

**Profile**



Ahmed Timol, born in 1941, had from an early age shown an interest in politics and was inspired by activities of the Congress movement.

He was a keen sportsperson and a popular teacher. While studying abroad in the late sixties he joined the ANC. Upon his return to South Africa, he was involved in building the underground of the ANC. In the course of his duties, he was arrested and shortly thereafter, died at the hands of the police.

**Timol's death shocked the nation**

Five days after his arrest on 22 October 1971, Ahmed Timol fell to his death. In addition, the police beat up Timol's comrade, Mohamed Salim Essop, so badly that he had to be hospitalised. They also detained at least 11 people and raided the homes of 100 others. Timol's brother Mohamed, also in detention, was not allowed to attend his funeral.

Even though the early 1970s was a time of severe repression, our community and the country as whole was deeply affected. Thousands showed their anger and their grief.

- In Durban a National Day of Mourning was called for 10 November 1971. Large numbers of shops closed and school children stayed away.
- A prayer meeting held in Johannesburg attracted a crowd of over 1200.
- All businesses closed on the day Timol was buried and several thousand attended his funeral.
- Schools in Lenasia held a one day sit-in.
- Mass protest meetings were held at Johannesburg College of Education and Wits University.
- 500 lecturers and staff at Natal University called for a judicial commission of inquiry.

**Between 1963 and 1983, twelve people lost their lives while in detention in Johannesburg police stations.**

9 Sept 64	Babla Sateqjee (28)	The Greys, "jumped" from 7th floor	65 days
27 Oct 71	Ahmed Timol (30)	JV Square, "jumped" from 10th floor	5 days
28 Sept 76	Fenuai Mogatusi (22)	JHB Fort, "epileptic fit"	70 days
5 Oct 76	Jacob Mashabane (22)	JHB Fort, "suicide"	4 days
9 Oct 76	Edward Mzolo (40)	JHB Fort, undisclosed	8 days
11 Dec 76	W. Tshazhane (30)	JV Square, "suicide"	2 days
9 Jan 77	Lawrence Ndzanga (52)	JHB Fort, "heart failure"	51 days
20 Jan 77	Elmon Malele (61)	JV Square, "brain haemorrhage"	13 days
15 Feb 77	M. Mabehane (22)	JV Square, "fell" from 10th floor	18 days
5 Feb 82	Dr Neil Aggett (28)	JV Square, "suicide"	70 days
8 Aug 82	Ernest Dipale (21)	JV Square, "suicide"	3 days
5 July 83	Paris Malajji (23)	Proten Police Station, shot in forehead	1 day

**"Ahmed Essop Timol, an Asiatic male, 30 years old, born in South Africa, a teacher, died on October 27 1971, from serious brain injuries and loss of blood when he jumped from a window from the 10th floor of John Vorster Square. The cause of death is suicide and nobody is to blame." — This was the finding of Mr JIL De Villiers at the end of the 8 month long inquest into the death of the 22nd person known to have died while in detention.**