



Sudan Doctors Syndicate

New trends of violence and brutality against civil protestors in Sudan

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For the past few weeks, since mid-December last year, Sudan has been witnessing a wave of mass protests demanding the stepping down of the thirty-year rule of President Bashir. These protests came as a result of the cumulative economic and political crisis that was caused by three decades of dictatorship and corruption.

In the first weeks of the protests, security forces and the ruling party's civilian militias leaned to their tactic of firing live bullets at protestors to violently suppress the uprising. This resulted in a number of casualties that reached 27 victims in two weeks (between 19th of December to 4th of January) according to Human Rights Watch. The death toll stands now at 57 according to the count of medical sources. The latter may continue to rise given the number of seriously wounded protestors, currently receiving inpatient treatment.

Over the past two weeks, medical sources are alarmed by the rise in new trends of violence against civil protestors by the security forces.

Of these new assaults is the horrific torture of detainees, which has culminated in death. At least three detainees lost their lives as a direct result of torture in National Intelligence and Security Service detention centres;

Ahmed Alkhir, a 36 years old school teacher was arrested from a protest in Khashm Algirba city in Eastern Sudan. One day later his

family was contacted by the National Intelligence and Security Services to announce his death. At first, authorities claimed he died from food poisoning. However, the medical forensic postmortem report stated clearly the presence of signs of criminal violence that led to his death. Later, during this week, a formal investigation committee concluded that he was tortured to death in Security detention.

Similarly, two detainees were announced dead after few days of their arrest by the intelligence and security service in South Darfur state. The National Intelligence and Security Services contacted the families of Faiz Abdallah Omer and Hassan Talga, few days after their detention to be told that their sons are dead and buried. No bodies were delivered to the families nor any post mortem examination conducted.

Beating to death with bare fists, pipes and ends of shotguns during protests has caused the death of two students.

The death toll by live rounds of bullets continues to increase, however when they are not used, they have been replaced by another brutal phenomenon. Namely the aiming of tear gas bomb as a potentially deadly missile directly at protestors bodies (especially towards the head and chest) as an alternative to live bullets!

Examples of the tear gas bomb/missile injuries include: loss of an eye (three cases), rib fractures (four cases), skull fractures (three cases), various abdominal injuries leading to internal bleeding, in addition to three cases of fractured legs (tibia and fibula).

Different types of tear gas bombs are being used, some of them are explosive and cause deep burns and tissue damage, this has led to two university students losing their hands when they attempted throwing away fired canisters away from protestors. They both required surgical amputation following irreparable injuries (one lost some of his fingers, the other his whole hand).

Furthermore we have strong evidence to believe a nerve gas/tear gas mixed bomb were being used, at least three cases showed neurological symptoms and peripheral neuralgia and neuropathy that needed a course of Pregablin (neurological medication) plus a written report from a medical doctor who reported bizarre neurological symptoms and mood changes who was exposed to such gas.

Tear gas is being used excessively and without any due reason in residential areas, fired inside houses with total disregard to inhabitants many of whom were children and elderly. On at least three occasions tear gas was released fired inside hospitals and medical facilities, the most shocking was in a casualty department and asthma ward affecting both patients and medical staff, the latter rendered unable to look after their patients.

There are many unreported cases and many cases who would not come forward to report their injuries or get medical attention because of intimidation and serious threats by National Intelligence and Security Service, who have gone a step further by being present in hospitals and other treatment facilities to monitor both the wounded and treating staff. Security service men have entered wards and intensive care units to collect bullets and shrapnel surgically extracted from injured protestors.

The most inconceivably barbaric tactic used by the Security forces is running over the bodies of protestors while chasing them by military pickup trucks (known as Thatcher's locally) to breakup the protests. Several videos show military pickups accelerating directly into the masses, colliding and running over the bodies of the protestors. Sudan Doctors Syndicate can confirm at least three cases of such kind, one of them lost his life, and the other two sustained different body injuries and hip fractures.

The security services in Sudan are diversifying their brutal tactics against civilian protestors. At the same time, the continued sustained attacks on medical facilities, cadre and doctors is affecting the ability of health professionals to provide help. Over 28 doctors are still in detention in Khartoum alone, for either being on strike or for providing medical aid to the protestors in the streets. One doctor (Dr. Baker Abdel Hamid) has been shot dead by the security forces for providing emergency care for severely wounded protestors in the field.

In conclusion, the Sudanese security forces are becoming deadlier and more spiteful, their unspeakable crimes against its own unarmed people continue unabated and unopposed while most of the world silently watches.

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