

DETERIORATING CONDITIONS IN EGYPT'S BADR PRISON COMPLEX



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In December 2021, the Egyptian government **opened** the new Badr Prison Complex, **touting** it as an “American-style” “**correctional and rehabilitation center**,” and offering it as **proof** of improving prison conditions. Shortly after the prison’s opening, however, detainees reported significant **abuses**. Following a **wave of suicide attempts** between November 2022 and March 2023, a pressure campaign from human rights groups led to a temporary improvement of conditions in the facility. But since October 2023, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi has taken advantage of the conflict in Gaza to resume rights violations and other abuses inside Badr, according to interviews conducted by MEDC.

ABOUT BADR PRISON COMPLEX

- Badr has four main facilities: Badr 1, Badr 2, Badr 3, and an inmate center for women.
- The majority of prisoners from Egypt’s notorious Tora prison complex were **transferred** to Badr 1 or Badr 3 in 2022 in preparation for Tora’s closure.
- Badr 1 and Badr 3 typically hold political prisoners, while Badr 2 largely holds people detained for non-political offenses.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

Since the opening of Badr Prison Complex, rights groups have documented widespread abuses within the facility occasionally resulting in deaths and disturbing waves of **suicide attempts**.

Abuses by prison authorities include constant exposure to **fluorescent lighting**, **nonstop surveillance** of detainees and visiting family members, **due process violations**, and **torture** (including electrocution and being chained to the walls).

Other recent abuses in Badr 1 and 3 include:

BADR 1

- Prison officials have embedded visible recording devices in the tables detainees sit at to converse with their visiting families to ensure that guards can hear everything discussed.
- Prison authorities have denied adequate clothing to detainees and prevented families from providing winter clothing to their detained relatives.
- Some detainees report suffering from malnutrition due to irregular and prolonged closures of the prison canteen and severe limitations on the amount of food families are allowed to provide.
- Prison authorities are imposing increased restrictions on many detainees’ access to letters and books.

BADR 3

- Many detainees report being held in solitary confinement, deprived of fresh air and sunlight, and prevented from any communication with family members or lawyers. Per a **leaked letter** received by the Egyptian Network For Human Rights, detainees have responded by covering the surveillance cameras inside their cells and threatening further escalation.
- Detainees in some sections of Badr 3 report that the prison head office only allows irregular and infrequent family visits, about once every six weeks, despite **prison regulations** allowing for visits twice a month.
- In Section 2, prison authorities continue to deny family visits altogether. The majority of these detainees, including high-profile political prisoners, have been denied any visitation rights since 2015, well before their transfer to Badr prison.



PRISON DEATHS

In 2023, there were at least **three reported deaths** in the Badr complex. And in January 2024 alone, at least four individuals have died after reportedly being denied adequate healthcare. These deaths point to dire prison conditions for detainees.

2024

JAN 1

Former parliamentarian Adel Radwan Othman Mohamed died inside his cell in Badr 3 after being **denied adequate healthcare**. His family was not informed about the incident until January 4, in violation of **Egyptian law**, which states that the family must be notified promptly.

JAN 6*

A detainee died in his cell in Badr 3, reportedly from complications resulting from diabetes. His family asked to remain anonymous due to fear of retaliation.

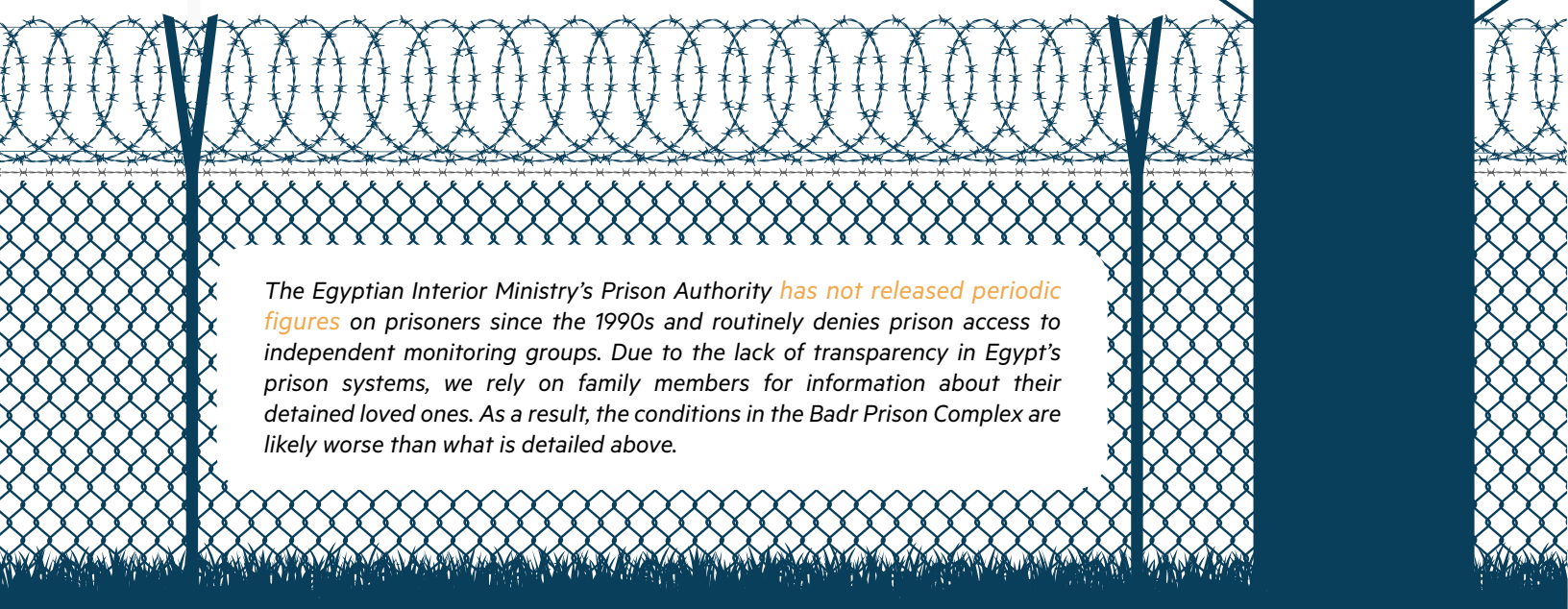

JAN 7*

Mohamed el-Sherbini Ali el-Sayed, a 58-year-old lawyer, **died** of cancer in the Badr Medical Center. He was denied adequate healthcare for cancer and herniated discs.

JAN 13*

Taha Ahmed Hiba, 33, died inside his cell in Badr 1. The cause of death was cancer, for which he was denied proper treatment; he suffered from **medical negligence** throughout his detention.

* Either on or close to this date.



The Egyptian Interior Ministry's Prison Authority **has not released periodic figures** on prisoners since the 1990s and routinely denies prison access to independent monitoring groups. Due to the lack of transparency in Egypt's prison systems, we rely on family members for information about their detained loved ones. As a result, the conditions in the Badr Prison Complex are likely worse than what is detailed above.