

#MeToo campaign gains momentum

Gehad al-Rawy in September won a sexual harassment case, with a Cairo judge sentencing her harasser to two years in prison. **CNN** reports that it was a rare victory in a country where, according to a 2017 survey by UN Women and Promundo, nearly 60% of women have been sexually harassed. In a 2017 Thomson Reuters poll that surveyed experts in women's issues, Cairo was named the most dangerous city in the world for women. However, Egyptian women last year came out with a flurry of accusations against their abusers. Activists call it Egypt's #MeToo moment, catalysed by the global outcry against sexual abuse in 2018 and leading to major shifts in the conversation around harassment. In November, some A-list celebrities called for an end to sexual harassment in a video campaign launched by the Egyptian National Council for Women. **'MeToo moved the world and Egypt is part of that,'** said Intisar al-Said, a lawyer who has worked with survivors of sexual violence for over a decade. 'Why do we always blame the women for the harassment so that she is both the victim and the condemned,' said actress Menna Shalaby in the video campaign. In 2014, Egypt criminalised verbal and physical abuse. But street harassment appeared to have persisted, buoyed by a widespread culture of victim-blaming. Al-Said says she has observed an increase in reported harassment since 2014, though it is unclear whether the rise in complaints is due to a greater willingness to report the harassment or an actual increase in the incidents.