular surgeons
- 214 general surgeons
- 112 orthopedists
- 11 pulmonologists
- 12 neurologists
- 8 neurosurgeons
- 250 obstetricians/gynecologists
- 15 gastroenterologists

Dr. Nabil Antaki, himself a gastroenterologist, is one of a group of 15 specialist doctors which, since late 2012, have volunteered their services, treating in private hospitals (with the most minimal equipment and medical fees possible) upwards of 500 civilians severely injured by terrorist bombings, needing specialist care and often life-support. Specialists in his group alone include: three general surgeons, one heart surgeon, one neurosurgeon, two orthopedic surgeons, and three anesthesiologists.

Dr. Antaki has been outspoken about the western media lies on Aleppo. When the [western-created “Aleppo is Burning” campaign](#) took flight in late April – the exact time when western-backed terrorists increased their daily bombing of Aleppo to severe bombardments – Dr. Antaki, seeing the worst of the casualties and bombings, [spoke out](#).

When I met him in July 2016, Dr. Antaki continued to be vocal about the media manipulations and fragrant lies about the reality on the ground in Aleppo.

“All of the campaigns which were launched by the western media concerned the east part of Aleppo, which is the part controlled by the ‘rebels’. All the media reported that the people there are suffering, the buildings are destroyed and that the Syrian government are doing ‘war crimes’. But, what we are receiving in the part controlled by the Syrian government is much worse than in the east part. Nobody speaks about what is happening in the western part of Aleppo. There are not only tens of mortars every day which fell on the western part of Aleppo, but hundreds, and every day we have hundreds killed or wounded. And nobody

spoke about it. When the media spoke about one supposed hospital destroyed in the eastern part, one week after, the main maternity hospital in Aleppo was hit by bombs sent by the 'rebels', and women were killed, and nobody spoke about this."

Aleppo's Dr. Tony Sayegh has also [been vocal about](#) the blatant media bias on Aleppo. In July, regarding the Quds hospital and related propaganda, Dr. Sayegh told me:

This hospital, in the Sukkari district, they made a big propaganda about it, 'the last doctor in that area,' which is absolutely wrong. The government has doctors working in that area who get their salaries from the government, even though the area is controlled by terrorists. For the government, all areas and their inhabitants are Syrians. Areas where there are terrorists, like al-Manbij, like al-Bab, in all those areas there are many doctors working with the health ministry, and they take their salaries from the health ministry.

Aleppo's Over Ten Thousand Dead and Maimed Absent From Corporate Headlines

Dr. Nabil Antaki gave the following overview of life for the civilians of government-secured Aleppo, from mid-2012 until our July meeting.

Since July 2012, the main area of Aleppo receives every day mortars, bombs and gas canisters, sent by the 'rebels' on the civilians living in Aleppo. Here you have human damage more than there, but less physical destruction, because here we are receiving mortars and gas canister bombs. If a mortar hits the building, it might make a hole the size of a window, but also kill five people at once. In the part of Aleppo under the government control, every day we have dozens of injured and killed.

In late April 2016, terrorists in the occupied eastern quarters of Aleppo, as well as then-occupied Beni Zaid and neighbouring districts, increased their normal bombing campaigns of mortars, gas canister explosives (from household to the the largest size canisters, stuffed with glass, bearings, metal shrapnel), explosive bullets, and powerful foreign-supplied rockets to from high-tens to over one hundred per day on the heavily-populated areas of Aleppo secured by the Syrian state.

Of the heightened bombardment, Dr. Nabil Antaki [told me](#):

Usually you don't have just one mortar, you have a rain of mortars: ten, twenty, thirty, and more in a few hours. Many people are wounded at the same time. When ambulances bring people to the public hospital, maybe twenty or thirty people arrive at the same time. The public hospitals lack enough medical staff and equipment. So if you have ten severely wounded persons arriving at the same time at the public hospital, by the time care comes, a victim has time to die.

In his Aleppo Medical Association office, Dr. Zaher Buttal read from his diary statistics on the late April/early May terrorists' bombardment campaign:

- April 23rd: 81 martyrs, 30 wounded.
- April 28th & 29th: Bloodiest days. 31 martyrs, 75 wounded ***initial numbers only*.

- From April 23rd-30th: 120 martyrs, over 800 wounded.
- May 3rd: 25 martyrs, 100 wounded (including 3 women killed in the al-Dabeet maternity hospital explosion).



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Dr. Dabeet showing me images of the Western-backed terrorist attack on the maternity hospital named after him

Although the Aleppo Medical Association documented the daily number of killed and injured by this increased bombing campaign, and although the areas attacked included a number of registered Aleppo hospitals, corporate media and Wall Street-backed “human rights groups” in their Turkish-based, or further-removed, reporting on Aleppo preferred to cite “unnamed activists” and al-Qaeda-in-Syria “White Helmets” actors.

Like many (if not most) Aleppo residents, Dr. Zaher Buttal has never heard of the White Helmets. The fact that the head of the Medical Association is not aware of this group purporting to be rescuing civilians in Aleppo highlights the reality that they work solely in terrorist-occupied areas and for the terrorists themselves. For more information on the terrorist-propaganda group that is known as the “White Helmets,” see [this video](#) and [this article](#).

Other Pro-Terrorist Propaganda

The same July 2016 *Intercept* article which promoted the lone-doctor narrative also neglected to mention that a hospital they cite is in fact a hospital not only long-established but also belonging to a volunteer association headed by Syria’s Grand Mufti, Dr. Ahmad Badr Al-Din Hassoun.

The *Intercept* [article read](#): “Almouslem’s hospital, Omar Ibn Abdel Aziz, has long been the only functioning medical facility in its pocket of eastern Aleppo City.”

In a mid-July and then an August 11th meeting with Mufti Hassoun in Damascus, he explained that the organization (The Association of Raising the Standard of Health and Social Status) of which he is Director had two hospitals and ten clinics daily giving medical care for free to up to 1500 of Aleppo’s poorest. One of these hospitals was the mentioned Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz hospital. It had three operating rooms, an MRI, nine dialysis machines, 12 incubators, and 50 beds. It is now controlled by terrorists who, Mufti Hassoun said, further mounted machine guns on the hospital’s three ambulances. The humanitarianism of western-backed so-called “moderate” “rebels”.

Mufti Hassoun explained:

In 1985 we started construction of the hospital, and in 1992 the hospital started operating. We treated for free over 400 patients daily, people from a very poor neighbourhood.

When the terrorists took over the hospital, they evicted the doctors, and killed three of the nurses and more than ten of the patients. The media say that MSF is supporting the hospital, but they are using it like a field hospital to treat terrorists. This is the hospital that we built with our own hands, and now they lie and say that it’s their own hospital.

Halfway through [a video](#) which the *Intercept* piece links to, who should appear but the war-propagandizing White Helmets – who only work in terrorist-occupied areas. This is the evidence the *Intercept* presents, along with a UN report lacking sources for its assertions. The UN has no physical presence in terrorist-occupied eastern Aleppo and, like lying media and NGOs, relies on “unnamed activists” and the SOHR-type sources for their statistics.

Brazenly, [Al-Hel online media stole a photo](#) from the Aleppo Medical Association, claiming it depicted doctors in terrorist-occupied eastern Aleppo: “Aleppo doctors are demanding an end to the bombing of the regime ... and describe the situation as ‘a humanitarian catastrophe’.”

The equally war-propagandistic Facebook page, Syria Breaking, [shared the stolen-photo](#) and Al-Hel article, adding its own lies:

There are now in the eastern part of the city of [#Aleppo](#), no fewer than 300 thousand people, there are only 30 doctors in five hospitals to serve them.

The photo in question was in fact from a May 6th protest ([photos here](#)) organized by the Aleppo Medical Association outside of the destroyed al-Dabeet maternity hospital, gutted on May 3rd by a terrorist rocket. According to Dr. Zaher Buttal, more than 150 doctors attended the demonstration.

The protest came following the weeks of carnage from terrorists’ relentless bombardment of civilian areas all over government-secured Aleppo – including numerous hospitals – and was, Dr. Buttal said, both in anger at the terrorists’ targeting of hospitals in Aleppo and also to

show the world that, contrary to media lies, Aleppo does have doctors.

Of the signs doctors held, Professor Tim Anderson [wrote](#):

Their signs - in English, Italian and German as well as Arabic - read: 'Syrian Arab Army represents me', 'Long live Syria, long live Aleppo', 'Terrorists are killing our children', 'Armed opposition is destroying our civilisation', 'No for armed opposition'.

From the terrorists' May 3rd bombings, a rocket landed on a parked car right next to the al-Dabeet maternity hospital, causing a massive explosion which gutted the hospital interior, severely damaged the exterior, and burned the two cars parked behind it. Footage from a nearby building's security camera shows the rocket and subsequent massive explosion occurred at 9:36 am, May 3rd.



A Western-backed terrorist rocket explodes outside Dabeet Maternity hospital in Aleppo

While [initial reports said](#) 16 civilians were killed in the May 3rd terrorist bombings, by the time the wounded had succumbed to their severe injuries, 25 people were killed and over 100 injured, according to the medical association's Dr. Zaher Buttal. The three women killed were in the al-Dabeet hospital reception at the time, said Dr. Dabeet. One of the injured included a 28-week-pregnant woman who survived the loss of long sections of her intestine due to shrapnel injuries.

The operating room was destroyed, along with patient rooms, five of ten incubators (the other five needing repair), and much of his equipment.

One week later the maternity hospital was again hit by a terrorist-fired mortar, destroying the roof and injuring construction workers there, according to Dr. Dabeet.



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Dabeet Maternity hospital after it suffered a direct hit from Western-backed terrorists in Aleppo.

According to Dr. Zaher Buttal, other hospitals hit include the [Ibn Rashd hospital](#), with a mortar hitting the top floor, the Arab Medicine hospital, and the perimeter of the Razi hospital.

Starving, Besieged Civilians? Liberated Areas Ignored

While terrorists' bombings and sniping attacks have been the most pressing issues in Aleppo in the past few months, other crises since 2012 have been those of water and electricity shortages, as well as the terrorist-blockades suffered by the population in government-secured Aleppo, cutting off food, fuel and medicine to the city.

The already risky Ramouseh road which I took into Aleppo in early July was recently assaulted by terrorist snipers and shelling, and has been closed to prevent civilian fatalities. This sole road leading into Aleppo closed, terrorist actions have again cut the lifeline for the over 1.5 million people inside. In July, Dr. Nabil Antaki explained how terrorists themselves closed the road many times in the past, and the dire effects of doing so.

Because the 'rebels' control the main roads around Aleppo, Aleppo has suffered blockades, sometimes for a few days and other times for many, many weeks. During those many weeks, nothing was able to enter Aleppo: no food, no vegetables, no fruits, no gas, no medical equipment, no drugs... the people of Aleppo suffered a lot.

The water supply has been cut by 'rebels', because the main water stations are in 'rebel' areas. Many times they cut the water for weeks or months. So for three years, we had to use the water of wells — we now have in Aleppo 300 wells which we had to use to provide water for the 1.5 million persons living in Aleppo under the Syrian state.

In addition, we don't have power supply, because the electricity generator and power supply are in the 'rebel' portion of Aleppo, and they cut the supply. That's why people have private subscription to 1 or 2 amperes, just to have 1 or 2 or 3 bulbs during the night. They have to pay very expensive prices just to have this. The people of Aleppo are truly suffering.

Mustapha Melhis of Aleppo's water authority [explained in July 2015](#):

Our water reservoirs are 90 kilometers [56 miles] away, in Hafsa, a region held by IS [Islamic State]. In May, they cut the amount of water [supplied] by half....

The second aspect of the problem is distribution. The water pumped by IS flows to the Suleiman Halabi and Bab al-Nairab stations here [in Aleppo]. Both areas are controlled by Jabhat al-Nusra, and they are using the water as a weapon to impose their demands.

In the same article, Aleppo Governor Mohammad Marwan Olabi said:

The power plants are outside the city. Terrorists control two areas from where electricity lines to Aleppo pass. Whenever they want to put pressure on Aleppo, they cut the electricity. And when electricity is gone, the water supply is cut off as well.

Corporate media have largely ignored these very real crises, and instead manufacture (regarding terrorist-held eastern Aleppo) the same types of propaganda campaigns of "starving civilians" which earlier flooded social media and were endorsed by dubious NGOs, like [those on Madaya](#) and Yarmouk. In all cases, no mention is made of the fact that the population in the area includes terrorist factions or why there is any lack of supplies (because of the terrorist factions).

As with Madaya and Yarmouk, when residents of the terrorist-inhabited regions do manage to speak to media, inevitably [they speak of](#) terrorists stealing food supplies, hoarding goods and selling them at extortionist rates, and preventing residents from leaving to safer areas.

On July 28, the Syrian Arab Army [fully secured the Bani Zaid](#) and [Lairamoun](#) northern neighbourhoods of Aleppo city, liberating them from the western-backed mercenaries who occupied the districts since October 2012.

Civilians who had remained in Bani Zaid [spoke of](#) the terrorists' firing of gas canister and other bombs on the civilians of neighbouring government-secured Aleppo districts. Western corporate media largely ignored this significant liberation and the jubilation of liberated residents.

On the same day, President al-Assad [issued a decree granting amnesty](#) to Syrians who laid down their weapons and reconciled with the state.

When the Syrian-Russian coordinated [humanitarian corridors opened](#) in eastern Aleppo in late July, reports soon after emerged of [terrorists preventing residents](#) from leaving, including [assassinating residents](#) who attempted to leave. When some residents from these areas did manage to evacuate, [testimonies showed them](#) thanking the government for providing the basics and cursing the terrorists for having stolen from them, abused

residents, and in many cases killed their loved ones.

Russia Today [interviewed](#) evacuees who likewise did not praise the west's so-called "rebels" but spoke of the hell civilians endured under terrorist occupation.

"We left with our remaining children. May God punish the rebels. They did not allow us to leave, they deprived us of gas, water, electricity and bread. We were not allowed to leave. There were no medicines. They used to tell us you live with us or die with us," one woman said.

Attacks On Aleppo Continue, To Media Silence

"For three days after the liberation of Bani Zaid, it was very quiet in Aleppo. People were happy, there were no more mortars. Suddenly, yesterday, the terrorists started sending mortars and rockets on Aleppo again, especially on Hamdaniya where thousands of displaced people live. So people are leaving this neighbourhood to find another place," Dr. Nabil Antaki told me on August 1st.

In a phone call on August 10th, Dr. Zaher Buttal updated that since July 30th, terrorist bombings had killed 30 civilians in Aleppo, and wounded hundreds. By August 11th, Dr. Buttal said another 16 civilians in Hamadaniya, Aleppo, had been killed by terrorists' missiles, another 45 wounded.

Today there was supposed to be a truce between 10 am and 1 pm. Terrorists ignored this and again bombarded Hamadaniya neighbourhood.

Both Dr. Buttal and truth-based media have [reported](#) that terrorists used toxic gas in their bombardment of civilian areas of Aleppo.

The Western corporate media and NGO complex, on the other hand, continue to talk about imaginary "last doctors" in Aleppo, while ignoring the very real suffering of over 1.5 million Syrians in government-secured Aleppo, as well as the doctors who are treating them. This is hardly surprising given that, from the very beginning, the corporate media has toed the NATO agenda on Syria, which is to [manufacture every imaginable lie](#) and accusation against the Syrian government, the Syrian Arab Army, and the people themselves, in order to chase the NATO-GCC-Zionist-Turkish dream of imposing a puppet government in Syria. They have failed.

Eva Bartlett is a freelance journalist and rights activist with extensive experience in the Gaza Strip, where she lived a cumulative three years (from late 2008 to early 2013), arriving by boat as a part of the Free Gaza missions. She documented the 2008/9 and 2012 Israeli war crimes and attacks on Gaza while riding in ambulances and reporting from hospitals. Eva accompanied Palestinian fishers and farmers as they came under intensive fire from the Israeli army. She has been to Syria four times since April 2014 and works to convey the voices of a people suffering under the foreign war on Syria. Her writings can be found on her blog, In Gaza.

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