



Princess Rym Ali Receives Honorary Degree from Coventry University



Her Royal Highness Princess Rym Ali, founder of the Jordan Media Institute (JMI), was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Letters by the United Kingdom's Coventry University for her contribution to the field of journalism and media, and her role in establishing the institute.

Her Royal Highness received the degree during the university's annual graduation ceremony that was held at Coventry Cathedral on November 22 and was attended by a number of distinguished academics and intellectuals. More than 7000 students will be awarded degrees from the renowned university during this week.

Professor Madeleine Atkins, vice-chancellor of Coventry University, welcomed Her Royal Highness and expressed her pleasure to award honorary degrees to individuals who excelled in their field in such a way as to be worthy of recognition, hoping that Coventry students will be

inspired by the drive and commitment those individuals have shown throughout their careers.

HRH Princess Rym Ali is a graduate of Columbia University's School of Journalism and holds a MPhil in Political Science from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris, and a MA in English Literature from the Sorbonne. She also worked for a number of international broadcasters including CNN, and has been the Executive Commissioner of the Royal Film Commission of Jordan since 2005. In July 2011, HRH Princess Rym Ali was awarded the "Best International Journalist" prize at the 32nd Ischia International Journalism Awards Ceremony in Italy.

Coventry University is one of the leading universities in the United Kingdom and has been rated the 'Modern University of the Year' by The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2014.



Conference on Freedom, Media and Religion



The Jordan Media Institute (JMI) and the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies (RIIFS) organized a conference entitled “Freedom, Media and Religion,” in cooperation with Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Liberty, and SKeyes Center for Media and Cultural Freedom.

The conference, which was attended by 150 experts and journalists, discussed a number of topics including the religion-secularism conundrum and its impact on the freedom of press, religion and the freedom of expression, managing pluralistic societies, as well as humor and religion in the media.

“Religion is an effective element in all societies, including those that define themselves as secular and non-religious,” HE Professor Kamel Abu Jaber, Director of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies (RIIFS) said during the opening ceremony. “It is an essential component –despite attempts to deny this – that shapes the identity of humans and societies,” he added.

Abu Jaber noted that the purpose of linking humor to religion is not in any way an attempt to undervalue the role of religion and its effects on our lives, but to emphasize the humane side of religion, highlighting the importance of religion as a tool that help people endure the burdens of life and fortify them with ethics and morals. “But this does not mean a person should stay grim in his or her actions and relations,” he added.

Dr. Basim Tweissi, Dean of JMI, said it is important to highlight three facts: The first is that culture is more important than politics

and economy, and this manifests in restoring of the unity of the Arab culture. The second is the significant role of the societies’ soft-power, and this lies within the power of media as the backbone of societies. And the third is political extremism that agitated stagnant religious feelings and transformed some media into tools in the hands of the extremists and religious groups.

Dr. Tweissi insisted on the need for greater efforts to promote diversification in the Arab media which requires enhancing the coverage of religion related issues and put an end to the hate speech. This requires developing professional skills to ensure more freedom and less use of religion for political purposes in the media.

Mr. Ralf Erbel, the representative of Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Liberty in Amman, said that the reason for divide in Arab societies is not a lack of trust of between citizens and regimes, but a lack of trust among citizens themselves, noting that the relationship between religion, secularism and the media, which has largely failed to provide a platform for dialogue, communication, and freedom. He added that without freedom of expression, it is not possible to create and nurture a pluralistic society.

Mr. Ayman Mhanna, executive director of SKeyes Center for Media and Cultural Freedom, said that the media completely lacks freedom of expression in some countries while this freedom is protected by law in other countries, which still face hidden pressures from state bodies. Therefore, it is important to neutralize the influence of the military and religious institutions on investigative journalism.



Sebastian Visits JMI

As part of his continuous efforts to support and promote a culture of debate and free speech, Tim Sebastian, the renowned British journalist, visited the Jordan Media Institute (JMI) accompanied by Mai El Sherbiny, a popular Egyptian TV presenter and news anchor, and gave a lecture to JMI's Masters students highlighting his years of experience as a journalist as well as his debate moderating skills.

Sebastian underlined the role of journalism in bringing about change and connecting the different levels of society, adding that a journalist has a guardian role in his society, one which entrusts him or her with a heavy responsibility. He noted that there are many examples of journalists in the Arab world who succeeded in pushing the boundaries in order to reveal the truth.

Sebastian also discussed the concept of free debate and the significant role it plays in enhancing freedom of speech, expanding knowledge and spreading awareness in the community on the most pressing local and global issues. "Free debate is the way towards change, although this change does not happen overnight. Stepping forward is what we aim to achieve," he added. "Hard work, research, preparation and fact finding are the most important tools for journalists who seek professionalism. Documented facts are the backbone of journalism," Sebastian stressed.

Tim Sebastian, who holds a BA in Modern Languages from Oxford University and the author of eight novels, worked as a journalist for BBC Television and reported from more than 25 countries over a 30-year period. He is best known for being the first host of the British Broadcast Corporation's (BBC)'s flagship interview programme "Hardtalk", for which he was twice named "Interviewer of the Year" by the Royal Television Society. Sebastian also won several awards in the field of media and journalism.

Following the political and social unrest in Egypt and Tunisia in early 2011, Tim founded the "Doha Debates" and the "New Arab Debates". These debates are currently held in Egypt, Tunisia and Jordan.



JMI Hosts Dr. Khaled Toukan

As part of the "Media and Topical issues" Master's course, Dr. Khaled Toukan, Chairman of the Jordan Atomic Energy Commission, visited the Jordan Media Institute (JMI) and delivered a lecture to the students on the Jordanian nuclear programme.

Dr. Toukan explained the relation between the implementation of the Jordanian nuclear programme and reducing electricity generation costs, stressing on the fact that having different sources of energy protects the nation against shocks, in light of the unprecedented rise in oil prices, as well as the irregular pumping of Egyptian gas to Jordan, which puts additional burdens on the budget.

He added that the nuclear programme will be linked to other major strategic projects such as a water desalination project, which will need half of the kingdom's electricity production.





Dr. Toukan indicated that the energy sector, which poses a threat to the national economy under the current circumstances, is a serious concern for successive Jordanian governments. He added that this project, which is expected to be completed by 2021, will create thousands of job opportunities for Jordanians.

In response to some concerns related to this programme, Dr. Toukan reassured that Jordan has taken into consideration the environmental standards and general safety measures according to international best practices, noting that the project will use Khirbet Al-Samra wastewater for the cooling process instead of using safe drinking water.

“The world is still using nuclear energy as an alternative source of clean energy,” Dr. Toukan said, pointing out that more than 70 nuclear power plants are currently under construction in different parts of the world.

MoU on Demographic Communication

The Higher Population Council (HPC) and the Jordan Media Institute (JMI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation in demographic and development issues. The MoU was signed by Dr. Sawsan Al-Majali, HPC Secretary General, and Ms. Nada Doumani, member of JMI's Board of Directors.

Dr. Al Majali highlighted the importance of implementing joint initiatives with JMI to increase awareness on the demographic opportunity, and the impact of demographic issues on the different development sectors, emphasizing JMI's role as a scientific reference in communication and media policies. Dr. Al Majali noted that the MoU falls within the mandate of the Higher Population Council as a national reference on development-related demographic issues and the concerned body on demographic policy and strategy development, including those related to media and communication, advocacy and awareness raising.



Ms. Doumani said the agreement came as a result of the cooperation between the two sides, with JMI looking forward to contribute in building the capacities of the local media in demographic communication, especially since Jordan is approaching the phase of the demographic opportunity. She added that JMI will support the media through training, capacity building, research as well as providing consultancies to the implementing bodies.

The MoU, which will be put into practice next year through a joint executive plan, includes initiatives in demographic communication and the demographic opportunity, and, therefore, HPC will be implementing regular events on these issues for JMI's faculty and students.

According to the MoU, JMI will take into consideration the demographic dimension when it plans graduation projects, research, studies, reports and media programs presented by students and trainees. Furthermore, the institute will develop scientific research in demographic policies from the communication and media perspective, and conduct surveys about the demographic issues with greater emphasis on the demographic opportunity.



Enhancing Media Coverage of Religious Affairs

Jordan Media Institute (JMI) has organized a workshop on media coverage of religious affairs in cooperation with the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies (RIIFS) and the Samir Kassir Foundation, supported by Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Liberty in Amman. During the opening of this workshop, Dr. Basim Tweissi, the Acting Dean of the Jordan Media Institute, stated that JMI is now focusing on specialized media coverage and quality of information and news on different aspects including religious affairs for being a highly sensitive issue to report.



Dr. Tweissi added during the workshop that was attended by HE Professor Kamel Abu Jaber, Director of RIIFS, that this workshop comes in line with JMI's goals and objectives of raising the capacities and professionalism of journalists as well as improving the level of media coverage in religious affairs.

Mr. Marwan Al Husayni, Media, Activities and Conferences Specialist at RIIFS said that this workshop contained a practical part represented in meeting 150 experts in media and religion, during which a wide range of intellectual issues were discussed.

This workshop was also attended by the journalist and trainer, Ms. Sawsan Zaideh, along with Dr. Salim Abdul-Rahim and Dr. Sakher Khasawneh who offered practical models of media coverage in religious affairs in the Arab world.

Workshop on Enhancing Media Reporting on Elections

A training workshop on enhancing media reporting on student council elections was organized in the Jordan Media Institute (JMI). The workshop comes as a part of a one year project funded by the European Commission (EC) and in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

The training, which was attended by 28 media and journalism students from Yarmouk, Petra and Zarqauniversities, aimed at raising the students' awareness on student council elections, training them on campaign planning skills as well as gaining support through communication and media. It also discussed debate moderating skills relating to controversial issues, hate speech and its destructive effect on public interest, as well as encouraging students to take responsible decisions.

The workshop further covered a number of topics and activities on the techniques of media campaign preparation and the related ethical standards, in addition to election monitoring and the best use of social media and social platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

At the end of the workshop, the participants drafted a set of recommendations for developing student council elections, highlighting their constructive roles in instilling participation and transparency values in life on campus.

JMI held the three day workshop in recognition of the student councils' role in qualifying students for participating in democratic life and empowering them with positive communication tools and techniques to reduce the acts of violence that have recently erupted in Jordanian universities.





Workshop on New Media in Journalism

A training workshop on employing new media in journalism was organized in the Jordan Media Institute (JMI). The four day workshop was attended by 11 students from the Institute of Modern Media at Al Quds University in Abu Dis.

The workshop discussed a number of topics including an introduction to social media, social media strategies, creating appropriate content, websites and search engines, content management of social media, photography basics, smart phones video and photo applications as well as creating audio slide-shows. The workshop also covered social media tools such as twitter, facebook and linkedin.



As part of the event, the participants had the chance to visit the Jordan Media City (JMC), Roya TV, Al Ghad newspaper and meet Jumana Ghneimat, Editor-in-Chief of Al Ghad newspaper. Ghneimat provided detailed information on the history of the newspaper, its operations and the different roles of the journalists.

“The workshop provided new and important information that helped me understand how to use new media in journalism,” said Israa Dar Hassan, a participant in the workshop. “This will help me pass my message to a larger audience,” she added.

Jaafar Kanas, a student from the Palestinian city of Jenin also commended on the workshop and thanked JMI and the trainers for “this distinguished event”.

JMI provides specialized training programmes in Journalism to expand the knowledge base of journalists and students and help to furnish their skills using latest technologies.

Alumni Testimonials

Interned at Al Arabia news channel upon graduation and is now a Multimedia Producer with Skynews Arabia. She covered the Feb 17th anniversary of the Libyan revolution from Tripoli and Benghazi, February to March of 2013.



Nosheen Al Kilani

“The fact that one can obtain a master’s degree in one year in an intensive program was very practical to me. One of the greatest opportunities the Jordan Media Institute offered was the internship program that was like a wide open gate to work opportunities of the same professional calibre and distinguished journalistic competence”.

Graduated in 2010 as part of the first in-take. He’s the Media and Public Relations Spokesman at the Jordan Industrial Estates Company. Mohammad received a prize for his breast cancer coverage.



Mohammad Al-Dwairi

“Jordan Media Institute added a lot to me; I learnt working under pressure and within a team, it also strengthened my research skills, taught me how to collect information in an orderly manner, as well as refining my skills as a journalist. JMI was a start point that I’m extremely proud of”.

December Calendar:

December 4, 2013:

- JMI organizes a lecture presented by Nisreen Abu Salha on the role of media in covering “persons with disabilities” news.
- JMI hosts Dr. As'ad Abdul Rahman, member of the Palestinian National Council to present a lecture on the Israeli-Palestinian political negotiations.

December 24th, 2013:

- A lecture delivered by Dr. Sawsan Al-Majali, HPC Secretary General, on demographic opportunity.



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