



May 2024 Branch

Last month we mourned the journalists killed in the course of doing their job and paid tribute to those who continue to work under constant threat of despotic regimes, crime cartels and paramilitary groups. These were occasions of sadness and celebration.

“Journalists in Gaza have endured a sustained attack by the Israeli army of unprecedented ferocity – but have continued to do their jobs as witnesses to the carnage around them,” said Nasser Abu Baker, president of the Palestinian Journalists’ Syndicate (PJS), as he received the **UNESCO Guillermo Cano Prize**. “This award shows that the world has not forgotten and salutes their sacrifice for information. It is justified that they should be honoured on World Press Freedom Day.”

The NUJ has strong links to the PJS, and Nasser is a friend. That’s why I was so proud that he, on behalf of his colleagues back in Gaza, was acknowledged by the prize for outstanding contribution to the defence of press freedom, especially when achieved in the face of danger.

Nasser is also vice-president of the International Federation of Journalists which has raised funds to protect those news gatherers in Gaza working not only in danger but in desperate conditions. On page six, Anna Wagstaff, secretary of Oxford and district branch, explains why her colleagues have decided upon a long-term commitment to support Gazan journalists.

Meanwhile, I will be using all routes to ensure that the targeting of every journalist which constitutes a war crime is investigated under international law. Because that death toll, now more than 100, is all the more shocking because we believe journalists are being deliberately targeted by the Israeli Defence Forces.

We are expecting to see Nasser next month in London where the IFJ’s annual

general meeting is being held. We have organised briefings with MPs and peers as part of that visit. The BBC is hosting the AGM itself and director general, Tim Davie, will be speaking to welcome union leaders from around the globe.

Aid for Gaza

Journalists in Gaza need your help to do their job in desperate circumstances.

The IFJ is supplying vital equipment and aid. Please donate to its safety fund.

Branches can email jackiec@nuj.org to transfer from their management allowances.

DONATE NOW

As one of the many events on World Press Freedom Day, I was part of a panel organised by Bonavero Institute of Human Rights and the Centre for Freedom of the Media which discussed the normalisation and professionalisation of SLAPPS in the legal industry and the impact on journalists, particularly freelancers. The ploy of attempting to block stories and investigations with the threat of expensive litigation is having a chilling effect. That is why the NUJ is working on a new online tool where these threats can be reported and tracked. I have also been liaising with Labour MP, Wayne David, to ensure that his private members’ bill, the Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation Bill, is sufficiently amended



to provide protection for journalists from this scourge. We need to remain vigilant as the bill progresses since there will be some peers who will actively oppose the legislation.

Otherwise, the level of industrial work has been particularly high. There were two days of strike at STV before members accepted a revised offer from management, and now members at Springer Nature are balloting to take action to improve their pay. The tortuous process of getting union recognition from a hostile management at PA Media grinds on and all tribute to our brilliant reps and members there for holding strong. Having a collective voice at work should not be something that scares the horses at our major media outlets.

Finally, we are working with our industrial officials and legal team to explore all potential options to follow the shocking and sinister revelations during an Investigatory Powers Tribunal in London that the Police Service in Northern Ireland has been using surveillance powers to spy on journalists and lawyers, including NUJ members Barry McCaffrey, and Vincent Kearney, former BBC journalist, now northern editor of RTÉ.

Michelle Stanistreet

CAMPAIGN

02



Minding the gender pay gap

It's that time of year again when the annual gender pay gap figures are released, Tara Conlan looks at the data

Overall the figures are pretty terrible and Press Gazette reported that 91 per cent of the biggest news publishing companies still pay men more than women. The average UK media gender pay gap is now slightly down from 12 per cent to 11 per cent.

There were some signs of progress – one of the biggest improvers was Which magazine – where women occupied 51 per cent of the highest paid jobs, compared with 27 per cent last year – and the highest

headline figure went to Newsquest, which paid women £1.68 for every £1 men earned.

Macmillan also did well with £1.32, the Evening Standard £1.10, Ladbible £1.06 and Random House £1.06.

Any organisation with 250 or more employees must publish and report specific figures about their gender pay gap and they are available via the [government website](#). To save you wading through all that data, we've crunched the numbers for the [top media firms](#), so have a look for yourself to see how the companies you work for have done.

Trigger alert: some of it makes for eye-opening reading.

Bottom end of the scale features The TES and Netflix, where women earned 72p for every £1 men earned, when comparing median hourly pay. Not far behind them were Liberty Global (73p), Channel 4 (75p), Roku (76p), Bloomberg and TikTok (77p) and Independent Digital News & Media (78p).

The NUJ's figures include bonuses, plus what percentage of the firms' top earners are men or women. We've also starred those

who get kudos for having one or more metric in which women are equal to or higher than men.

Seeing the inequalities laid bare can be galvanising and the good news is we have tips and advice on our [campaigns page](#) to help arm yourself for action. Also check out our [explainers](#) about the pay gap so you can work within your chapel to raise the issue, discuss it and lobby for change.

You can use a [template letter](#) adding your company's figures to send to employers to open discussions on improving women's pay.

Together, with transparency and knowledge, we can fill in the gender pay gap. One other way to tackle the problem is to take measures, such as those as laid out in the union's [#ShowUsTheMoney](#) campaign which calls on employers to put the job range rates on adverts and follow a ban on questions about a job candidate's salary history, to ensure people have a fair salary when they begin a new job.

The union is also arguing for data to be published on disability and ethnicity pay gaps.

Action

Check out your [employer's GPG](#), or go the [government website](#).

Use this [template letter](#) to start discussions with your employer.

More information on the [campaign page](#).

EVENTS

03



Indie News Week

Jonathan Heawood, executive director of the Public Interest News Foundation, invites NUJ members and branches to celebrate independent journalism

We all know the challenges facing journalism: failing business models, disaffected audiences, legal threats. Amid the doom and gloom it would be easy to overlook the great efforts of news providers working hard to inform and empower communities across the UK.

That's why, at the Public Interest News Foundation (PINF), we are launching **Indie News Week** - a celebration of independent news that will include a wide range of online, print, social media and in-person activities in the week from 3-9 June.

We want to give people a behind-the-scenes look at the world of journalism to help build trust and engagement.

The idea for Indie News Week was born at PINF's Indie News Forum back in October 2022. During the following year we worked with the Harrison Agency in Brighton and a group of indie news providers to develop the campaign messaging, which we distilled into the slogan, No News is Bad News™.

Alongside Indie News Week, we're also launching the UK's first match-

funding campaign for independent news - the Indie News Fund. Participating non-profit publishers will be able to double any funds they raise from their communities during the month of June, up to an agreed limit. Thanks to the generosity of three donors - founder and CEO of NewsNow, Struan Bartlett; the Tinsley Charitable Trust; and the Cobalt Trust - we now have £50,000 in the match-funding pot.

We're also working with the Bureau of Investigative Journalism to provide training for participating publishers, ensuring they can not only play an active part in this year's activities, but also develop the skills to hold more events and do more fundraising in future.

This is all part of creating a positive cycle where news providers build strong relationships with their communities, generating new stories, new audiences and new revenues from local advertisers, donors and subscribers.

So far, 38 independent publishers across the UK have signed up for the campaign including local news providers as well as those with a focus on climate and LGBT+ issues.

Get involved

NUJ branches wanting to be involved can email Hani Barghouthi at hani@publicinterestnews.org.uk, otherwise visit the PINF website for more information about your local events.

Nick McGowan-Lowe, NUJ national organiser Scotland, will be joining a panel in Edinburgh on Friday 7 June for a day of activities organised by The Scottish Beacon, a collaborative network of 24 publications based from Shetland in the north to Dumfries and Galloway in the south. The topics covered include: the future of local news and its role in communities; diversifying the news; and the creation of a Scottish Public Interest Journalism Institute.

Book now.

Independent publishers **can apply** to participate in their local communities and will be given a campaign pack and support throughout the week.

The week's activities will give communities an opportunity to meet their local journalists and find out what goes into accurate and fair reporting of the lives of their fellow residents.

RECRUIT



04

Supporting young members

We need to be welcoming more young journalists to the NUJ by promoting the union's benefits and offering support, says president Natasha Hirst

Engaging young members is crucial to building a strong and relevant union that reflects the evolving challenges of our industry. We know exploitation is rife for those starting their careers in journalism and publishing and this is the time when union membership is most important.

During the past year, a number of meetings held for early career members have provided important

insights into the issues they experience at work and their expectations of the union.

Unsurprisingly, the top concerns were low pay and precarious contracts. They spoke of the stress of managing student debt, cost of living rises and rent hikes while working in an environment where the threat of redundancies often looms. They felt there was little sense of professional development and career progression and they were unable to plan for their future. Newspaper companies are closing offices, leaving young journalists feeling isolated as they work from home, without the benefit of working alongside more experienced colleagues.

Despite feeling passionately about journalism, the cold reality of poor pay is making some look to other careers, while others already have second jobs.

Chapels and branches have been an important source of support and we must continue to communicate our wins and campaigning work to make them more visible to young members. We face the challenge of communicating

the value of NUJ membership to workers and freelancers weighing up the costs of subs in difficult financial circumstances and who often lack wider awareness of the role of trade unions.

The union's profile shows that younger blood is needed so it can be more representative and responsive to young journalists' needs and to ensure the NUJ's future. We have some amazing young reps and we must do all we can to foster involvement and create a new generation of activists.

Branches can provide a vital link between local journalism students and the union. I attended a recent event at the School of Journalism, Media and Culture in Cardiff where working journalists provided valuable insights into the industry and how to improve chances of securing work. Questions ranged from how to use social media to promote or gain work, how to pitch stories and different career paths to consider.

The key message was the importance of networking and building experience and this is where branches are invaluable. Students who engage with supportive branches have the benefit of learning from colleagues – and, don't forget, there are plenty resources on the NUJ website.

Action

• Download the [NUJ student recruitment toolkit](#).

• Go to the student recruitment [website page](#).

• Support the [George Viner bursaries](#) for journalism students.

Exploiting the dream

A career in the publishing industry can be a joy – working with passionate, enthusiastic people in what is seen by many as a dream job

So, say Michaela O’Callaghan and Eleanor Gaffney co-chairs of the **Society of Young Publishers** (SYP).

But, like many other “passion-led industries”, having a large number of young eager applicants can result in abuse and exploitation, with entrants into the business soon finding they are overworked and underpaid.

Research published this March by **The FLIP**, Female Leaders in Publishing, found that that while 77 per cent of staffers enjoyed work, most (97%) cited burnout.

Pay is a significant problem. Overall, 58 per cent of respondents said their salaries did not cover their living costs and this rose to more than two-thirds (68%) of those with additional caring responsibilities and three-quarters (76%) of those working part-time.

Michaela and Eleanor believe the London-centric nature of publishing is very much part of the problem. “Just getting together the money to go for interviews is for many difficult,” said Eleanor. The

high cost of renting homes, never mind buying, means many young publishers live with their parents if they are lucky to be in London or rent rooms in shared houses. It’s slightly easier for those who have trust funds.

A typical entrant’s wage at a London publishing house ranges from £26,00 to £28,000, but smaller publishers and those outside the capital may pay less. More worrying, according to Eleanor and Michaela, is that publishing is no longer seen as a career for life. A mixture of

burnout and pay levels that even with promotion are not enough to sustain a family life, means

many leave after five to six years, they said.

The SYP celebrates its 75th anniversary this year and exists to support publishing hopefuls in the UK and Ireland to break into the industry, and the next 10 years. Applications for its mentorship programme, which links industry experts with beginners and those contemplating a career, are **now**

open until 23.59 on Sunday 9 June. It provides a network for young publishers and its Spare Room Project offers beds for the night for jobseekers.

The NUJ provides a collective voice for the publishing industry lobbying for improved pay, flexible working, greater diversity and supports and represents young members. Pamela Morton, NUJ magazines and books organiser, said: “The SYP and NUJ share similar aims in calling for changes to the industry, so it less London-centric, better paid and more inclusive.



Action

Find out more about the **Society of Young Publishers**.

Find out more about the **NUJ and publishing**.

If you work in publishing invite a young colleague to join the NUJ.

Branch support

Anna Wagstaff, Oxford branch secretary, on why we need to keep donating

The devastating war on Gaza is now in its eighth month. Throughout this time, our Palestinian colleagues have been the only journalists on the ground ensuring the realities of the deaths and destruction do not go unreported.

More than 100 of them have been killed. As fellow journalists we can mourn those deaths, but right now many of us feel it is those who continue to bring out the news that need our support. They must be mentally, physically and emotionally exhausted and there seems to be no end in sight.

So, a growing number of NUJ branches have now agreed to make monthly donations to the IFJ

Gaza appeal alongside our regular donations to NUJ Extra. To get around the complexities of foreign transactions, the NUJ will process monthly donations from branches (email jackiec@nuj.org.uk) and send them on to the IFJ Safety Fund. Currently, six branches have agreed to make monthly donations, either open-ended or for an initial six or 12 months.

A few weeks ago, TV reporter, Sami Abusalem (pictured below), speaking via a **videoclip** from Rafah, outlined to a packed side meeting at the UN Human Rights Council just how badly journalists needed support to keep going from day to day. "We suffer from lack of time, lack of food, lack of internet, lack of electricity, lack of medication, lack of safety, we have



IFJ update

Tim Dawson, IFJ deputy general secretary, praised the generosity of NUJ branches in a speech for International Workers' Memorial Day. The IFJ has also received €10,000 from The American News Guild and the National Writers Union. The Media Arts Alliance Australia, and their colleagues in New Zealand sent €8,000, the International Transport Workers' Federation provided another €6,000. Working with the Palestinian Journalists' Syndicate, the money has been used to supply blast-trauma packs and batteries for cameras and other equipment as well as food and shelter. Direct payments have gone to women journalists to help fund their particular needs. There are plans to provide a social hub and space for training and recuperation, similar to those the IFJ created in the Ukraine.

nothing..." At the time this was recorded he and his family were part of a journalist community living in flimsy tents near one of the last functioning hospitals - one of the few places they can recharge their equipment.

Few among us could work under those conditions, day after day. But by signing up to donate regular monthly sums we can at least signal that we are standing alongside our Palestinian colleagues for the long term.

Get Active

The NUJ's website has a wealth of information, advice, guidance and useful materials

AI

Artificial Intelligence is a fast-moving technology which will affect all of us at work. Go to the **Journalism before Algorithms** website page for more information.

Campaigns

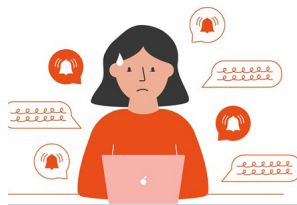
The **NUJ's Pay Campaign** calls for fair pay and flexible working and provides practical support to chapels when dealing with employers and on the rights of freelancers.

Let's Stop SLAPPs: go to the **website page** to see the latest on our campaign to stop lawsuits brought by the powerful and rich against journalists to censor and stymie reporting.

Recruiting students: there's lots of info, FAQs and materials for branches and chapels to encourage local journalism, publishing and photography students to join the union **on the NUJ website**.

Useful stuff

Freelance members can access help and useful information in the union's **freelance resources**, including **Protect your sources** and your rights as a journalist.



Legal assistance: one of the many benefits of NUJ membership is its legal advice.

Health and safety: advice, guidance and news.

The **safety toolkit** is a mobile-friendly resource to help media workers protect themselves and their journalism from harm.



Photographers: the toolkit has tips and a number for legal assistance when covering protests, and guidelines on taking photographs in public places.

Storysmart: is a set of online training modules to help journalists prepare to work in hostile environments and keep their data safe.

TUC Organising at Work: guide on building and maintaining strong workplace unions.

NUJ **recruitment materials**.

Mental health: find help for **post-traumatic stress disorder**.

The NUJ's guidance **Menopause is a workplace issue**

provides advice to reps and members on how to influence workplace policies and support women

during the menopause.

Reporting on refugees: inaccurate terminology and commentary can cause confusion and breed prejudice.

The **NUJ code of conduct** has set out the main principles of UK and Irish journalism since 1936.

Donate

The **IFJ's safety fund** helps journalists across the globe, including in Ukraine and Afghanistan and those covering the Israeli-Hamas war.

The NUJ's **George Viner Memorial Award** provides bursaries for black and minority ethnic students.

NUJ extra helps members and their dependents who have fallen on hard times.

NUJ extra

NUJ training

The union provides a free programme of **training for reps**. **NUJ Scotland Training** and **NUJ Training Wales** provide a huge range of professional skills courses.

Social media: Keep up with the latest breaking news, offers, campaigns, solidarity events and more on **Twitter**, **Instagram** and **Facebook**.

**REASONS
TO JOIN**



Ending the Gender Pay Gap

A Press Gazette analysis showed that 91 per cent of UK media companies paid men more than women and 85 per cent of men got better bonuses and it's a similar picture in Ireland. One magazine group's gap was almost 37 per cent. Opaque, unfair pay structures and unlawful sex discrimination are contributing factors. The NUJ negotiates on transparent pay structures, progressive work-life balance policies, better maternity and paternity deals and fair recruitment procedures.

Are you keeping good company?

Join the NUJ today at

nuj.org.uk/join

NUJ
NATIONAL UNION
OF
JOURNALISTS

www.nuj.org.uk