

MENA Women News Brief

December 20, 2016 January 3, 2017

Egypt

December 23: Facing Trial, Award -Winning Egyptian Feminist Mozn Hassan Speaks Out

“As founder of feminist organization Nazra, Mozn Hassan has attracted the ire of the Egyptian authorities—which have banned her from leaving the country and are pursuing trumped -up charges against her. As she receives a major humanitarian award, Broadly speaks to her about her activism.”
(Broadly)

December 28: Egypt’s child custody laws: How to reform?

“An amendment to the personal status law—which regulates all issues related to the family, notably marriage, divorce and child custody in particular—proposed earlier in December sought to change this provision, but not in the way that women’s rights advocates have long called for.” (Mada Masr)

December 28: Egypt's women find their voice against sexual harassment

“‘It was tough to get him to the police station,’ says Nema Gamal, 32, of the man who assaulted her. Weary after a day’s work, she was shocked when a man openly groped her from behind as she rode home with a friend on a Cairo microbus in 2013. ‘I screamed at the top of my lungs and told the driver to stop at the nearest police station,’ she says. Luckily, the driver was helpful and a police station was near. But the attacker, a 52-year-old man, squeezed out of a bus window and took off running. Her friend jumped out of the bus with Gamal and caught the assailant and dragged him to the police station.” (Deutsche Welle)

January 1: Iran Official Calls For Sterilization For Sex Workers, Homeless Drug Addicts

“An Iranian official has called for the sterilization of female sex workers and homeless drug addicts in Tehran to prevent ‘social harm.’ Siavash Shahrivar, head of the Social and Cultural Affairs Department in the Tehran Governorate, said those women should be "convinced" to undergo sterilizat

Jordan

December 31: Women at wheel of 'pink taxis' challenge Jordanian norms

"Nisrin Akoubeh checks the oil and water before getting into her taxi and pulling into Amman's heavy traffic for another day of shuttling fellow women across the capital. Akoubeh is one of a group of women who want to turn taxi driving into an acceptable profession for females, challenging Jordan's social norms. The 31-year-old widow and former nurse drives one of a fleet of 10 'Pink Taxis' driven by women for women passengers." (Jordan Times)

Kuwait

December 25: National Assembly's female security force, victory for women empowerment

"The inclusion of female security personnel in the National Assembly's Guard is considered as another victory for women empowerment in Kuwait. After reaching several key positkn.9(a)2(k)1.7(e)0.7(y)1.7(p)3.6-2.234

December 27: Gaza to hear appeal of woman's death sentence

"In a statement issued December 18, an alliance of Palestinian nongovernmental organizations is calling on the Palestinian judiciary to consider the effects of domestic violence as a woman appeals her death sentence in the slaying of her husband. The case is the first in which the death penalty has been issued against a Palestinian woman since the Palestinian Authority was established in 1994." (Al-Monitor)

Qatar

December 20: Qatarisation Strategies Found To Be Failing Female Nationals

"Despite Qatari women represent about half of the national workforce, women are not a priority in the private sector Qatarisation strategies plan. According to a survey done by Oxford Strategic Consulting, 'about 36 percent of companies either never or sometimes actively promote female nationals as part of their strategy.'" (Gulf Business)

Saudi Arabia

December 22: Saudi women dismiss link drawn between work and divorce

"Saudi working women have launched a social media hashtag to reject links between the rise in divorce figures and the trend of women taking up employment. A report published this week by the General Authority for Statistics said that the number of divorces among women who held jobs was 72,895 while the figure among women who did not work was 14,856, indicating that working women were more likely to be divorced than non-working wives." (Gulf News)

December 26: Music clip of Skateboarding niqab-clad women takes Saudi Arabia by storm

"A new music video showing niqab-clad local women skating, playing basketball, singing and dancing is taking Saudi Arabia by storm. The song and music clip titled 'Hwages' (roughly translated as concerns in English) was uploaded on YouTube on December 23 and has gained more than half a million views since then. The video opens to a scene showing three women wearing the niqab entering a car while a young boy takes the front steering wheel, in a nod to Saudi Arabia's ban on women driving." (Al Arabiya)

December 30: Saudi Arabia jails man for a year after he publically called for end of male control over women

"A Saudi man has been jailed for a year after he called for an end to the ultra-conservative Islamic kingdom's male guardianship system. The unnamed man was also fined 30,000 riyals (£6,500) after being convicted of 'inciting to end guardianship of women,' the daily Okaz newspaper reported. He was arrested while putting up posters inside mosques which called for the government to abolish strict rules giving men control over women." (The Independent)

Syria

December 24: Dire conditions for Syrian refugees on Jordan's border

"The conditions at Rukban, a remote and arid part of the desert in northeastern Jordan, have been troubling for a while, with no toilets, running water or electricity since the informal camp sprang up more than a year ago. Nearly 95 percent of households do not have enough food, according to a needs assessment conducted by World Vision International, and some people are reported to have sold their tents just to buy something to eat. Dwellings are makeshift and unable to withstand the increasingly harsh, cold weather conditions. Medical care has been almost nonexistent, and only five to six litres of water for each person is available." (The Independent)

Tunisia

December 22: Tunisia breaks up women terrorists' cell

"Tunisia said on Thursday, December 22 it has smashed a terror cell and arrested several suspects, including women. In a statement, the Ministry of Interior said two females — a 17-year-old and an 18-year-old — were arrested whilst the third one is already in custody being a suspect in another terror-related case." (Al Arabiya)

Turkey

December 22: Turkey's GDP could soar 20 per cent if women's participation in labor force doubled

"Turkey can increase its GDP 20 percent by 2025 if it can boost the average number of women in the labor force from 30 percent to the OECD average at 63 percent, according to a study by worldwide management consulting firm McKinsey & Company in cooperation with the Turkish Industry and Business Association (TÜSİAD)." (Hurriyet Daily News)

Yemen

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