



# List of the Imprisoned Journalists During 2020

Prepared and Edited By  
Monitoring and Documentation Unit  
Research and Studies Unit

Art Direction By  
Media Unit

**EOJM**

Egyptian Observatory for Journalism and Media  
Monitoring and Documentation Unit



# Introduction:

In 2020, the Egyptian Authorities continued launching arbitrary arrests campaigns against journalists, as by the end of December 2020, “The Egyptian Observatory for Journalism and Media” documented 17 arrest cases towards journalists and media workers, meanwhile the year ended and there are 13 journalists are still languishing in prisons, 12 of them are in partial detention. In addition to that, the presence of the journalist Ismael El-Iskandrany inside the prison to serve a 10 years a military prison sentence because of many accusations represented in joining a group established on the opposition of the law provisions “Muslim brotherhood”, participating in a criminal agreement as a purpose to committing crimes punishable by law and obtaining a military secret related to the Defense army by illegal means to inform it to the terrorist elements, broadcasting the secret via Facebook as well as spreading false gossips abroad about the country situations.

The detained journalists in partial detention are tried according to the anti-terrorism law issued in 2015, with charges related to joining a terrorist group established in the opposition of the law provision and the constitution, and accusations of joining a terrorist group in spreading false news and promoting commission of terrorist crimes without any sufficient explanation of these accusations nature or the grounds where these accusations depended on or specifying the nature of the group or how these news classified as “false”.

Hence, the Egyptian Authorities imprison journalists in partial detention pending these accusations for long times, as a violation to the partial detention nature and being just a precautionary measure that is supposed to be applied in particular cases with severe restrictions. In order to circumvent around the pre-trial detention period for 2 years at most, the authorities release journalists who have reached this stipulated period, and then “recycle” pending new other cases where they face the same charges against them in the case in which they were released, so that the journalists / media professionals spend several years behind the bars are merely accusations on which there is no clear evidence, and if there was, they would have been held accountable and their case would have been decided upon instead of this repeated extension of pretrial detention pending the case.

On another hand, the Egyptian Authorities were widespread in 2020 in performances related to renewing the pre-trial detention journalists only on the papers without being brought to justice authorities and their statements because of the existence of “security impediments” or “impossibility to transfer the accused”; which reflects the difficulty of transferring the detainees from the prisons to the headquarters of the Supreme State Security Prosecutions for security reasons. There is no legal basis for this in the constitution or in the law through which the mechanisms of applying legal excuses can be known. These excuses deprive the accused of legal appearance before his normal judge on his legal dates, which may be an opportunity to release him, prevents him from this right, that matter contradicts the rules of justice stipulated in the Constitution and the Code of Criminal Procedure, guaranteeing the pretrial detention decision may not be issued without interrogating the accused, as well as the necessity of hearing the statements of the Public Prosecution and the defendant’s defense before the pretrial detention decision is issued, besides the necessity of enabling the pretrial detention to seek the assistance of a lawyer.

In general, the pre-trial detained journalists who reached 12 journalists, 11 of them males and 1 female, are being tried in 7 cases, the most prominent of them the case No.488 of 2019 which includes 4 journalists are tried, taking into consideration the journalist “Solafa Magdi” is accused pending 2 cases. All the journalists are facing almost united charges related to joining/ participating a terrorist group and spreading false news, will be detailed in the next paragraphs where the observatory deals with each case separately.

Case No.488 of 2019 Supreme

State Security



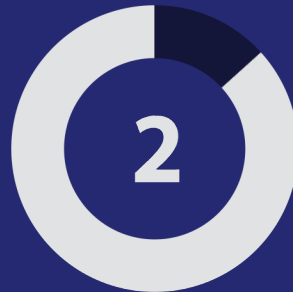
Case No.1365 of 2019 Supreme

State Security



Case No.855 of 2020 Supreme

State Security



Case No.1898 of 2019 Supreme

State Security



Case No.558 of 2020 Supreme

State Security



Case No.680 of 2020



Case No.1530 of 2019



Shape (1) Classification of imprisoned journalists according to the cases for which they are being tried

# Firstly: Methodology and Standers:

---

## Monitoring Cases of Arrest:

The Methodology of the “Egyptian Observatory for Journalism and Media” according to monitoring arrest cases depends on two main sources:

- The received reports and complaints from the clients or the families of the imprisoned journalists.
- What the “Legal Aid and Support” unit could obtain by collecting information and news around the arrested journalists.

## Documenting Cases of Arrest:

The cases of arrests are documented and worked on after making sure of the incident credibility, matching the journalist with the observatory’s standers. The incidents are documented through; communicating with the arrested journalists by the observatory’s lawyers, the investigations and prosecution records, and through the direct communication with the journalists’ families to know the circumstances of the arrest incident, the location and how it happened ... etc.

## The Observatory’s Standers:

First: The Observatory works on the cases in which the journalists/ media professionals are accused, in order to perform that the Observatory defines the journalist/ media professional as “every person subjected to violation on a background of performing his journalistic/media work and holding one or more of the following items: Evidence of his work as a member of the Journalists’ Syndicate or Mass Communications’ Syndicate, be certified or hired by press/ media institution, through press/ media archive or a certificate issued on the press/ media platforms or the officials.

Second: The journalist/ media professional had been arrested on the basis of his/ her work, for example;

- He was arrested during the work performance.
- He was arrested because of written press content, such as (News, reports and any other press or media content).
- He was arrested because of his job title and his work nature as a “Journalist” or “Media Professional).

## The Report Timeline:

The report presents an overview for the journalists/media professionals who remained in the prisons by the end of 2020, the report covers the period between (1st January 2020 to 31st December 2020).

# Secondly: The journalists' Cases in 2020:

---

## 1- Case No. 488 of 2019:

- **Case Background:** The case no.488 of 2019, Supreme State Security, started in March 2019, coinciding with the calls launched by the TV presenter “Moataz Mataar” under the slogan of (Rest assured, you are not alone) as a call to a noisy mass demonstration in a particular time, in addition to spontaneous demonstrations in March 1 and 2 as a protests followed the fire accident of the Train Station, after a huge collision of one of the train’s tractors to the platform, resulted to the death of 22 persons. The authorities arrested at least 94 accused in this case, including women of different ages, various governments topped with Cairo, Giza, Alexandria and Beni Suef. The State Security Prosecution charged the accused with participating a terrorist group to achieve its goals, as well as misusing social media during the investigations.

- **The accused number in the case:** Approximately 94.
- **Journalists number who were accused in the case:** 4



**Solafa Magdi**

The work place: Freelance Journalist  
Health Situation: She suffered from gynecological diseases inside the prison, "Bleeding"  
Current Legal Situation: During 2020, the journalist was remanded in custody pending investigations until her release on April 13, 2021  
Detention Place: Al-Qanater prison for Women  
Arrest Date: November 26, 2019  
Charges: Participating a terrorist group with knowing its purposing, deliberately broadcasting and publishing false news  
Arrest Details: In the evening of Tuesday, November 26, 2019 the journalist was arrested with her husband "Hossam El-Sayad" while they were on their way to their car in one of El-Bohooth streets, they were taken to Dokki department and deported to one of the National Security headquarters. On the evening of the next day November 27, they were presented to the Supreme State Security Prosecution, investigated and decided to imprison them for 15 days pending investigations in the Case No.488 of 2019.



**Moustafa Elkhateeb**

The work place: Reporter of the Associated Press Agency in Cairo  
Health Situation: No Diseases  
Current Legal Situation: Remained in Custody pending investigations  
Detention Place: Tora Prison  
Arrest Date: October 12, 2019  
Charges: Joining a terrorist group with knowing its objectives, spreading and broadcasting false news and using one of the websites to commit this crime..  
Arrest Details: In the evening of Saturday, October 12, 2019 the journalist was arrested from his home in Cairo, after publishing, after the agency published a news about arresting 2 British students. In October 14, 2019 the journalist appeared in the Supreme State Security Prosecution. He was investigated and the prosecution decided to imprison him for 15 days pending investigation.



**Ahmed Shakir**

The work place: Editor, RossAlyoussef

Health Situation: No Diseases

Current Legal Situation: He remained in the pre-trial detention pending investigations

Detention Place: Cairo Prison for Pretrial Detainees (Investigation Section In Tora)

Arrest Date: November 28, 2019

Charges: Participating a terrorist group with knowing its purposing, deliberately broadcasting and publishing false news.

Arrest Details: At dawn of Thursday, November 28, 2019 he was arrested from his home in Toukh, Qlayoubia Governorate. On November 30, 2019 he appeared for the first time in front of the Supreme State Security Prosecution, he was investigated and the prosecution decided to imprison hi for 15 days pending investigations.



**Hossam El-Sayad**

The work place: Freelance journalist

Health Situation: No Diseases

Current Legal Situation: During 2020, the journalist remained in the pre-trial detention pending the investigations until he was released in April 13, 202.

Detention Place: Cairo Prison for Pretrial Detainees (Investigation Section In Tora)

Arrest Date: November 26, 2019

Charges: Joining a terrorist group with knowing its objectives, spreading and broadcasting false news and using one of the websites to commit this crime.

Arrest Details: In the evening of Tuesday, November 26, 2019 the journalist was arrested with his wife "Solafa Magdi" while they were on their way to their car in one of El-Bohooth streets, they were taken to Dokki department and deported to one of the National Security headquarters. On the evening of the next day November 27, they were presented to the Supreme State Security Prosecution, investigated and decided to imprison them for 15 days pending investigations in the Case No.488 of 2019.



## 2- Case No. 1365 of 2018, Supreme State Security:

- **Case Background:** The case began in late December 2018, with arresting many citizens from different places and their disappearing them for several days, then their appearance in the Supreme State Security Prosecution and they were investigated on the background of cooperating with Al-Jazeera TV, which is hostile to Egypt, by preparing meetings with a number of personalities and political figures.
- **The accused number in the case:** Approximately 20.
- **Journalists number who were accused in the case:** 2.



**Mahmoud Hussein  
Gomaa**

The work place: Director of Al-Jazeera TV in Cairo  
Health Situation: He suffered from health issues inside his prison and visited the prison clinic  
Current Legal Situation: During 2020, the journalist was remained in pre-trial detention pending investigations until a decision was issued to release him on February 2, 2021  
Detention Place: Cairo Prison for Pretrial Detainees (Investigation Section In Tora)  
Arrest Date: May 25, 2019  
Charges: Joining a group founded against the provisions of the law and the constitution, broadcasting and publishing false news.  
Arrest Details: After the journalist was released pending the No.1152 of 2016 on May 25, 2019, he was included in a new case No.1365 of 2018, in which he faces accusations of joining a group established against the provisions of the constitution and the law, broadcasting and publishing false news.



**Mohammed Mosbah  
Jebril**

The work place: Freelance Photojournalist  
Health Situation: No Diseases  
Current Legal Situation: During 2020, the journalist was remained in pre-trial detention pending investigations until a decision was issued to release him on February 18, 2021  
Detention Place: (Investigation Section In Tora)  
Arrest Date: January 3, 2019  
Charges: Joining a terrorist group and spreading false news  
Arrest Details: On January 2, 2019, the National Security force arrested Mohammed Jebril after he recorded a meeting with the former Member of Parliament "Mohammad Anwar al-Sadat", and he appeared at the Supreme State Security Prosecution on the 13th of the same month, accused in the case No.1365 of 2018 Supreme State Security.

### 3- Case No. 855 of 2020:

- **Case Background:** The case began on the 25th of August 2020, when the National Security Forces stormed the home of the engineer and former member of the Constitution Party “Ahmed Yousry Mahmoud Ghaly” and arrested him after he had published a post on the social networking “Facebook” about the death of “Moustafa Al-Jabrouni” inside Tora Prison.
- **The accused number in the case:** 16.
- **Journalists number who were accused in the case:** 2.



**Solafa Magdi**

The work place: Freelance Journalist

Health Situation: She suffered from gynecological diseases inside the prison, "Bleeding"

Current Legal Situation: During 2020, the journalist was remanded in custody pending investigations until her release on April 13, 2021

Detention Place: Al-Qanater prison for Women

Arrest Date: November 26, 2019

Charges: Joining a terrorist group, spreading false rumors and misusing social media

Arrest Details: On August 27, 2020 Solafa was transferred to the State Security Prosecution after a claiming that she was contacting from her prison, during exercise and visit periods, with imprisoned terrorist elements at the same prison to transport functions to other outside elements through these visits to perform terrorist crimes. The case started on the background of investigations claimed that there are outside elements spread false rumors and communicate with the inside elements, those communicate with the accused as they have the ability to influence the applicable elements. These communications take place during exercise time in the prison and during the prosecution and court sessions.



**Islam El-Kalhy**

The work place: Journalist at "Darb" news website

Health Situation: No Diseases

Current Legal Situation: During 2020, the journalist was remained in pre-trial detention pending investigations until his release on March 8, 2021

Detention Place: Giza Central Prison, Kilo 10.5

Arrest Date: September 9, 2020

Charges: Joining a terrorist group with knowing its purposes, misusing social media, publishing false news and statements.

Arrest Details: The Security forces arrested the journalist of "Darb" news website and the member of Journalists' Syndicate, on September 9 while he was covering the death of a young man in Almonib area, Giza.

#### 4- Case No. 1898 of 2019, Supreme State Security:

- **Case Background:** On November 25, 2019 the security forces arrested “Esam Abdel Hameed Abdel Rahman” while he was working in his own fish shop in Suez. On December 11 “Hassan Moustafa Abdel Fattah”, a well-known bookshop owner and political activist, was arrested and considered one of the first who raised “Khaled Saeid” case in Alexandria. On December 27 “Ali Sayed Ahmed Attiya” was arrested from a café next to his house in Al-Khankah, Qalyobia governorate. At the same day “Adham Abou-Deif”, works as tuk tuk driver, was arrested from his home in Shoubra El-Kheima. In the next day on December 28, “Ali Mohammed Abdel-Ghany”, works as a development researcher, was arrested from his home in Mansoura. On December 29 “Ali Mahmoud Fathy Abou Hegazy”, a former activist of “6 April” youth movement, was arrested from his home in Damietta. In the next day, December 30, “Ali Mohammed Housny”, the former activist of “6 April” youth movement was arrested from his home in Damietta as well.

All of them appeared in different periods between December and January in front of the Supreme State Security Prosecution and all were placed in the case No. 1898 of 2019 and charged with promoting terrorist group ideas, spreading false news and misusing social media.

- **The accused number in the case:** Unknown.
- **Journalists number who were accused in the case:** 2.



**Moataz Wadnan**



**Moustafa El-Asar**

The work place: News Editor, Huffington Post Arabic website

Health Situation: Suffers from bones and back problem

Current Legal Situation: Pre-trial detention pending investigations

Detention Place: Cairo High Security Prison 2 (Scorpion Prison)

Arrest Date: May 7, 2020

Charges: Promoting the commission of a terrorist crimes.

Arrest Details: On May 7, after the State Security Prosecution decided to release Moataz Wadnan with guaranteeing his residence place in the case no.441 of 2018 Supreme State Security Prosecution and during finalizing his release procedures, he was "Recycled" in appeared in the Supreme State Security Prosecution in May 9 on behalf of a new case No.1898 of 2019. He was investigated and the public Prosecution decided to imprison him for 15 days pending investigations and he is still in partial detention until now.

The work place: Freelance Journalist

Health Situation: No Diseases

Current Legal Situation: Pre-trial detention pending investigations

Detention Place: Tora Prison (Al-Zeraa Section)

Arrest Date: May 7, 2020

Charges: Promoting the commission of a terrorist crimes.

Arrest Details: On May 7, 2020 the State Security Prosecution decided to release him under the guarantee of his residence place. While finalizing his release procedures in Fayoum Department, the police department denied his presence there and he appeared in the State Security Prosecution in May 9, 2020 pending new case (the case no.1898 of 2019). He was investigated and the prosecution decided to imprison him for 15 days pending investigations. He is still under partial detention until now.

## 5- Case No. 558 of 2020, Supreme State Security:

- **Case Background:** The Egyptian authorities have imprisoned a number of individuals who tried to express their concerns or evaluate the state's performance in combating the spread of the new Corona virus "Covid-19". They were included in the case No.558 of 2020 State Security Inspection. The Public Prosecution charged them with joining a group founded against the law, spreading False news and misusing social media. The most of the accused were arrested during March and April 2020.

- **The accused number in the case:** 50.
- **Journalists number who were accused in the case:** 1.



**Ahmed Allam**

The work place: Journalist and TV presenter - freelance

Health Situation: No Diseases

Current Legal Situation: Pre-trial detention pending investigations

Detention Place: Tora Prison

Arrest Date: April 21, 2020

Charges: Spreading false news, misusing social media and joining a terrorist group.

Arrest Details: He was arrested on April 25, 2020 from one Alayyat villages, Giza governorate. He was presented in front of the Supreme State Security Prosecution on Monday April 27 which decided to imprison him for 15 days pending the case No.588 of 2020 Supreme State Security, on charging of spreading false news, misusing social media and joining a terrorist group.



6- Case No. 680 of 2020:

- **Case Background:** Unavailable
- **The accused number in the case:** Unavailable.
- **Journalists number who were accused in the case:** 1.



**Medhat Ramadan**

The work place: Shababik Website

Health Situation: No Diseases

Current Legal Situation: Pre-trial detention pending investigations

Detention Place: Tora Prison for Investigations

Arrest Date: May 28, 2020

Charges: Joining a terrorist group and spreading false news

Arrest Details: The journalist was arrested from his family's home in Minofya governorate on May 28, 2020, appeared in the Supreme State Security Prosecution on June 27, 2020 and he was investigated in the case No.680 of 2020 Supreme State Security. He was charged with joining a terrorist group, spreading false news and statements and misusing social media. He was imprisoned in pre-trial detention pending the case.



## 7- Case No. 1530 of 2019:

- **Case Background:** The case started in December 2018 by arresting a citizen from Suez governorate called "Youssef El-Joker" was photographing a lot of children wearing "Vendetta" masks and holding shotguns and knives as well as urging the citizens to demonstrate in the governorates aiming to restore the "Legitimacy".
- **The accused number in the case:** More than 100 accused.
- **Journalists number who were accused in the case:** 1.



***Moustafa Sakr***

The work place: Journalist at "Daily News" and "Al-Borsa"

Health Situation: Unavailable

Current Legal Situation: The journalist was in the pre-trial detention until his release decision was issued with precautionary measures in March 6, 2021

Detention Place: Giza Central Prison

Arrest Date: April 12, 2020

Charges: Joining a terrorist group and spreading false news

Arrest Details: The security forces stormed the journalist's home at dawn of April 12, 2020, and he was taken to one of the National Security Agency headquarters, he was trapped for several hours until he was presented in front of the State Security Prosecution on the same day in the evening to be investigated without a lawyer. He was charged with joining a terrorist group with knowing its purposes and spreading false news and statements.

## **8- Case No.569 of 2015, Supreme State Security registered with No.18 of 2018 military criminal offenses in north of Cairo:**

- **Case Background:** The court said, in the case's merits no.18 of 2019 military offences in north of Cairo; "It's settled in its certainty, its faith was confirmed and its conscience was reassured by the rest of the lawsuit papers and the investigations conducted in them, in the light of the circumstances that the country is going through, occurring hostile acts and targeting public and vital facilities in the state to spread chaos, demolish the state institutions and its economy as well as sow terror panic in the citizens' hearts and disturb security and peace. All the defendants during 2015 and thereafter joined the Muslim Brotherhood which was founded against the provisions of the law, with the purpose to call for the provisions of the constitution and the law disruption, preventing the state institutions from carrying out their work, assaulting personal freedom and public rights guaranteed by the constitution and law for the citizens, attacking police and armed forces and their facilities aiming to disturb security and endangering the society safety.

- **The accused number in the case:** 20
- **Journalists number who were accused in the case:** 1.



***Ismael Elskandrany***

The work place: Freelance journalist and researcher

Health Situation: Unavailable

Current Legal Situation: Sentenced to 10 years in military prison

Detention Place: Military Prison

Arrest Date: November 29, 2015

Charges: Joining a terrorist group established against the provisions of the law "Brotherhood Group", participating in a criminal agreement aimed at committing crimes punishable by law, obtaining by illegal means a defense secret with the intent of informing it to terrorist elements, broadcasting a defense secret on "Facebook" and broadcasting false rumors abroad about the situation in the country.

Arrest Details: He was arrested from Hurghada Airport upon his arrival from Germany. He was presented in front of the Supreme State Security Prosecution and decided to imprison him for 15 days pending the case's investigations. The detention continued until the case was referred to the military court, which issued its ruling on May 19, 2018 imprisoning him for 10 years. He is now subjected to implement this sentence.



The Monitoring and Documentation Program aims to follow up on all violations against journalists, media professionals, and press and media institutions in Egypt. It adopts its own methodology in the monitoring process, which is based on 3 main axes in monitoring violations; The first: field monitoring through the field work team. The second: communicating with the victims to ascertain the occurrence of violations against them and documenting their testimonies. The third: takes place in the absence of field information or direct communication, and monitoring and documentation is carried out through newspapers and channels via electronic media.

The Monitoring and Documentation Program serves as the department's center for the work of the Egyptian Observatory for Press and Media; Through it, the legal aid and support program is informed of the issues that must be worked on, and the other research programs are informed of the urgent issues at this time that need to be worked on.