



JOURNALISTS SAFETY WORKSHOP

Newsletter by Faculty of Humanities
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Chief Patron: Dr. Altaf Ullah Khan
Chief Editor: Syed Muhammad Saqib



Faculty of Humanities, Forman Christian College (A Chartered University), in collaboration with Department of Journalism and Media Studies, Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway, hosted a three-day workshop on Journalists Safety. Starting on March 14th, the goal of the workshop is to provide journalists with the necessary knowledge and abilities to protect themselves in hazardous situations, and also to cope with the emotional consequences that may follow such encounters.

Journalists play a crucial role in the dissemination of information and holding those in power accountable. However, this role can come at a cost to their physical and mental safety. Physical safety for journalists is paramount. Journalists often put themselves in dangerous situations to cover stories, particularly in conflict zones or areas with high levels of violence. Without proper protection, journalists can be subjected to harassment, assault, kidnapping, or even murder. Ensuring the physical safety of journalists is essential to protect their lives and allow them to continue to report on important issues.

Journalists often find themselves in the midst of violent situations such as war zones, riots, and protests. In these situations, their mental safety becomes even more important because they are exposed to high levels of stress, trauma, and danger. Journalists may witness violence, injury, death, and destruction, which can have a profound impact on their mental health and well-being.

If journalists are not equipped to handle the psychological toll of such experiences, it can lead to serious mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, and PTSD. This can not only affect their ability to do their job effectively but can also have long-term consequences on their personal and professional lives.

WORKSHOP TRAINERS



DR. ALTAF ULLAH KHAN
Dean of Humanities and Professor of Mass Communication at FCCU

Adept at International Journalism, Development Communication, Freedom of expression. Has been a significant part of several training workshops throughout the years at FCCU and beyond.

ABEER SAADY

War Correspondent, Researcher, Media Consultant & Trainer

Spent more than 30 years covering war and conflict in the Middle East and Africa. Internationally recognized for training young journalists who hope to follow in her footsteps.



CO-TRAINERS



SABAHAT AFSEEN

Senior Lecturer at Bahria University, Islamabad, Pakistan. Her specialization is in Global Journalism, Conflict, and Peace Studies.

UMER FAROOQ

Multimedia journalist and blogger affiliated with the Voice of America's Urdu service. Reports from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and adjoining tribal districts.



DEAN'S NOTE

We are living in a world that is becoming extremely violent in many ways. Journalists are at the receiving end of this unfortunate trend due to their responsibility to democracy as a vehicle of informed narrative building for the citizens. While we are refreshing and learning anew safety protocols for journalists amid violent events, the streets are witnessing violence in Lahore. This is a testimony to the need for more engagement in safety, both physical and mental, by academia and media. The three day workshop which also included a book launch on women journalists' safety on day two dealt with all the important issues through participatory presentations and dialogic training. Real life examples, role playing, and interactive debate was the main feature of the workshop. This is skill development process at the higher education level. The transfer of knowledge to students and journalist professionals is the next step in the process. We look forward to more such initiatives that enrich the profession and serve the community, both journalists and the larger human populace.



DR. ALTAF ULLAH KHAN



WORKSHOP DAY 1

SESSION 1

A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO SAFETY AND SECURITY

The session focused on lack of security influencing us and our families. Explaining of our hostile environment and measures of risk identification.

SESSION 2

DIGITAL RISK WHILE WORKING IN HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

Explanation of the digital safety and online profile management. Generalizing sustainability and fulfilling needs of Pakistani academics and its people for safety rules

SESSION 3

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR LOCAL JOURNALISTS IN PAKISTAN

Censorship nomenclature has changed to organizational policies. What are the risk management tools?

- Accept
- Avoid
- Transfer
- Reduce

SESSION 4

PLANNING FOR AN ASSIGNMENT

To-do list for planning an assignment

- Risk Assessment
- Profile Management
- Communication Plan
- Gender-Based Preparation

SESSION 5

TRAVEL & MOVING WHILE ON A MISSION

Carry your digital lead, mobile, and all time charged power banks, at least carry 72 hours of food supply. Carry a map and get your travel supplies sorted.



TRAVEL CHECKLIST FOR CONFLICT REPORTAGE

1. Research the area: Before you travel, research the area thoroughly to learn about the current conflict situation, cultural norms, and any safety concerns.
2. Obtain necessary permits and visas: Check with the local authorities and obtain all necessary permits and visas required to report from the area.
3. Get vaccinated: Make sure you get all the necessary vaccinations before traveling to the conflict zone.
4. Pack appropriate gear: Carry appropriate gear such as protective gear, first aid kit, satellite phone, and other equipment that you may require.
5. Hire a local fixer: It's crucial to have a trusted local fixer who can assist you in navigating the area, providing security, and translating if needed.
6. Stay in a secure location: Stay in a secure location that has good communication and access to emergency services.
7. Develop an exit plan: Have an exit plan in place in case of any emergency or threat to your safety.
8. Inform someone about your whereabouts: Keep someone informed about your location and itinerary in case of any emergency.
9. Follow safety protocols: Always follow safety protocols and guidelines to ensure your safety and well-being.
10. Review and follow ethical reporting guidelines: Review and follow ethical reporting guidelines to ensure that your reportage is fair, accurate, and unbiased.



WORKSHOP DAY 2

SESSION 1

PLANNING AND SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

When dealing with risks related to physical and mental safety in violent conditions, it is important to have a thorough understanding of the security situation and develop a security plan. Practicing situational awareness, staying informed, seeking support, and practicing self-care are also essential. It is crucial to prioritize safety above all else, and be prepared to adjust plans and seek help when necessary.

SESSION 2

CROWD MANAGEMENT, COVERING DEMONSTRATIONS

When covering demonstrations during conflicts, it's important to understand the situation and stay informed about any potential risks. Dress appropriately, maintain situational awareness, and keep a safe distance from the crowd. Respect the crowd and avoid provoking them. Work with a team, have a backup plan, and prioritize safety at all times.



SESSION 3

CRISIS AND CONFLICT COVERAGE IN JOURNALISM

1. Prioritize safety at all times, both for yourself and for your sources.
2. Build relationships with locals, community leaders, and other sources on the ground.
3. Verify all information before reporting it.
4. Develop a deep understanding of the context and the issues at play.
5. Focus on telling the human story of the crisis or conflict.
6. Maintain ethical standards in all aspects of your reporting.
7. Covering crises and conflicts can take a toll on mental health. Practice self-care and seek support when needed.

SESSION 4

HOW TO DEAL WITH KIDNAPPING, ARREST AND WORKING UNDERCOVER

Tips to avoid kidnapping, arrest, and working undercover: research, stay alert, avoid being alone, be careful who you trust. To survive: prioritize safety, stay calm, follow instructions, build rapport, maintain health, focus on positive outcome. If colleague facing this: follow policies, communicate with family, work with authorities, offer support. After: seek help if needed, reconnect, reflect, consider legal action or advocacy.



JOURNALISTS GRAB BAG

Notebook	To take notes and record information
Pens	To write notes and jot down ideas
Camera	To capture images and document scenes
Spare Batteries	To ensure equipment remains powered and usable
Voice Recorder	To record interviews and conversations
Phone Charger	To keep phones charged and connected to the internet
Water	To stay hydrated while on assignment
Snacks	To provide sustenance and energy during long assignments
First Aid Kit	To address minor injuries that may occur while on assignment
Pocket Knife	To cut through materials or help in emergency situations
Flashlight	To navigate in low light conditions or power outages
Identification Card	To verify the journalist's identity while on assignment



GROUP ACTIVITY



The participants were divided into two groups, A and B, given a hypothetical situation of chaos reportage and demonstration of risk management. Both groups actively participated while drawing out road maps of risk management and parameters of journalist safety. Here are some examples:

- Before entering a dangerous situation, journalists should conduct a risk assessment to identify potential hazards and determine the level of risk involved. This should include an evaluation of the local security situation, the political climate, and the potential for violence.
- Journalists should have established safety protocols that outline procedures for emergency situations, such as evacuation procedures, first aid, and communication plans.
- Depending on the level of risk, journalists may need to wear personal protective equipment, such as helmets, body armor, and gas masks.
- Journalists should receive appropriate training in personal safety, first aid, and conflict reporting. This may include courses on situational awareness, self-defense, and digital security.
- Journalists should establish local contacts and fixers who can provide guidance on the security situation and help navigate local customs and regulations.
 1. **Digital security:** Journalists should take measures to protect their digital devices and communications from hacking or surveillance, such as using secure messaging apps and avoiding public Wi-Fi networks.
 2. **Psychological support:** Covering traumatic events can take a toll on journalists' mental health, and it is important to have access to psychological support and counseling services.

BOOK LAUNCH

Safety Handbook for Women Journalists was launched at Forman Christian College, (A Chartered University), on March 15th. The book is written by Abeer Saady, an International War Correspondent and Media Trainer, and has been edited and translated into Urdu by Sabahat Afsheen, Senior Lecturer, Bahria University, Islamabad. The launch event was organized by FCCU's Faculty of Humanities, in collaboration with the Journalism & Media International Center (JMIC) and Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway.

The guest of honor of the event was Dr. Douglas Trimble, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs at FCCU. Dr. Altaf Ullah Khan, Dean of Humanities at FCCU, expressed his thoughts on the book, noting that the Urdu translation would provide Pakistani women journalists with the tools to perform their duties safely and effectively. On this occasion, Ms. Sumaira Khan, who is Pakistan's only woman journalist who covered the Fall of Kabul in Afghanistan, shared her experience of conflict reporting that has also been documented in the book. The event was moderated by Syed M. Saqib, Assistant Professor at the Department of Mass Communication, FCCU, and was attended by journalists, students, and participants from the Journalists Safety Workshop at FCCU.



Book Launch Ceremony



Dean of Humanities, Dr. Altaf Khan sharing his remarks



Dr Douglas Trimble Vice Rector, FCCU,



Author of the Book, Abber Saady



Editor & Translator, Ms Sabahat



Conflict Reporter, Ms. Sumaira Khan



WORKSHOP DAY 3

SESSION 1

DEALING WITH ARMED GROUPS. SAFETY AND ETHICS.

Reporting on armed groups requires journalists to prioritize safety, maintain independence and impartiality, respect boundaries, avoid being used as a tool, negotiate with care, and be transparent. It is crucial to have a thorough understanding of the group and their objectives before engaging with them. Journalists must approach negotiation with a clear understanding of the desired outcome and be cautious of the group's potential propaganda use. Overall, reporting on armed groups requires careful consideration of safety and ethics guidelines to report effectively and responsibly.

SESSION 2

DIFFERENT STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH THREATS, ONLINE HARASSMENT, AND SURVEILLANCE.

Dealing with online harassment and surveillance involves various strategies such as strengthening online security, limiting personal information online, reporting harassment, using block and mute functions, seeking support, joining supportive communities, and educating oneself about online harassment and surveillance. By adopting these strategies, individuals can protect themselves and their privacy online.



SESSION 3

DEALING WITH ETHICAL DILEMMAS RELATED TO THE SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS

Ethical dilemmas related to the safety of journalists include protecting sources while ensuring personal safety, reporting sensitive information that could put the journalist at risk, avoiding conflicts of interest, maintaining objectivity, and collaborating with authorities. These ethical dilemmas require careful consideration to balance the obligation of journalists to report accurately and protect sources while ensuring their own safety.

SESSION 4

PSYCHOSOCIAL SAFETY, TRAUMA MANAGEMENT, AND WORKING UNDER PRESSURE

The stories you cover and the environment you work in can affect your mental and emotional wellbeing as a journalist. Traumatic events or sensitive topics can lead to distress, while positive stories can have a positive impact. Self-care and seeking support and resources are important for managing this impact.



WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE THE TARGET OF A HATE CAMPAIGN

- Document and save evidence of the harassment.
- Report the harassment to your employer and relevant authorities.
- Consider taking a break from social media or using privacy settings to limit contact.
- Seek support from colleagues, friends, and mental health professionals.
- Consider legal options, such as obtaining a restraining order or taking legal action against the harassers.
- Educate yourself on online safety and harassment prevention.
- Practice self-care and prioritize your mental and emotional wellbeing.

CERTIFICATES DISTRIBUTION CEREMONY



Dean of Humanities, Dr Altaf Khan, presents his concluding remarks



Chairperson Mass Communication Department, Dr Firasat Jabeen, delivers a thank you note

