

From Jordan

The National Jordanian campaign to eliminate 'Crimes of Honor' reported that two married Jordanian women were killed in two separate crimes of honor last week. The first aged 40 had just completed her three month prison sentence. She was charged with adultery. Upon arriving from prison to her village she was shot by her father and was killed instantly. The other woman aged 21 was murdered by her brother who was suspicious that she was having an illegitimate affair. Rana Hussein, head of the campaign to eliminate crimes of honor, asserted that the number of women murdered has risen to 7 this year. Official statistics show that 20 women are killed in Jordan each year to cleanse the honor of the family. Even though Jordanians are demonstrating and protesting to amend and abolish article 340 of the Jordanian penal code, the majority of deputies at the lower house of Parliament have voted against it. Despite this fact, the momentum for change is growing with the increasing pressure both nationally and internationally to withdraw such a law. Human rights activists and campaigners have recently managed to collect 15,000 signatures to a petition in which citizens request the abolishment of such a law. (An-Nahar Newspaper, Tuesday April 25, 2000)

From Lebanon

The Lebanese Committee for Peace and Freedom organized a sit-in on February 28, 2000 to protest against the Israeli aggression on Lebanon. During the sit-in the members and their president Mrs. Anissa Najjar submitted an appeal to the UN Security Council to take the necessary measures to make Israel comply with the security council resolution 425. The sit-in was a success nationally and internationally. Both Bruna Nota, International President of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and Edith Ballantyne, convenor of the WILPF standing Committee on the Middle East special adviser on United Nations matters sent letters in support of the sit-in.

From Egypt

A Date with History

1800: women demonstrate in Rosetta, demanding the right to use public baths and better treatment from their husbands.
 1873: opening the first primary school for girls.
 1893: release of the first women's magazine in Egypt, *Al-Fatat*.
 1899: Qassem Amin publishes *Tahrir Al-Mar'a* (Women's Liberation).
 1901: Qassem Amin publishes *Al-Mar'a Al-Gadida* (New Woman).
 1911: Malal Hefni Nassef puts forward ten demands to Parliament. All are rejected.
 1914: establishment of the Women's Teaching Union.
 16 March 1919: five hundred women protest in the streets against British occupation.
 1920: opening of the first secondary school for girls. Twenty-three girls are enrolled at the Shubra Secondary School in its first year.
 1923: Huda Sha'rawi and Ceza Nabarawi lift their veils as a symbol of women's emancipation. The incident is replicated throughout the country.
 16 March 1923: Huda Sha'rawi and other women establish the Egyptian Feminist Union demanding rights as equal citizens, women's rights to education, the right to vote, and reform of the Personal Status Law.
 1924: a new chapter is issued, stating the right to free primary education for both boys and girls.
 1925: Ceza Nanarawi and Huda Sha'rawi publish *L'Egyptienne* in Arabic.

1938: The Middle East Women's Conference is held in Egypt.
 1944: The Arab Women's Union is established, under the leadership of Huda Sha'rawi.
 1947: Huda Sha'rawi dies.
 1951: Members of Doria Shafiq's Bint Al-Nil organization stage a sit-in in front of the parliament, calling for women's political representation.
 1953: Dissolution of all political parties
 1956: The new constitution enshrines women's right to vote and to run for election.
 1957: The first woman enters parliament.
 1961: Free university education announced.
 1962: Hekmat Abu Zeid becomes Egypt's first female minister (of social affairs).
 1979: A new election law assigns a 30 seat quota for women in the parliament.
 1979: The Local Administration Law is reformed to include a 10-20 per cent quota for women.
 1980: Of the 210 members in the new Shura Council, seven are women.
 1979-80: The Personal Status Law is reformed, with some gains in women's rights.
 1985: The High Constitutional Court rules on the unconstitutionality of the reformed Personal Status Law.
 Dissolution of the new law's most important gains.
 (Source: Arab World Books in the News March 16, 2000)