

# Millions outraged in Britain at savage police assault on family at Manchester Airport

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The savage beating by armed police of a Muslim family at Manchester Airport in the north-west of England has sparked outrage in Britain and internationally. A protest was held in Manchester city centre Thursday evening in which hundreds blocked roads and trams, carrying placards denouncing police brutality and racism.

Footage of the assault was shot on Tuesday evening at the airport's Terminal 2 by Amar Rafiq, who was returning to Manchester from Qatar. His and other clips of the incident shot by other witnesses have been viewed many millions of times on social media, with one X repost alone viewed 10.1 million times.

The two men filmed being assaulted were named as brothers Fahir Khan, aged 19, and Amaad, 25, from Rochdale, in Greater Manchester. Fahir was booted in the head, then had his head stamped on by a police officer during the assault. His lawyer Ahmed Yakoob has since confirmed that a CT scan found that he now has a cyst on his brain. He commented that his client is "fighting for his life" and that his health has "worsened since last night [Wednesday]."

A 44-second video shows in the first few seconds Fahir being kicked in the face and his head stamped on by a Greater Manchester Police (GMP) officer after he had already been tasered and lay immobile on the floor with his hands behind his back. The officer then rams his knee into Fahir's back before going out of shot for a few seconds.

At 22 seconds into the clip, the officer moves to confront another person sitting on a bench. He aims a taser at him and shouts "get down" twice. As the man, who has both arms behind his head, complies and begins to drop to the floor, the GMP officer boots him in the leg (26 seconds) before punching him in the head with the hand holding the taser which smashes him to the floor. He is then handcuffed with hands behind his back, face down on the ground.

Voices are heard saying "stop kicking people," and "you're on camera."

The mother of the two is seen trying to help Amaad, after tending to Fahir, but is pushed away by police.

Another clip, viewed over 730,000 times, shows the same scene from a different angle immediately after the first youth has been brutally attacked, with the same officer beating the second man.

More footage of the aftermath of the original police attack shows three armed police, with one pointing a taser at a person's face and other officers poised to deploy their tasers. The police officer

pointing the taser issues an instruction to the two other officers who approach bystanders as the video ends.

Another clip shows the end of the same confrontation from behind. The police attack continues as one of the three bystanders is pepper-sprayed in the face and then dragged brutally to the ground by two officers, with one holding him to the ground with the full force of his body.

Rafiq told *MailOnline*, "I was just gobsmacked. The police [officer] just kicked the guy in the face."

"Everyone was worried about themselves, they started panicking and rushing away, they feared they would be attacked."

The newspaper reported, "He added he did not see what happened to the men or the woman accompanying them because officers sent everyone away from the scene."

"Mr Rafiq said at least ten officers were present at the time."

Exactly what led to the altercation is unclear, but nothing justifies the horrific violence meted out by the police. Fahir could have been killed instantly and is still in mortal danger.

George Galloway, the leader of the Workers Party of Britain—who until losing his seat at the July 4 general election was MP for Rochdale—said in a statement posted on X Thursday afternoon, "I've got videos [of the assault] that most of you have not seen and are even worse than those you have seen. I have called on Greater Manchester Police to suspend the officers involved, and indeed to consider arrests and charges of the worst offenders of what was an egregious and savage assault on former constituents of mine."

At some stage in the beatings, the police arrested Fahir and Amaad, who were held overnight. Speaking alongside the brothers on Thursday, lawyer Yakoob said, "I'm with Amaad and Fahir here. They were released not long ago from Cheadle Heath Police Station. They then had to make their own way to the hospital, but in reality because they've had head injuries it was the police duty to take them to the hospital."

"But nevertheless they made their own way and now I've documented their injuries and we are headed to Rochdale Police Station to make a formal complaint of assault and wounding against the police officers that have assaulted both Fahir and Amaad and their elderly mother who was just there as a bystander."

The release of the footage sparked protests, with demonstrations taking place Wednesday evening outside Rochdale police headquarters and the Manchester city centre office of Labour Party

Mayor Andy Burnham. Outside the police station, protesters chanted “Shame on you,” with one demonstrator telling the crowd, “We’re no longer going to settle for this police brutality. We put our trust in the police and what do they do instead? They inflict violence upon us when we surrender to them.”

The initial response of Greater Manchester Police on Wednesday was to play down the assault by their officers. A first statement issued at 4:03 p.m. did not mention the content of the video of Fahir and Amaad being attacked. A second issued at 8:36 p.m. had to retreat, describing the footage as “truly shocking” and stating that “the use of such force in an arrest is an unusual occurrence.” It added, “We acknowledge the concerns of the conduct within the video, and our Professional Standards Directorate are assessing this.”

It added, without providing any evidence, “In advance of what is shown in the footage available, we were called to reports of an assault at Terminal 2 Manchester Airport at 8:25pm on Tuesday 23 July. The alleged suspect was seen on CCTV at a ticket machine in the car park and officers attended the location to arrest him.”

The statement claims, “During our response, three officers were assaulted. One female officer suffered a broken nose, and the other officers were forced to the ground and suffered injuries which required hospital treatment.”

It then acknowledged, “One male officer has been removed from operational duties and we are making a voluntary referral our policing response to the IOPC [Independent Office for Police Conduct].”

On Thursday morning, GMP were forced by growing anger to put out another statement that “Following a thorough review of further information that has become available in relation to an incident at Manchester Airport on Tuesday evening, Greater Manchester Police has suspended a police officer from all duties.”

Such is the concern in ruling circles, with many thousands of people in Rochdale and other towns with a large Muslim population regularly protesting against Israel’s genocide in Gaza, and with riots breaking out last week in Leeds, that Labour Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer spoke out Thursday.

Starmer said of the video, “I’ve seen it myself. I understand that concern,” adding “There has now been the suspension of one police officer this morning and the Home Secretary is meeting the Mayor [of Greater Manchester] to discuss this as we speak now.”

These are crocodile tears from a government committed to a law-and-order agenda and cracking down on dissent and protest, staffed by a Labour Party which has sought to whip up Islamophobic sentiment against Gaza war protesters.

Starmer has a track record of refusing to prosecute police officers involved in the killing of civilians. Taking over as Director of Public Prosecutions in 2008, he approved the decision not to prosecute any of the police officers involved in the brutal shooting murder of innocent Brazilian Jean Charles de Menezes during an anti-terror operation.

In 2011, he attempted the same in the case of Ian Tomlinson, a father of nine who was attacked by police officer Simon Harwood in 2009. Tomlinson died shortly after. Fifteen months later, Starmer announced that Harwood would not be prosecuted. The Crown Prosecution Service was forced to proceed a few months

later when an inquest jury found that Tomlinson had been unlawfully killed.

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A WSWS reporter spoke to Shabnam, one of the protesters who attended the demonstration in Manchester city centre on Thursday evening.

Shabnam said, “There were over 200 at the protest. There were a few police but they left us to do what we had to do. And that was to let Greater Manchester Police know that they’re thugs, and that we’re not going to stop until these officers, not officer, are arrested and charged with attempted murder, and GBH [grievous bodily harm].

“A young lad has now got a cyst on his brain and this is police brutality and it’s not good enough. That could have been anyone’s mother that got hit and it could be anyone’s son that got hit; anyone’s brother, cousin, friend. If his mother would not have moved his head [as the police officer stamped on it] that boy would have died. We see it, it’s there on the internet. You cannot justify police brutality.”

Shabnam brought a homemade placard reading, “No police has ever gone to prison for murder of innocent civilians in the UK - More than 1,900 people killed by police since 1990 - Justice Where?”

She explained, “The only police officer that been arrested in recent time is Wayne Couzens who was caught for Sarah Everard’s murder.

“And I see it from attending Palestine protests and I’ve seen what they [the police] have done on Just Stop Oil protests. Why are the police going after people who are protesting climate change and things that matter politically to us, like genocide?

“You can’t speak the truth. This country is turning into the United States of America and people should be petrified of what is to come next because once our freedom of speech is removed we are doomed. I am a human being, I have a voice and no-one can take that away and I will carry on fighting against Zionism and for the UK to stop arming Israel. It’s all intertwined.”

Asked if she thought the laws in place against the right to protest would be used more widely against the working class, Shabnam replied, “Absolutely. Especially with the Labour Party and [prime minister] Keir Starmer, who is literally a kid starver. Look what he did a few days ago. He suspended seven of his own MPs who wanted to scrap the two-child benefit cap, when you’ve got all this child poverty in the UK. We are living in very dark times.”



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