

# Nadim Center

**For psychological management and rehabilitation of victims of violence**

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## **Open message to the Egyptian Minister of Health and Chairperson of the Doctors' Syndicate**

### **Those are your patients, handcuffed in your hospitals!**

Ten Egyptian young men came to Nadim center.. they are among the tens of victims of the 6<sup>th</sup> of April in Mahalla Kobra city in the Delta who happened to be around or passing through the streets which witnessed the attack launched by the Egyptian Ministry of Interior forces against unarmed Egyptian citizens on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April, using tear gas, rubber bullets, clubs before delivering them to the police stations where they were subjected to torture, humiliation and detention awaiting their trial, which is ongoing until the date of writing this statement. This statement is not about the trial which involves some of the best and most committed human rights lawyers of the committee for the defense of Egyptian demonstrators. We shall not use it to condemn the police violence which has become a constant component of Egyptians' daily lives in harmony with the brutal policies adopted by the Mubarak regime and implemented with determination and all disregard for the by its Minister of Interior Habib el Adly.

In this statement we do not address the Minister of Interior, it is an open message to the Minister of Health whose hospitals have become an extension of the ministry of interior.. where doctors seem to have adopted the role of police officers; where the ethics of the medical profession seem to have given way to the code of conduct of the police and state security men..

It is also a statement addressed to the chair of the doctors' syndicate, who is responsible for the supervision of the professional performance of Egyptian doctors as well as their protection and provision of circumstances that enable them to carry out their profession as we were taught in medical school and not in the butcheries of police stations and state security headquarters.

To both of them, those are the stories of some patients. We record their stories in their own words accompanied in some cases with their pictures, lest you think the stories are fabricated. It is a document to demonstrate the decadence of the medical profession in Egypt, in the hope that you might remember your oath, in the hope that the pride of your profession would drive you to undertake measures that would protect Egyptians whose misfortune drives them to seek help in your hospitals. Those stories deserve a thorough investigation. The least to be done is to cover the expenses of their treatment and rehabilitation. After all they are the victims of an unholy alliance between the ministries of Health and Interior.

**Ibrahim Abdel Fattah Mohamed Atteyya**, 23 years old, works in a bakery.

"On the 6<sup>th</sup> of April was coming from my brother's in Kafr Hegazi. I was passing through the Shwan square.. there was a lot of beating going on.. I hid in a nearby shop.. suddenly I felt something hit me in the face.. then I woke up in the hospital.. el Hekma hospital.. they could not do anything to there so they sent me to the university hospital in Tanta.. they took my ID and there I stayed handcuffed to my bed for a whole month.. we were allowed family visits for one or two hours per day.. the prosecution questioned me on the second and third day and then again 10 days alter.. they held my brother in law who took me to the hospital.. they kept him until late next day..



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**Ayman Abdel Hamid Bassyuni**, 30 years old, married and has one daughter, Habiba. He works in a furniture workshop and is threatened to leave his job after he lost his right eye.

"Our lives are a mess.. I was working and was making a good living.. I had to sell my furniture and move to a smaller place.. I lost my eye and lost my job" Ayman used to work in Cairo. Every two weeks he would return home in Mahalla for three days. It was a Sunday. His sister was having some lab investigations and since there was no public transportation on that day, his mother asked him to go and pick her up and bring her home. He went through a side road. After a few minutes he felt something hit him in the eye. He was scared and started running. People gathered around him trying to calm him down. His eye was bleeding. There was an open clinic and many people were running towards it. The doctor told him to go to hospital immediately.

"I went to the hospital. There was another case just like me. They called an ambulance because the hospital was not equipped to deal with us. We went to Mansura hospital and I was operated upon. When I woke up I found myself handcuffed to the bed and next to me was a policeman. He used to come with me to the toilet. If I gave him 5 pounds he would untie me for a while.. nobody was allowed to visit us.. I argued with them to see my mother.. I was worried they might hurt her.. when I asked that policeman what we had done to be treated like this he would say 'nothing. But those are the orders'. We spent a whole week at the hospital. They untied me after four days. They told us to come for follow up.. I would go and they would examine my eye and prescribe some medicine which I have to get from the pharmacy outside the hospital. I got tired. My eye has shrunk. I tried to return to work but my eye keeps burning because of al the paint. I was doing OK and was helping my mother with her expenses. For three years I was doing OK got married and had Habiba.. she is one and a half years old.. I sold the furniture, which I had made myself.. I sold my wedding gift to my wife, even the ear rings of the little girl.. I can no longer look at myself in the mirror.. why did this have to happen.. they don't care.. if I was the son of a minister they would have treated me abroad. I was in a daze for a whole month.. I can't cope!

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**Ayman Mohamed Odeh**, 30 years old, clerk. Married and his wife is expecting but she left him and is asking for divorce after losing his left eye and his job.

I didn't go out on the first day of the demonstrations. A nearby shop was burnt and I stayed at home. The following day I went to work.. in the evening there was a demonstration.. I was on the stairs.. I heard gun shots.. I ran down the stairs and something hit me.. I fell and lost consciousness. The son of my boss was with me.. he called my brother and they took me to a private hospital which refused to admit me.. they took me in a taxi



to Tanta.. that was not a hospital.. it was more like a camp.. I was dying and bleeding and they kept asking me about my ID and what I was doing and why I was there .. I had an x-ray and the referred me to the ophthalmology hospital.. I had an operation and I woke up three days later and found myself handcuffed to the bed surrounded by officers and policemen.. they told me those were their orders.. I was questioned by the prosecutor.. I told him I am neither a thief nor a murderer, why am I handcuffed? He ordered the handcuffs to be removed. After he left I fell asleep and when I woke up I was handcuffed again. They said those were orders coming from above!.. Everything they needed at the hospital we had to buy from outside. We had to plead to the nurses to change the dressings. My brother spent all his savings on my treatment. They removed my left eye and put an artificial one. The right eye is weak. Also the left half of my face I numb because of the strength of the blow damaged the nerve. I can no longer work. I can't see at night. ..

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**Ayman Abdel Aziz El Nashibi**, 30 years old, works as a carpenter. He lost his left eye.

"On that day I was on my way to visit my in-laws. It was about 4 o'clock when people started running through the streets and through the square where I was. In a few seconds the police began to throw tear gas. I met my cousin and was just about to borrow his mobile phone when I felt something hit me in the face. I didn't fall nor did I lose consciousness. Two people ran towards me and took me to their house and bandaged my eye. I called a friend who came to take me to hospital.. it was 3 minutes away but there were two other cases.. I could not wait.. I went to another hospital and then another and another and at the end had to go to Mansoura.. there were many injured.. I had an x-ray and then was referred to the ophthalmology center.. some policeman was accompanying me now and they told me he is for my protection.. We arrived at the center by night.. they started questioning me and made me sign some papers.. I was very tired and nauseous.. I was taken to the operating theater and the next thing I was waking up next morning in a ward with three other people who were equally injured in their eyes.. I realized I was handcuffed to my bed.. so were the others..

A couple of days later they took us to the Mansoura police station.. we were all handcuffed to each other.. I spent one day at the police station and left next morning after they made me sign a couple of papers. I haven't read them. I am still taking my medication but I feel my vision is deteriorating.. I went to a private doctor.. he did an ultrasound and told me that my eye has been damaged from the inside and there is no use of operating".

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**Abdallah Mohamed Eid Nunu**, 21 years old, taxi driver. He lives with his mothers, has one married sister. He lost his right eye through a rubber bullet. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of April I was driving the taxi.. a gas bomb hit the car and broke the glass.. I left the car and started running.. I got a shot in the eye and several others in my neck, shoulder, chest and leg.. until now I feel the pain of those bullets as they hit me.. People surrounded me and took me to Tanta.. For three days I lay there in bed and nobody did anything.. my eye was bleeding.. maybe if they had intervened at once, they could have spared my vision.. After three days some house officers stitched my eye.. they did not remove the bullet.. I spent 21 days at that hospital.. then they told me your eye has atrophied and we have to remove it.. I went to El Maghrabi eye hospital in Tanta.. they told me we can operate but it will cost you 11 thousand pounds and you will regain your vision.. we collected the money and I did the operation.. but still I cannot see".



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**Faruq El Nabawi Mohamed El Sayed**, 28 years, microbus driver.

"On the 6<sup>th</sup> of April I was on my way back from Zagazig. It was about 5 in the afternoon. There was a lot of beating and smoke.. I drove the car to its owner and went to the bus station to take a bus home.. I was shot by those rubber bullets five times.. 4 in my stomach and one in my eye. I ran to Faruk hospital. They gave me an injection and told me I had to go to the university hospital in Tanta.. I stopped a taxi trying to get to Tanta, but the roads were blocked and I had to wait until next morning... At the hospital they enlisted me for an operation and then they handcuffed me and kept me locked in a meeting room. I kept shouting but nobody came. They operated at 10 in the evening. When I woke up there was this prosecutor who questioned me. I remained handcuffed in the hospital for 30 days.. When we went to the toilet they would handcuff us to the water pipe.



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**Belal Abdel Ati**, 20 years, student in the second year, faculty of commerce (Injury to the left eye, damage to the left retina)

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of April I was going to college. The demonstrations were all over. I tried to cross and return home, but there were clashes between the police and the people.. Suddenly something hit my eye.. it hurt very much.. some people took me on a motorcycle and drove me home.. they told me it is the tear gas that is causing my eye to hurt.. I went to the hospital with my brother.. they told me that was a shot that blew my eye.. we went to the university hospital in Tanta.. getting there was another war.. we arrived there after four hours.. on the way I was given a pain killer and I started vomiting.. then I lost consciousness.. at the hospital I heard somebody shout: handcuff him! I thought I was confused.. how can they handcuff me in a hospital?.. Two hours later they operated on me.. when I recovered from the anesthesia I was handcuffed and surrounded by many high rank officers.. I was confused.. they told me I was participating in the demonstrations.. I could not remember anything then.. all the time I thought they had removed the rubber bullet.. later I found out they didn't.. we were denied any visits.. the officer used to accompany me to the toilet. For twenty days I was handcuffed to the bed.. we used to bribe the policemen to receive visits..

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**Mohamed Rashad Ali El Dahan**, 20 years old, works in an embroidery workshop, helps father maintain livelihood of a family consisting of wide and two daughters. Lost his left eye through a rubber bullet on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April.

"I was on my way back from work at 3 pm.. there were clashes between the police and the people.. I was curious so I stood in a corner watching.. then I felt something hit me in the left eye.. people took me to the hospital in Mansheyya Gedida.. the doctor put a dressing and told me everything was all right, so I returned home. I told my friends I cannot see with my left eye.. I went to several hospitals but none would take me.. they told me the government has prohibited us from receiving any



people with injuries.. they suggested I go to Tanta or Mansoura.. in the evening I took a taxi to Tanta.. my friends came with me.. at the reception of the hospital an officer arrested me and all my friends.. I was handcuffed.. they took my ID and my friends were taken to the police station where they were held for four days.. they made me sign some papers and then took me to the operation room.. for four days I would wake up only to drink and then sleep again.. I was drowsy.. I was handcuffed to the bed.. everybody in the ward was.. there were many policemen around.. in the toilet they would handcuff me to the water pipe.. and the policeman would wait for me by the door.. they took the bullet out by my retina is gone..

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**Abdel Nabi Moussa Madkur**, 21 years old, works as a mechanic since he was 10. Illiterate.

"I was on my way to pick up my sister and her children.. there was shooting on the streets.. we ran.. I lost them.. I kept running and then I felt I was shot in several parts of my body.. I was bleeding from my eye.. people took me to my brother who took me to the hospital.. they didn't do anything and referred me to Mansoura.. they sutured the wound and put a dressing.. when I woke up next

day I found myself handcuffed to the bed and surrounded by guards.. I remained there for a week.. a prosecutor came and questioned me.. For months now I have been at home, unable to work, I am afraid to lose my other eye and then go totally blind".

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**Ali Taha Abdel Razek**, 30 years old, works as a barber.

It was Sunday the 6<sup>th</sup> of April.. my wife was at her mother's.. I had to cross the square to pick her up.. on our way back the streets were full and there was a lot of fighting.. there was a car throwing gas bombs at people.. there was no reason for them to shoot.. suddenly I was all covered in blood.. I had cartouche in my chin and left side of my head and my right eye.. people would look at me and scream.. I thought I was dying.. I could not see. My family took me to the eye hospital.. they referred me to Mansoura hospital.. they operated.. it cost me 6000 pounds.. I had to borrow them.. I wrote checks to the amount.. at 2 am I woke up and found myself handcuffed to the bed and so many policemen surrounding me.. I was scared.. I felt I was lost.. I have never been to a police station.. one policeman untied me.. a young doctor came and shouted at him and ordered him to handcuff me again.. I know he is a doctor because he is the one who examined us later.. I thought I would never get out of there.. I don't want anybody to see me like this.. my younger brother was scared to see me and would not come again to visit.. for a long time I was unable to use my healthy eye.. I have a terrible headache.. there was no reason why all this should have happened to me.. my life has been destroyed.