Kirsty Wark: “Emergency medicine doctor Saleyha Ahsan has been investigating a valuable if traumatic benefit that the Afghan experience might bring to medical training within the NHS at a fake Camp Bastion that treats seriously-looking, but entirely fake battlefield injuries”
Saleyha Ahsan (describing the British Army medical services “HOSPEX” exercises in York): “It’s a method called macro-simulation, replicating exactly the conditions medics will face in the field.”
Saleyha Ahsan: “The principle behind macro simulation is that it’s as close to reality as possible. **Actors and make-up artists mimic even the most severe of injuries**”
Saleyha Ahsan: “In charge of the whole operation is doctor and army brigadier Kevin Beaton. He was my squadron commander in Bosnia and inspired me to study medicine.”
Saleyha Ahsan: “It’s looking quite gruesome already – but it is fake, it’s not real”
“She's a former British Army Captain who served in Bosnia”
“I came out to support the revolution... ...then I worked in the hospital to look after the wounded fighters”

Dr Saleyha Ahsan, speaking about her time in Libya, You Tube video, 2012
“Trauma FX ..are specialist in simulating CBRN [Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear] injuries and conditions”
..we can easily travel international as we are a mobile team and can work in any location

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY

Trauma FX support various military forces internationally, providing our superior services in support of Pre deployment training and specialist combat medical training for assessments and training exercises, we can easily travel international as we are a mobile team and can work in any location.

Trauma FX recently supported US, UK and German Army combat medics in a multinational training exercise in Grafenwoehr, Germany. For a fascinating account into our time supporting the joint forces training event, please see the video on our home page.
Syria crisis: Incendiary bomb victims 'like the walking dead'

A BBC team inside Syria filming for Panorama has witnessed the aftermath of a fresh horrific incident - an incendiary bomb dropped on to a school playground in the north of the country - which has left scores of children with napalm-like burns over their bodies.

Eyewitnesses describe a fighter jet dropping the device, a low explosion, followed by columns of fire and smoke.

Ian Pannell and cameraman Darren Conway's report contains images viewers may find extremely distressing.
Attack occurs Monday 26 August 2013, at Urm Al-Kubra, Aleppo (five days after Ghouta chemical attack)

Syrian fighter jet drops an incendiary bomb containing “something like napalm or thermite”, first on a residential building and then a school playground

"Scores of children with napalm-like burns over their bodies”, over 10 killed

“There were no shrapnel injuries or loss of blood, typical of most aerial bombs”

BBC reporter Ian Pannell and cameraman Darren Conway, in Syria filming for Panorama, record the aftermath as victims arrive at nearby Atareb Hospital

Two British doctors from the charity Hand in Hand for Syria, Rola Hallam and Saleyha Ahsan, take charge of the situation

Full length Panorama special Saving Syria’s Children broadcast a month later features extended footage of the incident
“This footage was first aired on BBC’s ten o’clock news on August 29 2013, just as the UK parliament were debating possible military intervention in Syria. As it happens the motion for intervention was unexpectedly defeated by a narrow majority. If this had not happened the BBC’s footage would unquestionably have served as very timely and useful PR in support of the coming war against Assad.”
Dr Saleyha Ahsan, former British Army Captain

Dr Rola Hallam, executive of British charity Hand in Hand for Syria
“[Dr Rola Hallam’s] father, also a doctor, helped coordinate medical logistics from inside Syria in the early days of the uprising. **He is now involved politically with the Syrian National Council.**”

*Saleyha Ahsan, Medicine as a weapon of war in Syria, Open Security, 6 February 2013*
“Either you defend us or you arm the Syrian Free Army to defend us – you have the choice!"

Dr Mousa al-Kurdi, addressing Foreign Ministers of Turkey, USA and Canada, Friends of Syria summit, Istanbul, 2012
Abdulrahman Obied, Medical Director of Atareb Hospital with Dr Rola Hallam (August 2013)

Iessa Obied, Abdulrahman’s brother. (Facebook, 16 January 2013)

Hand in Hand for Syria executive Dr Rola Hallam (Saving Syria’s Children)
Hand in Hand for Syria logo

Syrian Arab Republic (opposition)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>&quot;Independence flag&quot;[^5]</th>
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<tr>
<td>Use</td>
<td>National flag and ensign</td>
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<td>Proportion</td>
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<td>Adopted</td>
<td>Adopted in 2011–12 by opposition government-in-exile (proportional change from historic flag)[^6]</td>
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<td>Design</td>
<td>A horizontal tricolor triband of green, white, and black, with three red stars charged in the center.</td>
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[^5]: The flag is also known as the "rebel flag".
[^6]: The 2011 flag was inspired by the original flag, including the black color, the white color, and the three red stars.
I have watched the Panorama BBC documentary. Makes for interesting viewing but I think the scene of the school children coming in with the burns was an act.
“They were able to sit down, be touched by others even talk. This is not how a severe burn victim would present. **Most victims:**

- **would be screaming the place down in agony.** Even after treatment and with all sorts of pain drugs they still hurt and still scream.

- would have difficulties with their airways, almost immediately... **This shows them able to speak and breathing very well no obvious signs of respiratory distress like coughing, shallow breathing etc.**”
“Some are shown with skin hanging off *but the flesh beneath is not that convincing* it actually looks like more skin.”
comes to these things. There wasn't doubt about Assad's brutality, by
Syria crisis: Incendiary bomb victims 'like the walking dead', BBC News at Ten, 29 August 2013
Clinical Training on a Grand Scale, Army Medic, 2008.

Feature on the Army Medical Services Training Centre (AMSTC) near York, location of the HOSPEX exercise seen in Newsnight

A simulated burns casualty played by a professional actor
Conflicting accounts of time of alleged incendiary bomb attack

“Around midday on August 26, 2013”
Human Rights Watch, November 2013

“On 26 Aug 2013, at 02:00 pm”
Violations Documentation Center in Syria, October 2013 (VDC quotes alleged witness Mustapha Haid who claims he “heard rumours” about the attack at “3 in the afternoon”)

“The attack happened on the 26th of August at around 5.30pm at the end of the school day.” Ian Pannell, 18 February 2014

“I would say it was around, I don’t know, between three and five, something like that.” Darren Conway, Saving Syria’s Children cameraman, speaking at the Frontline Club, London, 15 October 2014 (The Frontline is withholding video of the event). Conway received an OBE for “services to British broadcast journalism” a few months after Saving Syria’s Children aired.

“At 6 pm yesterday evening, warplanes fired a missile and then sprayed a phosphorus bomb.” Syrian doctor who travelled to Turkey with alleged victims, reported sceptically on website ‘Syria Truths’.

“5:30 to 6 in the evening... ...more or less.” Alleged eye witness Abu Youssef, Youtube, 1 September 2013.

http://bbcpanoramasavingsyriaschildren.wordpress.com
“We the fighters of the Free Syrian Army in the North West areas of the City of Aleppo we declare that we were present in this region in August 2013 and we did not meet any air strike with the substance of Napalm on Urum al Kubra or on any other region in the North West Aleppo countryside and we deny the cheap fabrication of the BBC and of the stations that imitate her because it undermine the credibility of the Free Syrian Army.”

*Former commander of the Al-Tawhid Brigade, based in Aleppo province in August 2013*
Where were Drs Ahsan and Hallam when the crisis began?

“It was a hot, balmy late afternoon on 26 August and I was sitting on the hospital balcony overlooking the olive groves.”

Dr Saleyha Ahsan, Independent, 29 September 2013

“Ummm...we had just come out of the basement of the hospital because a warplane was flying above so we were all advised as we always do to go to the lowest part of the hospitals in case they target it.”

Dr Rola Hallam, Women in the World Summit, April 2017

http://bbcpanoramasingaysiachildren.wordpress.com
Dr Saleyha Ahsan: contradictory accounts of first victim

“The sudden screech of a truck pulling into the hospital courtyard was the only alert we got that a patient had arrived. I ran down the stairs to the sparse “re-sus” room – the patient was an eight-month-old baby.”

The Independent, 29 September 2013

“I felt as if I was having an out of body experience because I couldn’t quite work out what I was seeing, there was a boy, covered in this strange white dust, had wide staring eyes, his clothes were hanging off him, and he had this huge laceration on the side of his face, and his skin looked like it had areas of burn, and he was saying in a very calm voice ‘where shall I go ukhti?’ which means sister in Arabic.”

ABC Radio (Australia), 27 November 2013

http://bbcpanoramасаvingsyriaschildrеn.wordpress.com
Contradictory accounts of baby’s alleged burns

“Then an eight-month-old baby came in with nasty scolds [sic] on his legs.”
Dr Saleyha Ahsan, Romford Recorder, 11 October 2013

“We were working in the emergency department when a baby, a seven month old, came in with 80% burns”
Dr Rola Hallam, Save the Children event, 27 November 2013

http://bbcpanoramasisavingssyriaschildren.wordpress.com
Dr Saleyha Ahsan: contradictory accounts of male victim

I treated five teenage boys: One of them, Mohammed, was so badly burned that his hair had melted. His body still emanated heat. “I want to sleep,” he kept saying.

Foreign Policy, 4 September 2013

One of my patients, Anas Said Ali, 18, was so badly burnt his hair had melted, his body still emanating heat. “I want to sleep,” he kept saying.

The Independent, 29 September 2013

http://bbcpanoramamassavingsyriaschildren.wordpress.com
Dr Saleyha Ahsan: contradictory accounts of female victim

One girl spoke to me in English. I was humbled by her efforts despite her terrible pain. “How bad is my face, ukhti?” Her mother cried by her side. The girl, composed and calm but in obvious pain asked. “Do you think they can fix my face?”

The Independent, 29 September 2013

One girl spoke to me in English. I was humbled by her efforts despite her terrible pain. Her mother cried by her side. “Do you think they can fix her face?”

BMJ blog, 30 September 2013

http://bbcpanoramasavingsyriaschildren.wordpress.com
Conflicting accounts of number of casualties allegedly treated at Atareb Hospital

“This overwhelmed facility in a rebel-held area of northern Syria helped 25 victims, of whom eight died.” From “detailed account” by Dr Saleyha Ahsan, Daily Telegraph, 4 September 2013

“The hospital admitted 30 patients that day.” Ian Pannell, BBC News website, 30 September 2013

“...and then 40 badly-burnt, majority kids, ranging from the ages of 14 to 18 started to descend upon us en masse.” Dr Saleyha Ahsan, ABC Radio (Australia), 27 November 2013

“The bomb hit a school in the village of Orum Alkubra in Aleppo province and approximately 50 of the victims were brought to the nearest hospital.” Website of Hand in Hand for Syria, the UK registered charity featured in the BBC’s reports

Above: Iessa Obied, an employee of Atareb Hospital, Hand in Hand for Syria’s “flagship medical facility”, posing with a shoulder-launched surface-to-air missile, January 2013, one of many such images posted by Mr Obied on Facebook. http://bbcpanoramasavingsyriaschildren.wordpress.com
BBC: Lutfi Arsi “died on his way to hospital in Turkey”

“The other adolescent who kneels up and looks into the camera wearing a t-shirt that reads “Super-9” is fourteen-year-old Luffi Arsi [sic] who was in the playground when the bomb landed. He died on his way to hospital in Turkey.”

Gemma McAleer, BBC Complaints, 2 December 2013
Halep saldırısında yaralanılan Suriyeliler Hatay'a getirildi

Türkiye sınırlarına 10 kilometre uzaklıkta bulunan Suriyenin Idlib kentine bağlı Terip kasabasında okula donnaştırılan binaya yapılan hava saldırısında yaralanın ve vücudlarında yanıklar oluşan 25 Suriyeli yakınlarının yardımlarıyla Türkiye’ye getirildi. (AA)

27 August 2013
Lutfi Arsi, Atareb Hospital, Syria (BBC Saving Syria’s Children)

Lutfii Arsi, Reyhanli State Hospital, Turkey (website of Turkish daily newspaper Hürriyet)
Syria crisis: Incendiary bomb victims ‘like the walking dead’ – Ten O’Clock News, BBC One, 29 August 2013
1. Woman walks unaided to ambulance
2. The woman sits in ambulance
3. After c.10 mile journey to hospital the woman is filmed by the BBC being carried from the ambulance. Two of the men carrying her knew she could walk unaided as they travelled with her (one is seen above, in camouflage).
4. After having cream applied to her face and forearms, the woman is filmed by the BBC, standing unaided.
5. The woman demonstrates that her legs/feet are in good health by stamping on a hard surface.
“The Walkie Talkie can be one of the most important tools used daily on a film set. They can ease communication between the crew, various departments and help Assistant Directors run the set. An Assistant Director without a walkie talkie is like a hockey player without a stick.”
“I have no idea who the man pictured is” - Tom Giles, editor, Saving Syria’s Children, email 22 March 2015
“This video of Robert Stuart is a must see. Let me pin my colours to the mast and say that I am absolutely convinced that the BBC did deliberately and knowingly fake evidence of chemical attacks.”

Craig Murray, former British ambassador, blog post, 9 March 2016
It looks suspiciously like one scene in particular, of people with horrific burns, was staged.

Jonathan Cook, 8 March 2017
“Speaking of atrocity propaganda—very chic these days—the eminent BBC joined the club in 2013, throwing journalistic integrity to the wind with its broadcast of *Saving Syria’s Children*, a documentary that ostensibly showed the aftermath of an incendiary bomb raid. According to the report, the Syrian government used either napalm or thermite to attack schoolchildren in a remote district of Aleppo. The resulting footage, filmed in a nearby hospital, is bizarre in the extreme, with the alleged burn victims clearly taking stage directions from people off-camera. The story was dissected and ultimately exposed as a sham by journalist Robert Stuart, at which point the BBC began removing all traces of the film from YouTube, citing copyright issues. No formal retraction was ever made, to the BBC’s everlasting shame.”
Insight: Saving Syria's Children - The Worst Case Of Fake News?
Victor Lewis-Smith is a British film, television and radio producer, a TV and restaurant critic and newspaper columnist. He is Executive Producer of the ITV1 National Food & Drink Awards.[1] He is a music graduate from the University of York.[2] He is a long-standing contributor to Private Eye Magazine.
@bbcpanorama. Will someone in your office contact me about the possible fake Syria programme you made? Or I will terminate my bbc contract

10:01 AM - 23 Feb 2017

Victor Lewis-Smith
@TVOFFAL

I have a contract to make a tx pilot for BBC R4 comedy. That gets ripped up tonight if editor Panorama fails to contact me

@bbcpanorama

11:23 AM - 23 Feb 2017

Victor Lewis-Smith
@TVOFFAL
Victor Lewis-Smith
@TVOFFAL

Editor of @bbpanorama contacted me. We are talking on Monday. Hmmm
6:24 PM - 23 Feb 2017

Victor Lewis-Smith
@TVOFFAL

Editor of Panorama has written. Would rather put her response in writing later today. How about her making the unedited rushes available?
10:47 AM - 27 Feb 2017

Victor Lewis-Smith
@TVOFFAL

Just spoke to Robert Stewart @cerumol. His brilliant research into the @bbpanorama fake Syria doc spurs me to make a cinema doc about it
3:47 PM - 27 Feb 2017
Saving Syria’s Children - Panorama Statement

On 20th September, 2013, Panorama broadcast “Saving Syria’s Children.” Travelling with British doctors, it sought to illustrate the devastating impact of the war on children. Filmed in the north of the country, the doctors witnessed the aftermath of the bombing of a school by a suspected incendiary device and experienced medical facilities constantly under attack – both war crimes under international law. Eleven people died in the incident and more than twenty were injured. The BBC subsequently returned to meet some of the children affected, who were still being treated for severe burns. Unicef now estimates that in total tens of thousands of children have been killed in the war in Syria. Human Rights Watch have documented the use of incendiary bombs by pro-government forces in Syria.

It remains an incredibly important piece of journalism, fearlessly reported by Ian Pannell and Darren Conway. It represents the very best of the BBC – reporting the facts, always with due impartiality. A handful of people have raised questions about the programme’s authenticity, including RT in 2014. The BBC complained to Ofcom about the RT report, and Ofcom found that RT had indeed breached rule 2.2 of the Ofcom code – which states that “Factual programmes of items or portrayals of factual matters must not materially mislead the audience.”
@racheljupp editor of @bbcpanorama Ok. As promised, I’ve torn up my BBC contract. More will undoubtedly follow.

vimeo.com/206285524

7:10 PM - 1 Mar 2017

Likes: 34
Retweets: 33
Followers: Victor Lewis-Smith
@ceremol and I are talking about Associated-Rediffusion producing a crowdfunded theatrical doc about @BBCPanorama Syria debacle (and more) twitter.com/anonymous4835/...