

Egyptian police sexually abuses pro-democracy detainee

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The two Youth for Change activists, Mohamed el-Sharqawi and Karim el-Sha'er, arrested yesterday by plain clothes security, were brutally tortured and sexually abused, say their lawyers and fellow activists who managed to see the two last night at the State Security Prosecutor's office.

Sharqawi was kidnapped, according to accounts by lawyers and activists as he was leaving the Press Syndicate on Thursday afternoon, roughly 5pm. Plainclothes security agents and thugs grabbed Sharqawi in Abdel Khaleq Tharwat St., beat him, and shoved him in a car, which took him to the Qasr el-Nil Police Station. Shortly after, his fellow activist Karim el-Sha'er was leaving the syndicate in the private car of Dina Samak, a six-month pregnant journalist with the BBC, and the wife of Ibrahim el-Sahary, a leftist activist who's currently locked up in Tora prison with other pro-democracy activists.

Dina Samak called me last night, in a state of total shock and trauma, to say her car, was followed by a taxi, as soon as she got out the syndicate's garage. The taxi cut the road in front of her. Plainclothes security came out it, and were joined by others thugs standing by. They started hitting Dina's car till they smashed the windows, dragged Sha'er out of it with a doze of beatings. There were other journalists too in the car, Jihan Shaaban, Ahmad Salah and Dina Gameel. All were assaulted. Samak was taken to the Judges' Club for medical aid. "They (security) have reached such a low level, that I feel we are cattle, not human beings," Dina told me. "The sexual abuse, the torture, the detentions won't stop us from overthrowing this rotten regime."

[You can get pictures of the attack on Wael Abass's website. He also recorded a video testimony (in Arabic) with Dina and Jihan.]

Sha'er was shoved in a car and taken to Qasr el-Nil Police Station, where he and Sharqawi were blindfolded and handcuffed. They were brutally tortured, according to their lawyers. Sharqawi was also sodomized according to the lawyers and Kefaya statement. Later they were taken to the State Security Prosecutor's office in Heliopolis. Those who saw them last night, including leftist activist - Salma Said, told me the two boys were "bruised, in total shambles. There is not a single place in their bodies which does not have a red or blue mark."

I spoke with the activists' lawyer who managed to see them finally in the night, after initial refusal of legal access by the prosecutor. The boys refused to be interrogated, and requested to be transferred to a hospital and to be examined by the Forensic Medical Authorities to prove the torture. The prosecutor refused to transfer them to a hospital, refused to allow a woman doctor who was with the lawyer to provide medical aid for them, and ruled the two boys were to remain in police custody for 15 days. They were taken to Tora Prison, where other pro-democracy detainees are incarcerated. The request for examination by the Forensic Medical Authorities, if granted, won't happen before Saturday, since today Friday is the official weekend holiday in Egypt.

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P.S.

* May 26, 2006 at 2:02 PM

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