

POWERHOUSE GLOBAL MAGAZINE (PGMAG)

INTERVIEW WITH:

HH PRINCESS DATO' SERI

DR ROMONA MURAD (PRM)

FROM MALAYSIA



PGMAG: Thank you so very much for granting us this opportunity Your Highness.

PRM: You are welcome. It is my utmost pleasure to be interviewed by your prestigious magazine.

PGMAG: Our research shows an incredible and inspirational woman. A woman with great intelligence and beauty. A true 'powerhouse' and a global influencer. I know our readers would love to know who Princess Dato' Seri Dr Romona Murad is and what she is about in the world.

PRM: Thank you for the opportunity for me to share with everyone about myself and what I do in life. I am the Founder and President of Romona International Sdn Bhd (Romona International), a private limited company based in Malaysia and also the President of Romona Consultancy and Management. Currently, I am holding the position as the Chairperson for the

Royal Society Group Malaysia which is under the Royal Society Group World based in Al-Jubail, Saudi Arabia. I am also a Member of the Patron of the Euro Asia Financial Policy Forum (EAFPF) based in Italy. I was also appointed as a Vice Permanent Representative of the NGO, Aider-Donner-Nourrir (ADN) in Malaysia. Not to mention, I also hold position as Honorary President for Malaysia for Rockfield College of Sciences & Technology, Zurich, Switzerland.

Besides these positions, I am also an Ambassador for Triton Solar, a solar company which is based in New Jersey, USA. In addition, I hold position as a United Refugee Green Council Ambassador & Spokes Person on Housing, Education, Health & Socio-Economic Issues of Refugees in Malaysia since 2014. I was also appointed as RSG Commissioner for Heraldry and Sovereignty to Malaysia by the Royal Society Group on 8 February 2014. Not to mention, I was appointed as Delegate to Malaysia by the Royal Society Group World as official representative to which the Royal Society Group and its affiliates conduct its foreign affairs on 5th January 2014. The appointment as Asia President for Chamber

of Inter Commerce under the International Royal Academy of United Nation (IRAOUN) based in New York, USA was a huge responsibility for me. I was also Asia Executive Vice President for International Royal Academy of United Nations. I am proud to mention that I am the first woman from Asia to hold senior position with the International Royal Academy of United Nations.

My achievements are a few. I was a recipient of the 2019 Africa Advancement Award under the category "Award for Humanity and Peace Advocacy" on 31st October 2019 in London, UK. I was also a recipient of the "Grand Order of the Noble Hand of Honor" from PALEDEC, Accra, Ghana on 7th September 2019. In 2014, I was nominated as one of the "Most Influential Person in the World" in the area of peace and humanity by the International Council for Human Rights, Arbitration, Politics and Strategic Studies (ICHAPS) which is an organization under the United Nations.

I was conferred the Royal title, Her Highness Princess Putri Ma'amor by HRH Sultan Ali A.Umpa, The Sultan of the Royal Sultanate of

the Kapatangan Valley, the Philippines on 14th February 2014. I have my own own Coat of Arms as the Royal Princess. I was conferred Dame Commander - Cross of Merit by the Brasileira Society of Philosophy and Literature Teaching, Brazil and Commander-The Order Royal and Sovereign of the Arameans Lion King of Judah by HRH Prince Ydenir Prudenciano III Machado of Brazil. I am also the Honorable Council Member - Grand Order of the Council Honor of the Royal Society Dignitaries and Honorable Priority Members. I also received the Sultan Special Award from His Royal Highness Sultan Ali A. Umpa, Royal House of Kapatangan, Sulu, the Philippines. Currently I am the Honorary Member of World Organizer of Martial Arts, USA and VAL Honorary Member and Malaysia Ambassador for VAL, Slovenia. I am also an Honorary Member of the International Royal Academy of United Nations. I am an EXCO Member for UMNO Overseas Club Alumni under UMNO political party in Malaysia. I am also active in Parents-Teachers Association and I am holding many posts as PTA Committee Members for various schools in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. I was conferred Darjah Seri



Setia Sultan Arif Shah, First Class (SSAS) from the Sultan of Inderagiri, Indonesia on 10 December 2014 which carries the title Dato' Seri. I was conferred Darjah Setia Mahkota Pakoe Buwono (DSMP) from the Sultan of Surakarta, Solo, Indonesia in 2010 which carries the title Dato'. In 2009, I was conferred Darjah Mahkota Pakoe Buwono (DMP) which carries the title Datuk from the Sultan of Surakarta. And in 2008 I was conferred a medal, Setia Mangku Pakoe Buwono (SMP) also from the Sultan of Surakarta.

I have vast experience in Public Relations, Communications, Advertising, Promotions and

Event Management. I am a member of the Institute Public Relations Malaysia (IPRM). I have with me more than 20 years experience in the corporate world. Among the companies that I was attached to were The Melewar Corporation, the Land and General, Amanah Raya Berhad, Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission, DiGi Telecommunications and Syarikat Bekalan Air Selangor (SYABAS), all in Malaysia. I am actively involved with NGOs activities in Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and other countries in Asia.

PGMAG: As a leader, what are some of the qualities which



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constitutes a 'great leader'?

PRM: Being a great leader is a huge responsibility. I practice honesty and integrity in whatever I do. Also I have to instill confidence in whatever I do and I have to inspire others as a Global Peace Ambassador. Not to forget, I have to give my fullest commitment and passion in whatever I do. Besides all these, I have to be a good communicator. Decision making capabilities also important and I have to be able to make decisions and be accountable for whatever decisions I have made.

Delegation and empowerment must also be practised. I also have to empathize with the people or my subordinates. And lastly I have to apply emotional intelligence while I delegate all my jobs and tasks.

PGMAG: How would you describe your style of leadership?

PRM: My leadership style is democratic mostly but I also practice laissez-faire and coaching. I like to hear the opinions of others in whatever I do. However, I do give the decision to my subordinates to come out with the best solutions. At times, I also coach



my subordinates in case they need my assistance especially for the new staffs.

PGMAG: As the chairperson for the Royal Society Group Malaysia, a wife and a mother, how do you create work/ life balance amidst your busy schedules?

PRM: I am very lucky in my life because I have a great husband

who is very understanding and my handsome kids are now grown up already. I have 4 boys and they are 24, 22, 18 and 16 years old. I am indeed thankful because I have maids who took care of my kids when my kids were small. With many positions that I have, I managed to handle all tasks with the help of my subordinates and my associates. Any tasks given to me I can take care in a stride ,

not a problem to me.

PGMAG: If you know what you know now, what would you do differently?

PRM: I would like to live in a peaceful world, and it has to start from home. I love peaceful home with no tension. So everything must start at home. If your household is not at peace, how are you going to make the world a peaceful place to live in? We must instill love and peace starting from home. It is a must in order for us to make the world a beautiful place to live in.

PGMAG: What are your top three keys to running a successful business?

PRM: 1. A Successful Business Needs a Strong Vision

Creating a vision helps define where the company wants to go, and where it sees itself in the future. If we don't know where we want to be a few years from now, and build an organization around that vision, changes to the marketplace or outside forces can easily derail us and knock us off course.

2. Smart Investments Allow for Growth

Most would equate "great financial management" with profits, but it's more than that. Thinking about great financial management means investing in the right places. Whether that's infrastructure, product, marketing, distribution, or human capital, we need to be smart about the areas in which we're investing to ensure that the company is sustainable in the long run.

3. People Are the Foundation of Business Success

Our most important asset, as a company, is the people that we employ. Engaged and happy employees take good care of customers. And happy customers take good care of the business.

PGMAG: If you have an opportunity to address world leaders on matters affecting the lives of the people, what would be your message?

PRM: My message would be peace and humanity. We must instill love among us no matter what are our skin colors, languages, religions or cultures. Respect others and live in harmony. Our racial tension in the world today is high and that is not good for the future of our humanity. The



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world was just hit by the case of killing of one black guy by a white policeman in the USA. On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, was killed in Minneapolis, Minnesota, during an arrest for allegedly using a counterfeit bill. Floyd's death triggered demonstrations and protests in many cities in USA and around the world against police brutality, police racism, and lack of police accountability. In early June 2020, the Minneapolis City Council took action to ban choke holds and require police officers to intervene against the use of excessive force by other officers, and voted an intent to

replace the police department with a "new community-based system of public safety".

Black Lives Matter demonstrations have sprung up all over the USA and the world due to the death of George Floyd. So my message to the world leader is that please focus on peace and humanity. If we are at peace, we can have a safe world and our future human race will be saved. If not, we will face World War and we will surely destroy the Earth, our living planet and the human race as well.

PGMAG: What are the three books that changed your life?

PRM: To me, there are so many books that I have read and have empowered me throughout my life. However, these 3 books have big influence in my life and I use as a guide throughout my life:

The Qur'an. The sacred text of Islam, the Qur'an is believed to be the last word of God told to Prophet Muhammad pbuh through the angel Gabriel over a period of 23 years. This book is the cornerstone of the Islamic religion. I use this book as a guidance in my life.

The Republic, Plato. Written

around 380 BCE, this text is considered to be one of the most influential pieces ever written. The Republic observes justice in man and politics and discusses the role of the philosopher in society. Many of the intellectual concepts contained in The Republic are still discussed today, but the text is also an important historical document that provides historians with a snapshot of Greece at the time of its writing.

The Art of War, Sun Tzu. I read this book after I came back from USA and joined a local corporate company in Malaysia. The Art of War can be implemented in all areas of our lives and activities, be it in daily life, business, society etc. To me, I used the techniques of The Art of War in my business. As you know business has always been tough, but it has gotten even more difficult as competition has become more global, faster-paced and increasingly technology dependent. So in the 21st century, I still think it would make sense to look to The Art of War by Sun Tzu for business advice.

PGMAG: What would you say to your younger self?



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PRM: I had a happy life when I was younger. My father was from a Royal family, a businessman by profession and a landlord. He came from the lineage of Alexander the Great, Sultans, Maulana Sheikhs and Sheikhs. My father's mother was a Princess from the Sultanate of Kedah, and my father's father was from the lineage of Sheikhs up to Alexander the Great. I was brought up in Kedah, which is a state up North of Malaysia.

When I attended primary school (from the age of 7 - 12 years old), I was always top in my classes. I only got three times number 2 in my classes, the rests were number 1. You

can say that I was a very smart student during my younger years. My mother came from the lineage of royal court from Nakhorn Si Thammarat in Southern Thailand. She was a housewife, a teacher for me and she took care of me and my two younger brothers. When I reached the age of 13 years old, I was admitted into a boarding school, Sultan Abdul Halim Secondary School in Jitra, Kedah until I was 17 years old. Right after the school finished, the government of Malaysia sent me to College of Preparatory Studies in Shah Alam, Malaysia to prepare me for the university enrollment in the USA. I was chosen by the Government of Malaysia due to my excellent grades during my Malaysian Certificate Examination and granted full scholarship by the government to study in the USA. I was then admitted for enrollment at the University of Texas, Arlington, Texas USA in 1986 but I attended the university in Malaysia for my freshmen and sophomore years. I went to USA in January 1988 and I graduated in May 1990 with a BA in Political Science (concentration in Public Administration). After I graduated, I went to Houston, Texas and lived there until I came back to Malaysia in



February 1991. My mother was always the backbone of my success and she was the one who made me what I am today.

PGMAG: What are some of the steps leaders need to take, in order to promote diversity and inclusion in our society?

PRM: An inclusive society is a society that overrides differences of race,

gender, class, generation, and geography, and ensures inclusion, equality of opportunity as well as capability of all members of the society to determine an agreed set of social institutions that govern social interaction. The society that fosters a tolerant culture where human rights principles of fairness, respect, equality, dignity and autonomy are part of the society.

Steps leaders need to take in my opinions are:

1. Know your society: The leaders must first know what their communities look like. By capturing data on the people in the demographics, the leader is better able to understand the diversity of the people and identify any areas of concern or trends. Historically, these data have included federal and state protected categories; however, recent trends indicate that other factors, such as personality type and thinking/ learning style, may also be of value, though perhaps harder to find national comparative data for. If so, a leader may have to track its own data on these categories over time and determine what need for change may exist.

2. Identify Needs and Areas of Concern: Once data are collected, underrepresented areas can be identified.

3. Address Policies or Practices Affecting Diversity: Leaders must determine if there are barriers impeding the individuals from different communities.

4. Communicate the Initiatives: Inform the society about what the leaders want

to do.

5. Measure and Disseminate

Outcomes: The results of the initiatives should be communicated at all levels of the society in order to demonstrate the return on activities done in the society.
6. Review and Adjust: Diversity and inclusion initiatives are not static, and an ongoing review of the activities done in the society and a response to changing needs are necessary.

PGMAG: What is your message for the women of the world?

PRM: Women should be tough and strong. Must never give up and always strive for excellence. You can be what you want to be if you are focused and determined. Never surrender and always a fighter. Because the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world! If you do not have education, go and learn. Through education, women can educate the children, like what my mother did for me. She was my educator in my whole life. Education and life starts at home and women play a major role in the upbringing of children, who are our future.

PGMAG: We have come to the end of today's interview

and it has been a great honour learning from you. We wish you good health and happiness as you continue to serve humanity.

PRM: Thank you very much for this interview and for giving me this golden opportunity. I greatly appreciate this chance for me to share my insights and my life with the world.

PGMAG: Please share your website with our readers. Thank you once again.

PRM: My website is <https://datoromona.wixsite.com/romonainternational>.