

# MENA Women News Brief

August 16, 2016-

Iran

August 16: First all-women car rally to be held in Iran

“In addition to evaluating women’s driving skill, the rally aims at visiting tourist sites of Iran and empowering women’s driving ability, the report said. All Iranian women holding driving license along with a map reader are allowed to participate in the event.” Tehran Times

August 20: Teenager Alizadeh wins first women’s medal for Iran

“Kimia Alizadeh won the first ever Olympic medal by an Iranian woman at Rio Olympic taekwondo bronze in Rio.” Your Middle East

August 22: Rural women play important but hidden role in economy: VP

“Unfortunately, the role of rural women is not appreciated and their hidden role is ignored in the society, ISNA quoted Iran’s Vice President Ali Khamenei as saying.” Iranian Pressphoto

## Israel

### August 22: 'Women of the Wall' step up activists ahead of High Holidays

"The 'Women of the Wall' organization is planning a following seminar, free of charge, next week in Jerusalem. Women of the Wall works to break down religious standards in the public life of Judaism in Israel, particularly at the Western Wall. Arutz Sheva Israel National News

### August 28: Israel Joins Bikini Fray, Ordering Concert Singer to Cover Up

"Even as France has started an international debate about whether some women cover up too much on the beach, Israel has gone the other way, with fresh concerns about whether some cover up too little. The Israeli Ministry of Culture and Sport said on Sunday, August 28 that it would insist on modest dress by performers at government-sponsored musical events after a singer said she was forced to leave the stage for wearing a bikini top at a beachside concert near here last week. The New York Times

## Jordan

### August 23: Some 258 women running for seats in upcoming Jordan elections

"Some 258 female candidates are running in the upcoming elections, up from 215 in the 2013 polls, Sisterhood Is Global Institute (SIGI) Executive Director Asma Khader said on Monday, August 22. Speaking at a press conference, Khader, a former minister, said the increase in the number of women running for office was due to the 2015 Elections Law and changes to electoral districts. Al-Bab

## Lebanon

### August 16: Women rally to demand justice for violence victims

"Activists, women and human rights groups Tuesday, August 16 staged a brief protest outside Beirut's Justice Palace in Adlieh to demand an appeal against the sentence given to a man who beat his wife, Manal Assi, to death." The Daily Star

## Libya

### August 18: Special Report Enslaved in Libya: One woman's extraordinary escape from Islamic State

"This story is based on interviews with Ruta Fisehaye, eight other women enslaved by Islamic State, and five men kidnapped by the group. Reuters spoke to the refugees in three European countries over four months. Two women agreed to speak on the record, helping to lift the stigma that besets survivors of sexual violence." Reuters

## Saudi Arabia

August 22: Rethinking women's role in Saudi diplomacy with UK (OpEd by Najah Al-3.38)

August 25: Saudi women at Olympics: Winners without medals

“No medals were won at the Rio Olympics by either men or women in the Saudi team made up of 13 athletes. For Saudi Arabia, it was the second time for women to participate since the last Olympic Games in London in 2012. With no organized sports programs for women and underdeveloped training facilities in certain sports even for men, there is prospect for change in sports and athletics in the Kingdom.” (Al Bawaba)

Syria

August 23: Women in Syria’s Daraya urge international community to halt Assad’s siege

“Middle East Eye published a passionate plea on Monday from 42 women living in and out of the besieged Syrian city of Daraya, which urged the international community to intervene and halt Syrian President Bashar Assad’s use of napalm on the city.” (Middle East Eye)

August 25: Syrian women in refugee camps informed of their rights

“Turkey, host to the world’s largest Syrian refugee population, which swelled after a civil war broke out in the country five years ago, is looking to improve the lives of the most vulnerable members of the refugee community women. Authorities said Turkish staff supervising the 26 camps concentrated near Turkey’s lengthy border with Syria were trained on the international protection of rights, and forced and

August 22: The Emirati striving to empower women in the workplace

“Shamsa Saleh is at the forefront of advancing the lives and ~~changing~~ the rights of UAE women. As chief executive of Dubai Women Establishment, it is her job to shape an environment where women have the opportunities and support ~~they~~ need to build businesses and careers.” (The National)

August 28: Gender equality in energy sector stressed

“Speaking on the occasion of Emirati Women’s Day (day, August 28), female achievers said that while great strides have been made in promoting gender diversity, the oil and gas industry is still struggling with exceptionally low female-to-male ratios when compared to other fields ~~work~~.” (Gulf Digital News)

Yemen

August 16: As crisis escalates in Yemen, pregnant women need essential care

“Civilian fatalities are mounting in Yemen, with some of the deadliest episodes of violence taking place in the last two months. UNFPA estimates over 400,000 pregnant women are caught in the conflict, requiring essential and ~~so~~ sometimes urgent health services.” (The United Nations Population Fund)

General

August 19: What Happens After Countries Finally Start Sending Women to the Olympics

“A hundred and twelve years after the IOC first allowed women ~~to~~ compete, London marked the first time that all 206 National Olympic Committees sent female athletes to the Games; the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Brunei Darussalam and Qatar were the final holdouts. To many observers, Sarah Attar and her fellow athletes’ participation was a sign of progress for three countries that have not traditionally provided a way for women in sports, either because it was not a priority or because, as in Saudi Arabia, it was outright discouraged.” (VICE)

August 22: The Multifaceted ‘Burkini’ Debate

“In Turkey, traditional Muslim women have long argued that wearing what they want on their heads is a fundamental human right. Feminists and secularists counter that the head scarf is a symbol of women’s subjection to men, and of Mr. Erdogan’s project to restore the country’s Islamic identity. These same arguments are heard elsewhere. In Morocco, private pools and beaches have banned the burkini for several years, mostly in the name of hygiene.” (The New York Times)

By Elena ScottKakures, Middle East Program

The Middle East Program would like to thank Elena ~~Skat~~ Kakures for compiling the MENA Women News Brief throughout the past four months. We wish her the best in her future endeavors.

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