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Credibility, and how to lose it

Hajrah Mumtaz wrote an excellent piece in *Dawn* over the weekend about [media credibility and how news organizations risk losing this vital piece of their business](#). Threats to media credibility are certainly not unique to Pakistan, but neither are these same threats missing. Also, our media is vulnerable to some of these threats at a time when the stakes are especially high.

Mumtaz mentions two ways that media can lose credibility. The first is when news organizations reduce the size of their staff and resort to ‘outsourcing’ the material for their reports. This can easily result in biased or propaganda pieces getting used in the place of actual reporting.

The second, which Mumtaz says is a more direct threat to Pakistan’s media is manipulated by political agents:

There is another way in which the issue of news credibility crops up, however, and that lies in the influence and biases of the owners of news organisations, and their political links. Media and politics have become intertwined in the past decade: in terms of some media outlets, both print and broadcast, a consistent stance for or against a certain government, or political party, or leader, or even an issue, can clearly be identified. Matters are not helped by rumours that journalists have or can be bought, or not, or put in planted stories, or end up presenting as ‘objective’ news material that is little more than an official press release.

This is fairly clearly a problem already. This blog has found examples recently of major newspapers [parroting political talking points without verifying the claims](#) and [printing anonymous opinion pieces as ‘news.’](#) While FOX News has already gained the reputation of a political propaganda machine in the USA, our own [Shireen Mazari](#) has made quite a reputation for herself at home and in the world, even being called the [“Ann Coulter of Pakistan.”](#)

Unfortunately, the two problems mentioned by Mumtaz are possibly working together for to the detriment of the nation.

The shrinking size of international media organizations makes it more likely that these agencies will look to the news reported by Pakistan’s media for stories and facts. So there is a problem if the stories are politically manipulated and the facts are not verified.

The result will be confusion in the world about what is happening in Pakistan. Eventually, people will stop trusting any information that comes out of our media as tainted by the reputations of these irresponsible media talking heads. Our media, as a result, will not be trusted in the world and people will not know what the real situation in Pakistan is. How would it be otherwise?

Pakistan’s media has many good journalists and excellent editors. These individuals have the ability to prevent this course by continuing to provide quality reports, but also by putting positive pressure on their colleagues to act responsibly and professionally, and to self-police the media and criticize their colleagues when they act outside the lines.

Together, we can make sure that the world not only gets the true story about Pakistan, but that they can *believe* it.

Tags: [Ann Coulter of Pakistan](#), [credibility](#), [Dawn](#), [FOX News](#), [Hajrah Mumtaz](#), [Shireen Mazari](#)

This entry was posted on Monday, February 1st, 2010 at 11:19 am and is filed under [Uncategorized](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can [leave a response](#), or [trackback](#) from your own site.

3 Responses to “Credibility, and how to lose it”

[Aamir Mughal](#) says:
[February 1, 2010 at 12:26 pm](#)

GEO TV: Hamid Mir's Anti Pakistan Reporting.

<http://chagataikhan.blogspot.com/2009/11/geo-tv-hamid-mirs-anti-pakistan.html>

Don't be deceived by these sycophants, time servers and worse creatures on earth like Hamid Mir and his likes they are worse than snakes. On one hand he says that the Pro PPP websites/bloggers

<http://letusbuidpakistan.blogspot.com/2009/11/capital-talk-and-let-us-build-pakistan.html> is creating differences between Geo/Jang Group Journalists and Pakistan army. Whereas Hamid Mir himself has damaged the reputation of Pakistan Army [read the articles below].

Not only the reputation of Army but Mian Nawaz Sharif and PML-N [One source claimed that it was Ejaz Shah who was the head of anti-narcotics force in 1998, when the-then Nawaz Sharif regime tried to involve Asif Ali Zardari in a narcotics case through him. But he refused and later the Nawaz regime booked Zardari in the same fake case through the Punjab police - Why Benazir points finger at IB chief By Hamid Mir Saturday, October 20, 2007

http://www.thenews.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=10696 as well by filing stories without any credible facts [and if with facts then those too based on Biased Corruption Cases registered by Former Senator of PML - Saif ur Rehman (nowadays a proclaimed offender) and allegedly Mr. Ansar Abbasi is also doing the same. NAB Documents, Accountability, Ansar Abbasi & Musharraf's Treason Trial. <http://chagataikhan.blogspot.com/2009/11/nab-documents-accountability-ansar.html>

In his popular talk show 'Capital Talk' (Geo TV) on the night of 5 November 2009, Hamid Mir dedicated almost entire program to criticize the 'Let us build Pakistan' blog as well as the group 'Critical Supporters of Pakistan People's Party' (CSPP). Hamid Mir and his guest Ansar Abbasi alleged that the 'Let us build Pakistan' was being run from the President House, and that an ambassador was the overall in charge of this blog. The 'Capital Talk' and the 'Let us build Pakistan' debate <http://letusbuidpakistan.blogspot.com/2009/11/capital-talk-and-let-us-build-pakistan.html>.

Mir also alleged that the CSPP and the Let us build Pakistan were trying to create differences between Pakistan Army and media. Read Hamid Mir's Article after the video which are very damaging for Pakistan Army. Not only him but Kamran Khan has well has done this. So much so that a Retired Colonel of Pakistan Army has declared [without naming anyone] that such journalists are Fifth Columnists. One such example is: Shaheen Sehabi, Jang Group & Definition of National Interest. <http://chagataikhan.blogspot.com/2009/10/shaheen-sehabi-jang-group-definition-of.html>

VIDEOS OF THE PROGRAM:

COURTESY: <http://www.youtube.com/user/politicssss>

COURTESY: <http://www.youtube.com/user/MrNeopk>

Who is Ilyas Kashmiri? Friday, October 02, 2009

http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=201054

This is with reference to Hamid Mir's report (Sept 20) titled "How an ex-

commando became a terrorist”. It is total disinformation — Ilyas Kashmiri neither had any association with the SSG nor did he serve in the army as a soldier. Being an ex-commando officer, I know that the SSG never indulges in such heinous crimes. It’s a superior professional force of the army composed of responsible officers and men who carry out professional tasks. I would like to add that there is always an attempt by hostile agencies to defame the security forces of Pakistan with a malicious intent. Therefore, newspapers and columnists must refrain from falling prey to these fifth columnists.

Colnel (r) Imam

Ex-SSG officer,

Rawalpindi

How an ex-Army commando became a terrorist By Hamid Mir Sunday,
September 20, 2009

http://www.thenews.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=24626

ISLAMABAD: Once he was a blue-eyed boy of President General Pervez Musharraf. He got a cash award from the president for slitting the throat of an Indian Army officer in the year 2000 but after 9/11, he became a suspected terrorist.

This terrorist was Ilyas Kashmiri, reportedly killed in a US drone attack in North Waziristan last week. US officials claimed that Ilyas Kashmiri was a senior al-Qaeda commander and his death was a huge loss for the militants fighting against the foreign forces in Afghanistan. Very few people know that Ilyas Kashmiri was a former SSG commando of Pakistan Army. He was originally from Kotli area of Azad Kashmir. He was deputed by Pakistan Army to train the Afghan Mujahideen fighting against the Russian Army in mid-80s. He was an expert of mines supplied to Afghan Mujahideen by the US. He lost one eye during the Jihad against Russian invaders and later on he joined Harkat-e-Jihad-e-Islami of Maulvi Nabi Muhammadi.

Ilyas Kashmiri was based in Miramshah area of North Waziristan where he was working as an instructor at a training camp. After the withdrawal of Russian Army from Afghanistan, Ilyas Kashmiri was asked by Pakistani establishment to work with Kashmiri militants. He joined the Kashmir chapter of Harkatul Jihad-i-Islami in 1991. After a few years, he developed some differences with the head of HuJI Qari Saifullah Akhtar. Ilyas Kashmiri created his own 313 Brigade in HuJI. He was once arrested by Indian Army from Poonch area of Indian held Kashmir along with Nasrullah Mansoor Langrial. He was imprisoned in different Indian jails for two years and finally he escaped from there after breaking the jail. His old friend Langrial is still imprisoned in India. Ilyas Kashmiri became a legend after escaping from the Indian jail. It was 1998 when the Indian Army started incursions along the Line of Control and killed Pakistani civilians many times by crossing the border. Ilyas Kashmiri was given the task to attack the Indians from their back. He did it many times. Indian Army killed 14 civilians on February 25, 2000 in Lonjot village of Nakial in Azad Kashmir. Indian commandos crossed the LoC, spent the whole night in a Pakistani village and left early morning. They slit

the throats of three girls and took away their heads with them. They also kidnapped two local girls. The next morning, the heads of the kidnapped girls were thrown towards Pakistani soldiers by the Indian Army.

The very next day of this massacre, Ilyas Kashmiri conducted a guerilla operation against the Indian Army in Nakyal sector on the morning of February 26, 2000. He crossed the LoC with 25 fighters of the 313 Brigade. He surrounded a bunker of Indian Army and threw grenades inside. After one of his fighters Qudratullah lost his life, he was able to kidnap an injured officer of the Indian Army. That was not the end. He slit the throat of the kidnapped officer. He came back to Pakistan with the head of the dead Indian Army officer in his bag and presented this head to top Army officials and later on to the then Army Chief General Pervez Musharraf, who gave him a cash award of rupees one lakh.

The pictures of Ilyas Kashmiri with the head of a dead Indian Army officer in his hands were published in some Pakistani newspapers and he became very important among the Kashmiri militants. Maulana Zahoor Ahmad Alvi of Jamia Muhammadia, Islamabad, issued a fatwa in support of slitting the throats of Indian Army officers. Those were the days when Corps Commander, Rawalpindi, Lt Gen Mehmood Ahmad, visited the training camp of Ilyas Kashmiri in Kotli and appreciated his frequent guerilla actions against the Indian Army. His honeymoon with the Pakistan Army generals was over after the creation of Jaish-e-Muhammad. Gen Mehmood wanted Ilyas Kashmiri to join JeM and accept Maulana Masood Azhar as his leader but the one eyed militant refused to do so. The militants of JeM once attacked the training camp of Ilyas Kashmiri in Kotli but he survived that attack. His outfit was banned by Musharraf after 9/11. He was arrested after an attack on the life of Pervez Musharraf in December 2003. He was tortured during the interrogation.

The United Jihad Council led by Syed Salahuddin strongly protested the arrest of Ilyas Kashmiri and on the pressure of Kashmiri militants, Ilyas Kashmiri was released in February 2004. He was a shattered man after his release. He disassociated himself from the Kashmiri militants and remained silent for at least three years. It was the Lal Masjid operation in July 2007, which totally changed Ilyas Kashmiri. He moved to North Waziristan where he spent many years as a Jihad instructor. This area was full of his friends and sympathisers. He reorganized his 313 Brigade and joined hands with the Taliban but he was never close to al-Qaeda leadership. He attracted many former Pakistan Army officers to join hands with him. The strength of 313 Brigade in North Waziristan was more than 3,000. Most of his fighters were hired from the Punjab, Sindh and Azad Kashmir. It is alleged that he organised many terrorist attacks in different areas of Pakistan, including the assassination of Major General (ret'd) Faisal Alvi in Rawalpindi. Alvi was also from the SSG and he led the first-ever Army operation in North Waziristan in 2004. Kashmiri planned attacks on Alvi on the demand of Taliban in North Waziristan. Sources close to his family have yet not confirmed his death in a US drone attack but there is no doubt that Ilyas Kashmiri was actually a creation of the Pakistani establishment like Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi of the banned LeT. The Pakistani establishment abandoned and arrested most of

these militant leaders without realising that they had followers all over Pakistan and they could create problems for Pakistan anytime. The establishment is still without any policy about all those who were once declared “freedom fighters” and were honored by the top Army officials like Pervez Musharraf.

My only point is this that why should we blame USA when our several TV Anchors for instance Kamran Khan of GEO TV who ‘SUCCESSFULLY’ [Al-Qaeda commander claims responsibility for 9/11 attacks Wednesday, July 23, 2008 Accuses Pakistan of inflicting more damage on his organisation; Mustafa says al-Qaeda men also attacked Danish embassy in Islamabad These comments were made in an interview with Najeeb Ahmed that was broadcast on Monday on Geo TV's Aaj Kamran Khan Kay Saath programme. This was the first detailed interview in five years of a senior al-Qaeda leader.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=16144] interviewed some obscure and concocted Militant Abu Mustafa Al Yazid [What is Al-Qaida ? Aaj Kamran Khan K saath P-1 <http://vidpk.com/14526/What-is-Al-Qaida-?-Aaj-Kamran-Khan-K-saath-P-1/> http://vidpk.com/channel_detail.php?chid=41] and relayed it on GEO TV for creating more problem for Pakistan. How the hell they get such interviews when even the high tech Western Agencies couldn't trace them??? Months after right after 911 Hamid Mir filed a front page Super Headline In Daily Dawn that Osama Bin Laden has 36 Nukes [Hamid Mir wasn't even Dawn Employee not even on contract Daily Dawn, Hameed Haroon, Hamid Mir & Nuclear Bombs <http://chagataikhan.blogspot.com/2009/04/daily-dawn-hameed-haroon-hamid-mir.html> Hamid Mir Calamity & Geo TV.

<http://chagataikhan.blogspot.com/2008/12/hamid-mir-calamity-geo-tv.html>] what was the purpose of such stories which always embarrassed Pakistan. There are several Militants of Northern Areas who used to address crowded Press Conference and getting coverage in every Private TV Channels in Pakistan. Basically this Rat Race amongst TV Channels has ruined the mental peace of Pakistanis. Nobody is saying to ban TV Channels but did anyone ever question the news they present, its veracity, its source, and its background. These TV Channels are keeping alive this “Alleged War On Terror” to make money out of the miseries of People of NWFP, Baluchistan and FATA. Let me quote you a dialogue from a best seller by Late. Harold Robbins

‘The truth,’ I said. ‘Can’t any of you tell the truth? Do you always have to manipulate others doing your dirty work for you when the truth is so much simpler?’

‘That’s show business,’ Guy said glibly.

‘I don’t like it,’ I said.

‘You better get used to it if you’re going to stay in it.’ (from *The Lonely Lady*, 1976)

Despite all this the Editor Jang has the audacity to lecture Pakistanis about “Corruption Free Pakistan” in his editorial

The Editor Daily Jang in his editorial dated 7 Nov 2009

<http://www.jang.com.pk/jang/nov2009-daily/07-11-2009/idaria.htm> [Internet

Edition]is lecturing Pakistani People and Politicians about Corruptions what about CORRUPT AND LIAR Journalists in Jang Group of Newspapers/The News International and GEO TV.

And if that was not enough another Group Editor, The News International i.e. Mr Shaheeh Sehbai [same Newspaper Group] who has nowadays adopted the role of Grand Tomás de Torquemada, the Grand Inquisitor of Spain, and like a bull in a china shop hitting everybody without even bothering to remember [as per his own article] that several leading corrupt journalists/columnists [again as per his own article] are working and writing in Daily Jang.

Shaheen Sehbai on Corruption in the Print Media: The peers, naturally those who come out unscathed and “clean”, should sit down to formulate lists of those who have been publicly demonstrating a lack of intellectual, moral and professional integrity. Big names like Minhaj Barna, Mushahid Hussain, Maleeha Lodhi, Wajid Shamsul Hassan, Nazir Naji, Ataul Haq Qasmi, Ayaz Amir, Hussain Haqqani, Irshad Ahmed Haqqani, Najam Sethi, Nasim Zehra, Jamiluddin Aali and many others who sought or accepted political, diplomatic or government jobs, or joined political parties as activists, should be asked to explain why they did not quit journalism to do so and why they continued to use the profession to get, keep or regain lucrative jobs or positions of power. How do they retain, or claim to retain, their objectivity and credibility, once they have demonstrated their political ambitions. In the least they should have apologised to the profession.

REFERENCE: Who will Bell the Bad, Fat Cats? by Shaheen Sehbai January 5, 2000 REFERENCE: <http://www.chowk.com/articles/4687>

Atta ul Haq Qasmi [condemned by Shaheen Sehbai in 2000 Who will Bell the Bad, Fat Cats? by Shaheen Sehbai January 5, 2000 REFERENCE: <http://www.chowk.com/articles/4687> for corruption but contributing for Corruption Free Jang]

Jang publish Quran and Haidth on its front page and read and listen the audio of Jang Group Journalists and note the abusive language. Do also note in the light of Ansar Abbasi’s claim that he is Islamist Journalist whereas he and his subordinate Ahmed Noorani are involved in wiretapping without court order and in second part of the audio Nazir Naji asks “are you tapping the call to which Noorani says no” [Lies and Islamic Journalism]

The Editor Daily Jang in his editorial dated 7 Nov 2009 <http://www.jang.com.pk/jang/nov2009-daily/07-11-2009/idaria.htm> is lecturing Pakistani People and Politicians about Corruptions what about Abusive AND Criminal Journalists in Jang Group of Newspapers/The News International and GEO TV.

Nazir Naji Abusing Journalist APRIL 19, 2009 . 580 COMMENTS in Featured Articles

<http://pkpolitics.com/2009/04/19/nazir-naji-abusing-journalist/>

Audio is in three part click the link and read the Editor Jang who is advising government on Controlling Corruption whereas forgetting that JANG Group is infested with Corruption.

STOP PRESS

Since Judiciary is restored and you can check PLD that what the Judiciary has to say about Wiretapping and Eavesdropping

In 1997 the Supreme Court directed the Government to seek its permission before carrying out wiretapping or eavesdropping operations; however, the judiciary's directive has been ignored widely. No action was taken during the year 2001 on the case of 12 government agencies accused of tapping and monitoring citizens' phone calls, which has been pending since 1996, and no additional action the case was expected.

Pakistan Country Reports on Human Rights Practices Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor 2003 February 25, 2004
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2003/27950.htm>

The Supreme Court directed the Government to seek its permission before carrying out wiretapping or eavesdropping operations; however, the degree of compliance with this ruling was unclear at year's end.

“The government acted in violation of Article 190 of the constitution, which says all executive and judicial authorities in Pakistan shall act in aid of the Supreme Court. Instead of readily and honestly complying with the Supreme Court verdict in the Judges' case, the prime minister castigated the ridiculed it and implemented it reluctantly in phases. Then there was the allegation of wiretapping of state functionaries, which is also a violation of a fundamental right.”[Dawn 30.1.1997]

Do note the wording “wiretapping/intercepting of anybody not just state officials”
Pakistan Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor 1999 February 23, 2000
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/1999/441.htm>

In 1997 the Supreme Court directed the federal Government to seek the Court's permission before carrying out any future wiretapping or eavesdropping operations. Nonetheless, that same year, a lawyer for a former director of the Intelligence Bureau, charged with illegal wiretapping during Benazir Bhutto's second term in office, presented the Supreme Court with a list of 12 government agencies that still tapped and monitored telephone calls of citizens.

Why these tapes have appeared [if genuine] so suddenly just after Mr Ansar Abbasi [Editor Investigations - The News International/Jang/GEO] surrendered his own plot and “managed to file” a particular story on this surrender??