

Press release: 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence

On 25 November 2018, the international community in Palestine launches a joint campaign “#HearMeToo: Voices against Violence” to mark the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence in Palestine. Civil society organizations and media outlets also join this national initiative to end violence against women and girls. The 16 Days campaign, annually commemorated worldwide, commences on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and lasts until 10 December, the Human Rights Day.

Women and girls from all corners of the world continue to experience violence and abuse. And because such acts are often overlooked and invisible to many, the survivors are routinely shamed into silence. Tragically, violence against women and girls is mainly perpetrated by men close to them, such as intimate partners and family members. In addition, violence is taking an increasing number of forms – ranging from verbal and sexual harassment in the streets to domestic violence and femicide in the worst-case scenario.

Violence against women and girls is a serious challenge in Palestine as well. As the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women indicated in her report following her visit to Palestine in 2016, violence against women in Palestine occurs both in private and public spheres and women suffer from multiple sources of violence including from the Israeli occupation, whether directly or indirectly, and also from the tradition and culture, with embedded patriarchal social norms and outdated legal frameworks.

Moreover, the protracted humanitarian crisis in Gaza, particularly because of the unceasing blockade, has exacerbated gender-based violence in all its forms, including sexual violence, domestic violence and child marriage. According to the Gender-based Violence (GBV) Sub-Cluster in Palestine, cases related to sexual violence are further under-reported due to stigma, lack of capacity and attitudes of service providers as well as concerns over safety and security of both the survivor and service providers.

The silence over violence against women and girls is usually reinforced by a non-supportive legal system that fails to criminalize domestic violence. In many countries, including Palestine, the applicable penal laws do not criminalize the acts of domestic violence, which stems from a traditional belief that family issues should be managed within the boundaries of the family. The International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) Palestine Report reveals that 1 in 4 Palestinian men reported witnessing their mother being beaten by their father or a male relative during their childhood, while 63 per cent of Palestinian men agreed that a woman should tolerate violence to keep the family together.

Recently, however, as a result of the strong advocacy of civil society organizations and women’s movements from various parts of the world, many

countries, including some Arab States, have begun to adopt specific legislation to respond to family violence. Palestine is in the final stage of the review of the Family Protection Bill, which is expected to be shortly submitted for consultations and to the President for endorsement. The Family Protection Bill is expected to provide measures to prevent and combat violence, as well as due protection, reparation, and empowerment of survivors of violence, while holding perpetrators accountable for their acts. The endorsement of the Family Protection Bill will be a critical milestone in the journey towards ending violence against women and girls in Palestine. The real success, however, will come only with proper implementation and translation of the commitments embedded within the bill through responsive policies, services, and practices. To ensure that the Family Protection Bill passes with the full support of civil society, the civil society should be consulted on any amendments to the texts.

It is important that national and international stakeholders continue and expand their financial commitment to combat violence against women and girls in Palestine. Various actors have been working together to finance programmes aiming at ending violence against women (EVAW). Currently, EVAW programmes in Palestine are generously funded by the Palestinian Government, UN Agencies, International development partners such as Canada, Sweden, Italy, Netherlands, the European Union, Spain, Belgium, Norway, Switzerland, Britain, Denmark, Japan, and others.

Violence against women cannot be eradicated without investing in gender equality. Therefore, it is also crucial to financially support the continuous efforts of the government and civil society organizations towards the effective implementation of the Concluding Observations of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Committee, which includes a recommendation to give high priority to the adoption of the Family Protection Bill, to ensure gender equality and realize women's human rights in Palestine, and a recommendation to narrow and close the pay gap.

Let us unite to end violence against women and girls and provide a safe and just place where survivors of violence can speak up and seek justice. We are all responsible for shifting the narrative from blaming the survivors to ensuring the accountability of perpetrators, and for providing preventive measure such as the Family Protection Bill and the revision of the Labor Law through the gender lens.

The international community stands ready to support the Palestinian Government as it works towards creating a legal, policy and cultural environment that recognizes women as equal members of society and valuable contributors to the development of Palestine, who deserve a life free from violence.

END.

News story: UK to benefit from new 'project manager' degree apprenticeship

The four year scheme will create project managers for any industry, not just nuclear, equipping people with an internationally recognised project management qualification and a Bachelor of Science degree.

The development of the apprenticeship was led by Sellafield Ltd, with support from high profile companies like British Airways, BBC, British Telecom, Rolls Royce and BAE Systems.

The Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills, Anne Milton, said:

It is fantastic news that the project manager apprenticeship standard is now up and running.

It will give people of all ages and backgrounds the chance to demonstrate their potential and learn important leadership skills. They can then in turn use those skills to support businesses across the country to grow.

The University of Cumbria (who lead the Project Academy for Sellafield), Cranfield and the University of Greenwich provided the support of academia.

John Oliver, Sellafield Ltd Projects Director, said:

This brand new qualification demonstrates that Sellafield Ltd is leading the way in developing project skills for the UK.

To have global companies looking to Sellafield Ltd and the University of Cumbria to help to develop their project managers, shows that Cumbria and the UK remain at the forefront of project education and skills.

Project delivery is a key part of our mission of making Sellafield safer, sooner, and the skills are required to support our 100 year decommissioning programme.

The academy is just one of the interventions we have made to create the next generation of project professionals, for Cumbria and the UK.

Rob Nitsch CBE, Chief Operating Officer for the Institute for Apprenticeships, said:

This is an excellent example of the sort of higher level degree apprenticeship that employers have been calling for and stands to make a substantive contribution to filling this skills gap – project managers take on a great deal of responsibility and therefore require first rate training.

Congratulations to the trailblazing employers who played a leading role in developing this apprenticeship.

The Project Academy for Sellafield was launched with University of Cumbria in April 2016 to help increase project capability across the country.

You can find the latest prospectus here [project academy prospectus](#)

Wesley Robinson from Sellafield Ltd led the development of the project manager degree apprenticeship.

He said:

The approval of the 'project manager' degree apprenticeship is significant news for the project management profession.

As chair of the project management employer development group I am extremely proud that within three years we have produced both a level 4 and a degree level apprenticeship in project management, made possible by the dedication of companies involved in the group and the support of our Government advisors and the Association for Project Management.

For further information on the project manager degree apprenticeship visit the institute for apprenticeships website or email project.academy@sellafieldsites.com

[News story: Overspeed at Sandy South Junction](#)

At around 14:32 hrs on 19 October 2018, an LNER service from Aberdeen to London's King's Cross passed through an emergency speed restriction of 20 mph at approximately 120 mph (193 km/h).

The emergency speed restriction had been applied at around 13:50 hrs on the previous day because track maintenance staff had found a defect (a crack) in a crossing, part of a set of points. Marker boards and associated automatic warning system (AWS) magnets were in place to provide warning of the

emergency speed restriction and denote where the restriction commenced and terminated. The driver of the train had not received any notification of the existence of the emergency speed restriction prior to the journey.

No injuries were caused and no damage was recorded to the train, which continued to London King's Cross.

Our investigation will establish the sequence of events. It will also consider:

- factors influencing the actions of the driver
- the rules and procedures applicable to the application, implementation and advanced communication of speed restrictions, including the ways in which train drivers are made aware of the existence of emergency speed restrictions
- any relevant underlying management factors

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry or by the industry's regulator, the [Office of Rail and Road](#).

We will publish our findings, including any safety recommendations, at the conclusion of our investigation; these will be available on our RAIB website.

You can [subscribe](#) to automated emails notifying you when we publish our reports.

[News story: Bryan Sanderson confirmed as Chairman of the Low Pay Commission \(LPC\)](#)



[Bryan Sanderson](#) has today (Tuesday 27 November 2018) been confirmed as the Chairman of the Low Pay Commission (LPC). He will take up his role with effect from 1 January 2019 having previously served for 2 years as interim Chair.

Mr Sanderson is currently trustee of several charities, an Emeritus Governor of the LSE and has continuing business interests.

The independent LPC is made up of employers, worker representatives and labour market experts – and provides recommendations annually to the government about National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage rates.

Prior to Bryan's current role, he was a Managing Director and CEO of BP Chemicals. He was the Chairman at Standard Chartered Bank, Northern Rock, the Learning and Skills Council and BUPA. Bryan has more than 40 years' experience in the energy, chemicals and financial sectors.

Published 27 November 2018

[Press release: Predatory mortgage support boss disqualified by the courts](#)

Daljit Kaur Dhillon (42), from Sutton Coldfield, appeared at the High Court in Birmingham on 13 September 2018 where an order was made to disqualify her from being a company director for nine-and-a-half years. She was also ordered her to pay costs of £12,000.

Known by a variety of names, including Kareena Kapoor, Lisa Dhillon and Daljit Kaur, Ms Dhillon was the director of three companies: Repossession Management Bureau Ltd, RMB Assets Ltd and OM Payments Ltd.

The companies offered financial assistance to people with mortgage arrears but clients complained that they were unaware of the exorbitant fees they charged and following an investigation by the Insolvency Service, the companies were [wound-up in the High Court](#) in September 2015.

Investigators found the companies were formed after a previous business, Red2Black Ltd, ceased trading following an investigation by another government agency. This investigation led to the director of Red2Black, Gurpreet Singh Chadda (the former husband of Daljit Dhillon), being given a Final Notice and record fine of nearly £1m.

The companies targeted people facing the threat of having their homes repossessed and under the guise of 'protecting' the equity, they would take out a charge on the properties. However, the companies failed to adequately inform clients of the amount of fees being charged or that the charge secured the indebtedness of the client. And when the property was sold, the companies would use the charge to extract grossly excessive fees for which no record

was maintained to support the amount of work that had purportedly been undertaken. In addition, there was a lack of transparency in that representatives of the companies used false names, which prevented clients from determining who they were dealing with.

Investigators found that Repossession Management Bureau and RMB Assets held charges worth just under £4 million over properties belonging to 97 clients. Together, the two companies had a trade income of more than £1.2 million of which just over £1.1 million was paid out for the benefit of Daljit Dhillon.

The companies were also found to have charged VAT on invoices despite submitting nil VAT returns to the authorities.

Daljit Dhillon was declared bankrupt in June 2016 on the petition of the Official Receiver as liquidator of the three companies, after she failed to repay £353,550 worth of void transactions back to the companies. As a result of further claims made in his capacity as liquidator, the Official Receiver has lodged debts of over £1.5 million in Ms Dhillon's bankruptcy and has recouped a further £40,000 from a former sales agent.

Helen Morten, Deputy Official Receiver for the Insolvency Service, said:

Daljit Dhillon set out specifically to mislead members of the public who were in a vulnerable financial position for her own considerable personal gain. The court's decision to disqualify her shows the seriousness with which this type of cynical financial service activity is viewed.

Notes to editors

Daljit Kaur Dhillon is of Sutton Colefield and her date of birth is June 1975.

Company registration numbers:

- Repossession Management Bureau Ltd – 08710372
- RMB Assets Ltd – 09185563
- OM Payments Ltd – 08190869

Amit Gupta of St Philips Chambers appeared as Counsel for the Insolvency Service and Christopher Snell of New Square Chambers appeared as Counsel on behalf of the defendant.

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service administers the insolvency regime, investigating all compulsory liquidations and individual insolvencies (bankruptcies) through the Official Receiver to establish why they became insolvent. It may also use powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK. In addition, the agency authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, deals with disqualification of directors in corporate failures, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).