

Report reveals British media coverage biased against Palestinians

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London, May 31 (RHC)-- British media coverage of the recent Israeli aggression against the Gaza Strip was “biased” against Palestinians and “skewed” public impressions, according to a new report. The Muslim Council of Britain's Centre for Media Monitoring (CfMM) analyzed the British media coverage of the conflict in a 44-page report entitled “Media Reporting on Palestine 2021.”

CfMM stated that during the 11-day war, there were 62,400 online print articles and 7,997 television broadcasts in the UK reporting on the incidents. The report has revealed that while there were some examples of balanced coverage, the overall narrative was unbalanced due to “skewed language, misleading headlines and problematic framing.”

Rizwana Hamid, director of CfMM and co-author of the report, told the Middle East Eye that the “overwhelming amount of complaints” about “British media’s biased coverage of events in Palestine” aligned with the analysis and evidence of the monitoring organization.

The report found that half of the broadcast media clips in the UK between May 7 and 10 referred to the situation in Sheikh Jarrah as an “eviction” or “real estate dispute”, which justifies the forced displacements, while the Israeli action were in contravention of international law.

Regarding Israeli police brutality against Palestinian protestors and worshippers at the al-Aqsa Mosque compound, the investigation highlighted numerous examples of media sources utilizing terminology such as “clashes,” “conflict,” “scuffles,” and “skirmishes” to suggest equal blame.

“As far as language is concerned, terms such as ‘evictions’ mask the illegal forced removals and expulsion of Palestinians from their homes,” Hamid said adding that “references to ‘conflict’ and ‘clashes’ try to equalize what is in effect a battle between David and Goliath”.

CfMM also cited several news reports speaking of an “intifada”, which it said played into “fear-mongering” and “framing Palestinians as violent aggressors”.

The report also addressed an article published in The Sun on May 12 titled, “Fifteen kids massacred in Israel-Hamas conflict as Netanyahu warns ‘we will inflict blows you couldn’t dream of,’” in which the writer had failed to mention that 14 of the 15 children killed were Palestinian.

A May 17 report in iNews wrote in its headline, “42 died over the weekend,” without mentioning that all of those dead people were Palestinians in Gaza. The research also pointed out a highly circulated BBC bulletin in which the Palestinians were referred as having “died” while stating that Israelis “were killed”.

Some of media also referred to the Israeli forces as the “military”, while referring to Palestinian groups as “militants”, which implies illegitimacy.

“The media narrative erases the history, context, and legitimacy of the Palestinian cause by presenting Palestinians as the aggressors and Israel as acting in self-defense”, Hamid told MEE. “In print media, bias is condoned and in our experience, unless there is a clear-cut case of an inaccuracy, the regulators fall on the side of newspapers,” she added.

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