

MENA Women News Brief

November 9-November 22, 2016

Egypt

November 10: Egypt's 50-year-old female triathlon athlete blazes a trail for women

“Egypt's 50-year-old triathlon athlete Amany Helmi Khalil said that she had blazed a trail for both women and older people passionate about sports after becoming the first female from her country in such an age category to complete the Ironman Barcelona triathlon in Spain last month. Khalil, who is a mother of two, came in 21st in the 50-54 age category for women in the triathlon after competing with women and men from all over the world who were mostly in their 20s and 30s.” ([Al Monitor](#))

November 14: How Egyptian women are working to counter rising prices

“Nilli Zaher, an Egyptian woman in her 30s who works as an accountant for one of the country's largest firms, did not wish to stand idly by amid what she describes as a massive price increase for basic goods, especially clothing. Although her job provides her with an income that meets her and her family's needs, with the support of her friends, Zaher launched a Facebook group where members can put up a basket of used clothes that they no longer need for barter or sale. The group goes by the name ‘Women Against Rising Prices.’” ([Al Monitor](#))

November 16: Cairo fest begins with an Egyptian women's lib film

“The 38th edition of the Cairo International Film Festival began at the Opera House on Tuesday, November 15 with an Egyptian work, Kamla Abuzekri's *A Day for Women*. Exploring the social, emotional and psychological consequences of opening up a swimming pool exclusively for women every Sunday in a disadvantaged Egyptian neighborhood, Abuzekri takes us inside the psyche of a nation still steeped in male chauvinism. Seen through the eyes of three women—each fighting her own demons—the society seems like a harsh bargain for their sex.” ([Hindustan Times](#))

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Iran

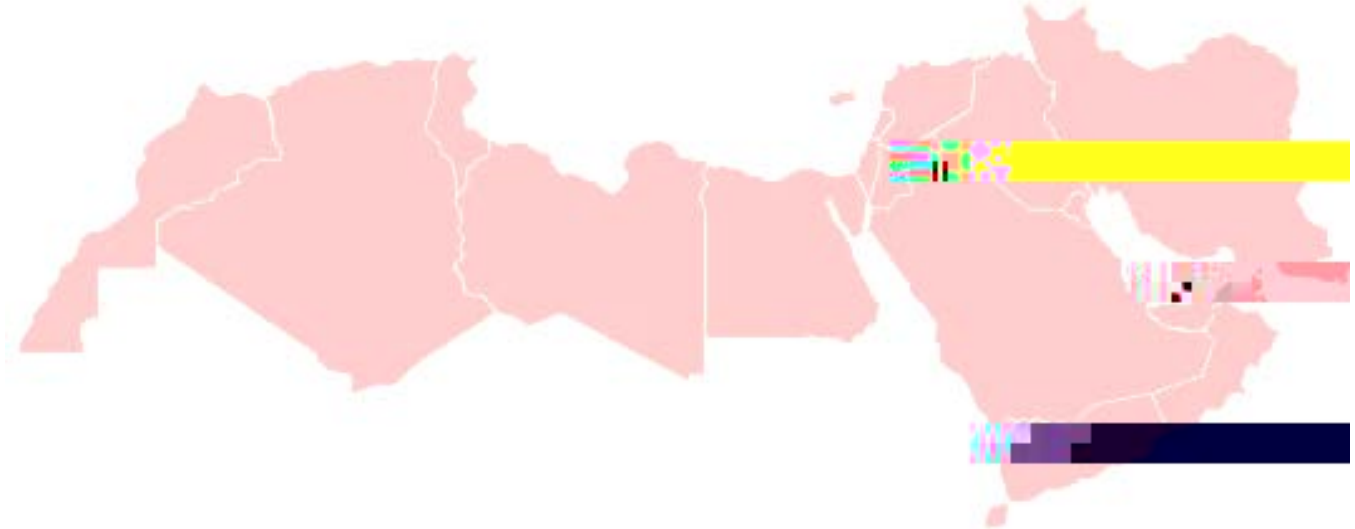
November 9: Why Iranian Women Spend Big on Cosmetics

“Women in Iran spend an unusually large proportion of their incomes on makeup, according to a recent report, which found that 4.5 percent of annual wages in Iran go toward cosmetics. That rate is three times what women spend in France, Germany or the United Kingdom. It's news that has the potential to reinforce all sorts of stereotypes — about oppression of women in the Middle East and the use of cosmetics as a political statement.” ([Seeker](#))

Iraq

November 14: All-female Yazidi militia launches operation for revenge on ISIS in northern Iraq

“An all-female unit of Kurdish-trained Yazidi fighters has said it wants to be front and center of a new attack on ISIS in the north of Iraq, in order to avenge their fellow Yazidi women who have suffered at the hands of the jihadi group. ‘We have not forgotten those Yazidi women sold in the slave markets of Mosul or burnt alive,’ the Sinjar Women’s



November 20: Who are the women running in Kuwait’s election?

“Kuwait’s interior ministry said that there are 14 women out of 287 candidates running in the parliamentary elections scheduled on Saturday, November 26. The number of women is the second lowest figure since they were allowed to vote as well as run in parliamentary elections. While women had the right to vote when polling was first introduced in Kuwait in 1985, this right was later scrapped. But in 2005, Kuwaiti women were re-granted the right to vote.” ([Al Arabiya](#))

Libya

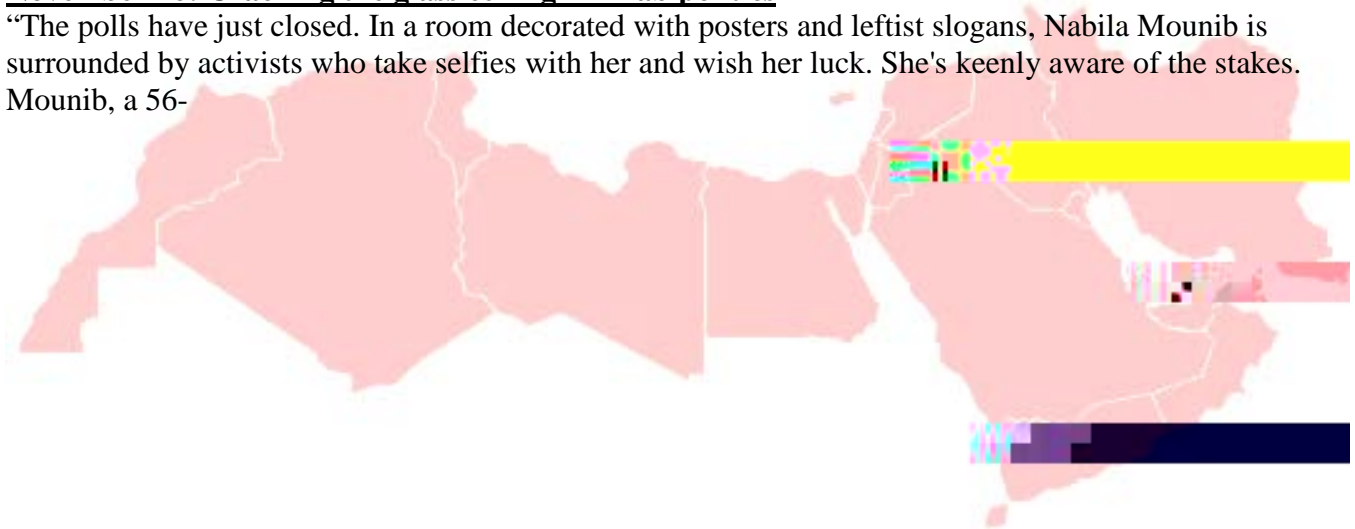
November 14: Libya calls for greater female role in government

“Female MPs from the House of Representatives are demanding a 30 per cent increase in women’s participation in all parliamentary delegations. The United Nations Security Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) held a three-day meeting in Tunisia last week where some 31 women elected to the parliament in 2014 attended. Political notes were compared with female legislators from Algeria, Chad, Egypt, Niger, Sudan and Tunisia in gaining experience for their own government in Libya.” ([Middle East Monitor](#))

Morocco

November 16: Cracking the glass ceiling in Arab politics

“The polls have just closed. In a room decorated with posters and leftist slogans, Nabila Mounib is surrounded by activists who take selfies with her and wish her luck. She's keenly aware of the stakes. Mounib, a 56-



Turkey

November 12: Turkish military allows headscarves for women

“The ban on headscarves for female civilian personnel serving in the Turkish military has been lifted, according to a ruling released in the official gazette. The ruling issued on Friday, November 11 says that women working under the Turkish Armed Forces, Gendarmerie General Command and Coast Guard Command will now abide by the dress code of the other state institutions, which enables them to wear headscarves, Xinhua news agency reported.” ([Gulf News](#))

November 22: Controversial bill on sexual assault withdrawn

Turkey's government has withdrawn a controversial bill that could have overturned men's convictions for child sex assault, following an angry public backlash. The controversial proposal sought to address whether all cases of marriage with people under the legal age of 18 should classify as "sexual assault." Critics feared the proposal could have legitimized the practice of men marrying girls under the age of 18, which is the age of consent in Turkey. ([AlJazeera](#))

UAE

November 10: Women's sport given a boost in Sharjah

“A decree setting up the Sharjah Foundation for Women Sports was issued Thursday, November 10 by His Highness Dr. Shaikh Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah. The foundation will focus on developing women's sports in the UAE in general, and in the emirate of Sharjah in particular. It will highlight the role of Emirati sportswomen in various regional and international arenas, as well as encouraging them to engage in different sports.” ([Gulf News](#))

November 14: Hurrah, The UAE Government Just Extended Its Paid Maternity Leave

“In a huge win for women around the Emirates, the government has just made good on its promise to review the country's maternity laws. His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, has reportedly issued a new law giving federal government employees three months of paid maternity leave. According to Article 53 of the amended Law 11, reports Khaleej Times, women will also be granted two hours a day to breastfeed their newborns until they're four months old.” ([Emirates Woman](#))

November 21: Women make up 20 per cent of UAE's nuclear workforce


“Emirati women make up 20 per cent of the workforce in the country's nuclear energy industry, an official said. Speaking at the 24th Women in Nuclear Annual Global Conference in the capital, Hasna Yousuf Al Blooshi, director for nuclear performance at Nawah, a subsidiary of the Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation, said the percentage was the highest of any nuclear industry in the world. ‘This strong presence of women in the nuclear sector reflects the high status [women] have achieved,’ said Ms Al Blooshi.” ([The National](#))

November 22: Case dropped against Dubai 'rape victim'

“A British woman, who was charged with having extra-marital sex in Dubai after reporting she was raped, has had all charges against her dropped. The woman was arrested and had her passport confiscated after she claimed she was raped by two British men. The Dubai Public Prosecutor's office said it had closed the case after ‘careful examination of all evidence.’” ([BBC](#))

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