



# HUNDREDS AT THE TIMOL FUNERAL

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IMPATIENT MOTORISTS leaned on their hooters yesterday as a seemingly endless stream of white-capped Indians held up traffic for more than a dozen blocks at a time in Roodepoort.

Schoolgirls pressing handkerchiefs to their faces, T-shirted Whites engaged in serious talk with immaculately dressed Muslims — they all formed part of the 1500 mourners following the hearse of Ahmed Timol.

The funeral procession for the 30-year-old schoolteacher, who plunged 10 floors to his death on Wednesday, was the biggest the little West Rand town had seen.

After a 3km trek, the green velvet bier with its golden tassels was lifted from the hearse outside the Roodepoort Muslim cemetery.

## HAND BY HAND

Shoulder-high, hand by hand, it was passed through the crowd. When the congregation broke into mass prayer, loud sobbing rose from the ranks of children whom Mr Timol had taught up to last week.

To chants of "Allah is great and Mohammed is his Prophet" the body was laid to rest.

The dead man's grey-bearded father, Mr Yusuf Timol (65), joined in the chant. A brother, Haron Timol (19), sobbed on a friend's shoulder.

Another brother, Mr Mohamed Timol (22), is in Security Police detention in Durban. A third, Mr Ismael Timol (26) is studying in India.

The mother, Mrs Hawa Timol, remained at home. "According to Muslim rites, the men bury the dead," a relative said.

Earlier, Mrs Timol had stood at the window of her first-floor flat in Mare Street,

watching the throng that filled the street.

Stern-faced or crying, the community had filed past the bier for a last glance of Ahmed Timol, clad in his white funeral "kafan" with his face exposed.

The crowd in the Roodepoort street had formed at 1.30 pm when scores of schoolchildren and students of the Johannesburg Indian College of Education staged a "sit-in."

As the crowd grew into a sea of white prayer caps, traffic police cordoned off the street.

The body arrived at the Timol's home at about 2.30 pm. It was released from police custody at noon, after the post-mortem examination. Then it was taken to the Newtown Mosque for "Friday prayers" and ritual bathing, which precedes the funeral.

When the last mourner had turned his back on the grave, a thunder shower broke from the overcast sky.