

# **MENA Women's News Brief**

**September 8-22, 2014**

## **September 15: Forbes Middle East reveals names region's 200 most powerful women**

“Forbes Middle East has unveiled its coveted 2014 ranking of The 200 Most Powerful Arab Women. Published in the September issue of the renowned business publication, this year’s lineup includes inspirational and accomplished women from family business and government, as well as top C-level executives in the corporate sphere.” ([Al-Bawaba](#))

## **Bahrain**

### **September 18: Bahrain's women ministers on Forbes list**

“Bahrain’s three female cabinet ministers [Sameera Ebrahim Bin Rajab, Fatima Al Beloushi, Shaikha Mai Bint Mohammad Al Khalifa] have made it to the Forbes list of the most powerful Arab women holding public positions in a new indication of the success of the national drive to empower women in the kingdom.” ([Gulf News](#))

## **Iran**

### **September 19: Iran's Jila Baniyaghoob on journalism, prison and Rouhani**

“Iranian journalist [Jila Baniyaghoob] and activist says freedom of speech and the press have not improved one iota under the new [Iranian] administration.” ([The Guardian](#))

## **Iraq**

### **September 9: ISIS said to form 2 all-women police brigades**

“Brigades are reportedly tasked with spotting disguised male activists and ensuring that women follow modesty rules... One of the brigades, al-Khansaa, operates in Raqqa, the Syrian headquarters city for [ISIS], the Independent reported.” ([Haaretz](#))

### **September 15: Iraq honors its first anti-ISIS female tribal leader**

“In Arabic, ‘sheikh’ is the title given to a tribal leader. But for the first time, Iraqis have broken the rule when they granted the title, posthumously, to the country’s first female tribal head, [Sheikha] Oumaya Naji Al-Jabara.” ([Saudi Gazette](#))

## **Israel**

### **September 15: Israel appoints its first female ambassador to an Arab state**

“Einat Shlain [a career diplomat and current head of the international division of the Israeli Foreign Ministry’s diplomatic research center] is to replace Daniel Nevo in Jordan; Nevo is thought to have developed best relationship with the monarchy of any Israeli diplomat.” ([Haaretz](#))

### **September 16: Did Israel's judicial system cover up sex scandal?**

“The sexual harassment investigation into Judge Yitzak Cohen is the result of a transparency revolution in Israel empowered by social media.” ([Al-Monitor](#))

## **Jordan**

### **September 13: In Jordan, Ever Younger Syrian Brides**

“For many Syrians stuck in Jordan’s squalid and sometimes dangerous refugee camps, marrying girls off at younger and younger ages is increasingly being seen as a necessity — a way of easing the financial burden on families with little or no income and allaying fears of rape and sexual harassment in makeshift living spaces where it is harder to enforce the rule of law. As a result, UNICEF says, the number of marriages involving girls younger than 18 has ballooned since the war in Syria started.” ([New York Times](#))

### **September 15: Lifting the Barriers for Economic Progress of Women in Jordan**

“While there has been a steady increase in the Jordan’s capacity to provide employment opportunities to its youth, there is still a lot of work to be done when it comes to engaging females in the workforce.” ([Brookings Brief - Blog](#))

### **September 17: This feminist cartoon is changing Jordanian society, one comic strip at a time**

“‘Majida is the new Jordanian everywoman, representing a culture in flux, and a new generation of young people who are ready to change old paradigms,’ writes Your Middle East’s Noor Ali about Majida, the fictional heroine who is challenging a society dominated by men.” ([Your Middle East](#))

## **Lebanon**

### **September 9: Protest in solidarity with female victims of terror**

“Over 50 protesters gathered outside of ESCWA Tuesday [September 9] to show solidarity with women affected by terrorism.” ([Daily Star](#))

### **September 10: Female candidates for Lebanese Parliament rally at Interior Ministry**

“Armed with perseverance and determination, numerous elite Lebanese women gathered Wednesday [September 10] next to the Interior Ministry to stress that the Lebanese political field is incomplete without their participation.” ([Daily Star](#))

## **Oman**

### **September 17: Oman’s MoSD Encourages Offices To Have Childcare Facilities For Working Mothers**

“As the number of working women in the sultanate rise, the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) is encouraging government and private organizations, through a new article in the Child Law, to have nurseries at workplaces for children of employees.” ([Muscat Daily](#))

## **Palestinian Territories**

### **September 11: Palestinian women barred entry into Al Aqsa Mosque**

“Palestinian women have been denied access to Al Aqsa Compound [by Israeli police and security guards] for prayers for the past few weeks, Palestinian members of the Israeli Knesset, its parliament, have warned.” ([Gulf News](#))

## **Qatar**

### **September 15: All-woman ambulance service likely**

“An all-female ambulance service could soon be a reality in Qatar where there are frequent requests for it.” ([The Peninsula](#))

## **Saudi Arabia**

### **September 14: Small retailers to face Saudi feminization rules for the first time**

“Saudi Arabia’s feminization program will be expanded to include some retail stores will fewer than five employees for the first time from October 25. Retailers selling women’s perfumes, maternity wear, abayas, shoes, bags, clothes and fabrics are to be included in what will be the third phase of the government’s plan to increase female employment.” ([Arabian Business](#))

### **September 18: No Women on Asian Games Team**

“Saudi Arabia’s failure to include women on its team to compete in the Asian Games in South Korea in September 2014 is a backward step for women’s participation in sport.” ([HRW](#))

### **September 20: Women investors beat men in stock market**

“The number of Saudi women investors in the stock market has grown by 5 percent, while men investors increased by 2 percent over the first half of this year.” ([Arab News](#))

### **September 20: Saudi women forge ahead in workplace**

“It is now commonplace to see women in banks, hospitals, schools, hotels, private sector companies and increasingly, working for various government agencies.” ([Arab News](#))

## **Syria**

### **September 8: Syria's refugees: fears of abuse grow as Turkish men snap up wives**

“Increasing number of women who have fled conflict are opting to marry Turks, many as second, third or even fourth wives.” ([The Guardian](#))

### **September 11: Syrian women find independence in embroidery**

“An NGO in Lebanon that trains and employs Syrian refugee women in embroidery is also providing a safe environment where they can share their experiences and support one another.” ([Al-Monitor](#))

### **September 16: The Young Girls Escaping the ISIS War**

“Syrian women and girls are facing increased danger from sexual exploitation in the very refugee camps where they sought safety.” ([The Daily Beast](#))

### **September 18: Women and girls ‘failed’ by international response in Syria**

“A report from the International Rescue Committee makes eight recommendations to ensure greater protection from sexual violence, exploitation and forced marriage.” ([The Guardian](#))

## **Tunisia**

### **September 11: Tunisian Electoral Lists Draw Criticism**

“As Tunisia prepares for the October 26th legislative elections, the small number of women at the head of the electoral lists is drawing criticism.” ([All Africa](#))

### **September 11: Tunisians debate niqab-wearing election nominee**

“The recent announcement that a niqab-wearing woman is to run in Tunisia’s upcoming legislative elections has sparked debate, with proponents claiming her face covering could hinder her ability to communicate and could make it difficult to prove her identity when in public.” ([Al-Arabiya](#))

### **September 12: Tunisia's Sister of the Revolution**

“Ikram Ben Said [founder of Aswat Nissa — or Voices of Women] took part in the Arab Spring's first successful uprising — and then realized that the struggle for women's rights in Tunisia was just beginning.” ([TIME](#))

### **September 13: Tunisia now has more women than men**

“The population of Tunisia is 10,982,754’ as against 9.9 million in 2004, National Statistics Institute chief Hedi Saidi said [on Friday, September 12]. ‘For the first time, there are more women than men,’ with women making up 50.2 percent of the population, he added.” ([Arab News](#))

### **UAE**

#### **September 8: Meet Dubai Metro's only Emirati woman driver**

“When the Dubai Metro was inaugurated six years ago, the other first to its credit was a young Emirati woman driver, Mariam Al Saffar, 30, who has now been moved to the Dubai Tram project as the operation supervisor since December 2013 and expects to be promoted to operations manager once the Tram project open in November.” ([Gulf News](#))

### **Yemen**

#### **September 8: Yemeni Women Fight For Greater Representation**

“After years of activism, Amal Basha’s [pro-quota National Dialogue Conference delegate] demands for guarantees of greater representation for women in the political system has finally edged closer to reality.” ([Yemen Times](#))


#### **September 18: Yemeni Women Making A Difference**

“Five exemplary Yemeni women from around the country are profiled below. Their work and initiatives constitute valuable contributions to Yemeni society. They have been interviewed as part of a project by the Yemen 21 Forum, a local NGO based in Sana’a.” ([Yemen Times](#))

By Samaa Ahmed



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