

Repression Instead of Shame (Online Article)

Historical Note

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Content

REPRESSION INSTEAD OF SHAME

Announcement regarding police brutality against protesters during yesterday's march for the murder of Shoab Khan.

As part of our community's actions regarding the murder of 24-year-old migrant Shoab Khan by the police on January 6 in Potamia, we participated yesterday in the call for a demonstration in Nicosia, demanding justice for the latest victim of the deadly migration policies.

After the protest ended peacefully without any incidents, police officers attacked protesters on Ledra Street and eventually arrested four individuals, taking them to the Ledra Police Station. One person was soon released, only after being forced to delete videos from their phone that documented the unjustifiable police response. The other three were transferred to different police stations. The police attempted to arrest more protesters and called the anti-riot squad, threatening with further violence if the remaining protesters did not leave the area. Later that evening, the three detainees were released after being charged with rioting, insulting authority, resisting lawful arrest, assaulting a police officer, and violating the General Data Protection Regulation.

As videos, photos, and testimonies reveal, the targeting and arrest of these individuals by the police were clearly politically motivated, intended to intimidate both them and anyone else who dares to resist and protest. We ask:

- Since when are people arrested for holding or using a megaphone? Since when does the police have the authority to decide which slogans are legal and which are not?

In which past century are we living when people trying to film arrests of protesters in a public space are thrown to the ground, arrested, charged, and have their phones confiscated?

- What was the exact threat that "forced" the police to handcuff peaceful protesters and drag them down Ledra Street to the police station?
- How can the police explain the arrest of a person without informing him of the reason, taking him to a station where no arrest procedures were followed, denying him the opportunity to speak with a lawyer, illegally deleting material from his phone, and threatening him with conditional prosecution if he publishes the material they arbitrarily deleted? The arrested individual stated that the material was for journalistic purposes, yet it was still deleted immediately.
- Why did the process take hours to complete, lasting well into the evening, when the alleged offenses are of a minor degree?

Yesterday, as in similar cases in the past, the police acted like a gang whose reputation was tarnished, whose authority was questioned – knowing they operate within a framework of impunity and lawlessness that they themselves perpetuate. However, when members of the police force commit murder, the least that the rest of their colleagues should do is show restraint and reflect on their responsibilities. But this would have happened in a different reality, not ours, where corruption has eroded all institutions and repression is the answer more often.

The cowardly aggressiveness of the police on Sunday clearly presents us with a threatening reality: it's been long since we have entered a new level of fascism and state authoritarianism, where police violence is covered up, peaceful protest is criminalized.

Justice for Shoaib Khan

End police violence and repression

Solidarity with the accused comrades

afoa – Community of Struggle

Nicosia, January 20 2025

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