



# DEAD MAN TALKING



Nicholas Azzopardi says he was beaten up by police officers inside the Floriana depot. Last week he died. His family are now calling for justice to be done

## MATTHEW VELLA

THE family of Nicholas Azzopardi, the man who revealed on his deathbed that he was beaten up by his police interrogators, and who died subsequently in hospital on 22 April, yesterday recounted the harrowing version of events they believe had led to the mysterious death of Azzopardi.

Flanked by MaltaToday editor

Saviour Balzan, and lawyer Toni Abela, Reno Azzopardi gave a blow-by-blow account of the events between the 9 April and 22 April, as well as publishing for the first time a video of his brother speaking on his deathbed about his ordeal.

Azzopardi, 38, had been reported by the police to have escaped from police headquarters and suffered fatal injuries when he jumped over a wall on 9 April.

Last Sunday, the story broke on MaltaToday of how Azzopardi had been mysteriously found in a ditch beneath the CID officers, after police claimed he had escaped a police escort and jumped down.

In the video, an ailing Azzopardi says he was brought in for questioning at the police headquarters in Floriana on Tuesday evening on 8 April, where he arrived with his daughter. There he was met by his estranged

wife and her mother, who took his daughter. He was then led downstairs to a cell by two police officers, whom he said had no police numbers.

It was there that Azzopardi said he was attacked by the police officers, after retaliating in self-defence by pushing one of his interrogators against the cell door.

As declared by his brother Reno yesterday, Nicholas had been reported to the police by

his wife of having molested his daughter. "It must be stated that his wife had serious problems of alcoholism. Even social workers had been previously attacked by her family. While Nicholas had been granted the full custody of his daughter, it was the courts which had noted that his wife could not be the guardian of their daughter due to her psychological instability and previous alcoholism problems."

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