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## **Iranian news agency accuses Baha'is of genetic warfare research, links to Covid-19**

Sen's Daily (29.03.2020) – <https://bit.ly/3cHuxfV> – State-sponsored media in Iran have been repeating a story that appears to have been invented by the Islamic Republic News Agency, TNews and popularized by the Young Journalists Club, a government agency affiliated with the state broadcaster. Their report is dated March 26, 2020. It was repeated the following day by Enqelaab News, Ghatreh News, Khabar Farsi, Mosalas Online, Mashreq News and others.

The story is a bit of a hodge-podge, which I will paraphrase. In the first place, Baha'is at Stanford are supposed to be preparing biological weapons. This follows a story on March 23

(in English), citing the coordinator of the fight against Covid-19, General Nasrollah Fathian: "There is even speculation that this virus has been created to specifically target the Iranian population given their genetic traits. But for now, these theories are all being examined."

Another story from the same government agency (YJC) a few days earlier, claiming that the Corona virus was probably an American weapon, linking this to an 'Iranian Genome Project' at Stanford University. The project actually exists and is studying the genomes of Iranian-Americans in the United States.

Thus far, we have a bit of absurd anti-American propaganda being repurposed by bringing in Baha'is working at Stanford, "who are likely to be of Jewish origin" which "makes it likely that the Corona (Covid-19) pandemic is a biological attack."

But what if there are no Baha'is or Jews working in the Stanford project? The YJC authors have thought ahead, and insert here a long history of the crypto-Jews of medieval Europe and Iran, who were forced to convert to Christianity or Islam but retained their Jewish identities in secret. This is true, but how is it relevant? The implicit argument is that the lack of evidence to support the YJC story is because the Jews involved are hiding their identities. And being Jews they must be Baha'is.

The next part of this rambling story refers to large-scale Jewish conversions to the Baha'i Faith in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and claims that most Iranian Baha'is are of Jewish origin. The latter claim is not true, and not new here: it is one of the links between anti-bahaism and anti-semitism. The JYC story quotes something from Khomeini about the dangers of "falling into the hands of a few Jews who have become Baha'is."

Then there's a section on supposed Baha'is in senior levels of

the Pahlavi government (the Shah deposed by the 1979 Revolution). These often-recycled claims have been debunked thoroughly by Adib Masumian in 'Debunking the Myths.' But even without that historical knowledge, any reader is bound to ask, if Baha'is were so prominent in the Shah's government, why were Baha'is so persecuted under the Shah's government? Why were their schools closed, why were pogroms allowed? How could Baha'is be at once so powerful and powerless in Iran?

One of these supposed Baha'is was Parviz Sabeti, head of one of SAVAK's divisions and the child of Bahai parents, who became a Muslim while in secondary school. SAVAK, the secret police, was one of the Shah's tools in monitoring and suppressing the Baha'is. Parviz Sabet left Iran at the time of the Revolution, and according to the JYC has a daughter, Pardis, who is a Professor of Genetics at Harvard. Pardis Christine Sabeti, daughter of the SAVAK official, is indeed a brilliant geneticist and one of the authors of 'Outbreak Culture: The Ebola Crisis and the Next Epidemic.'

So now it all comes together: Stanford University has a project sequencing the genes of Iranian Americans. Harvard University has a geneticist whose grandparents on her father's side were Baha'is in Iran, who is dedicated to fighting epidemics, so clearly, Iranian Baha'is are preparing biological weapons to target themselves... I mean, to target Iranians. Or Jews. Or they are Baha'is but really Jews targeting Iranians, or something like that.

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