

# Egypt tech firm aids virus fight with 3D-printed face shields

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Tue, 2020-04-28 13:05

CAIRO: Many health care workers in Egypt's threadbare hospital system must provide their own protective gear, so when a digital design company started 3-D printing face shields, they gratefully accepted.

Since the novel coronavirus first hit Egypt, medical doctor Yahya Diwer has been working all-night shifts as head of an intensive care unit in a Cairo hospital.

Around 100 COVID-19 cases have since passed through his Sheikh Zayed Al-Nahyan hospital, located in a low-income suburb of the capital, exposing staff to a heightened risk of contagion.

So when Diwer spotted a widely shared social media post by the Cairo-based tech company Giza Systems last month he was among the first to get in touch via Facebook.

The company uses digital printing technology mainly to produce assistive devices for people with disabilities, working in a lab called Project Nitrous.

With the arrival of the virus – which has by now infected over 4,000 people and claimed 300 lives in Egypt, according to government data – the company quickly jumped into action.

It designed a face shield that can be printed in plastic, cut out by laser and simply assembled, and started delivering the devices to thousands of doctors – for free.

"You feel safe wearing it and the design is sleek," Diwer told AFP. "It's easier than wearing a set of goggles and can be easily cleaned."

Mohamed El Hossary, director of Giza Systems' Education Foundation, said its usual work aims to create "everyday solutions for those with a disability.

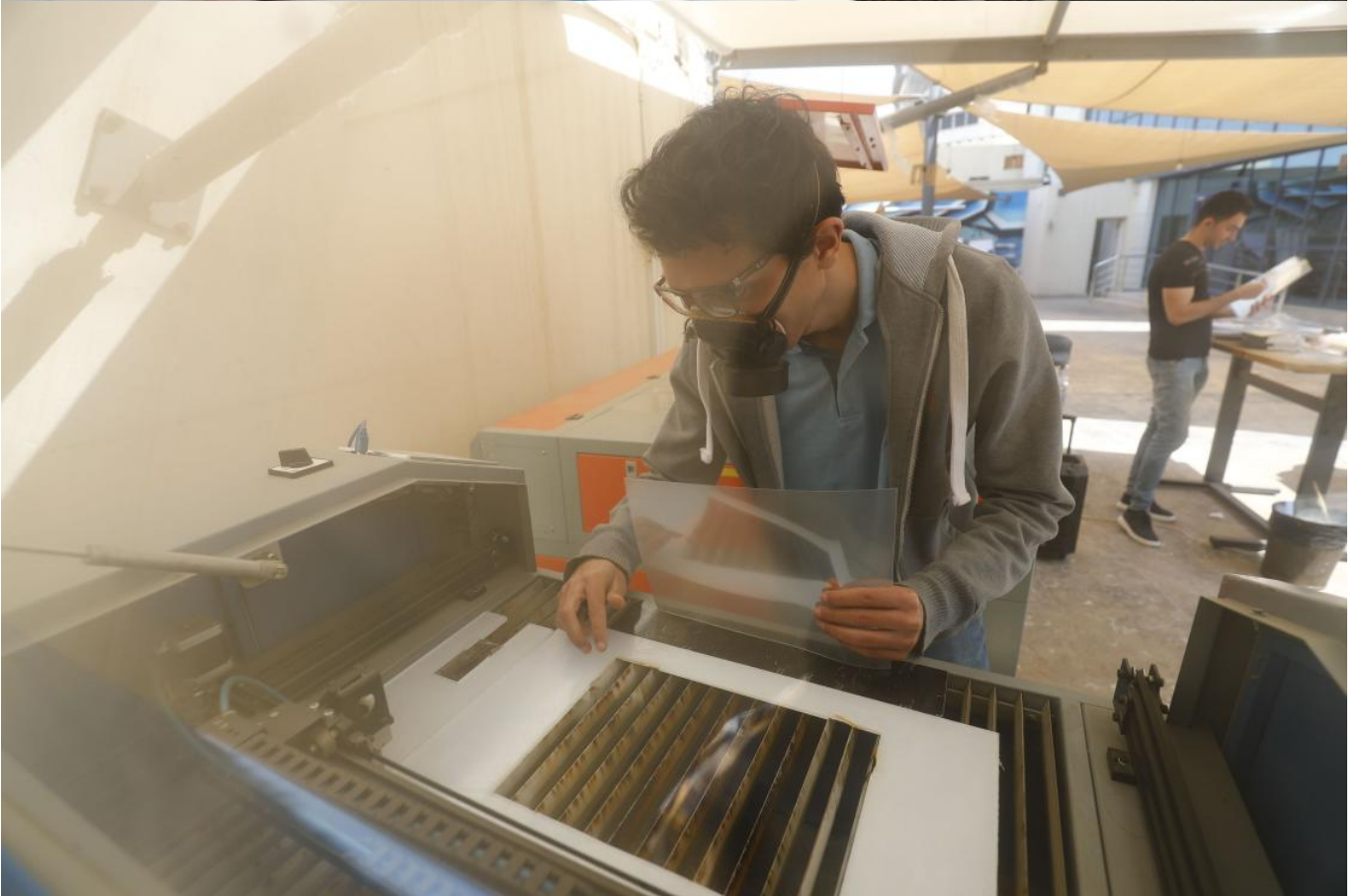
"Since we have experience in assistive technology, we went down to hospitals and asked them what they needed, and that's how we came up with manufacturing a face shield."

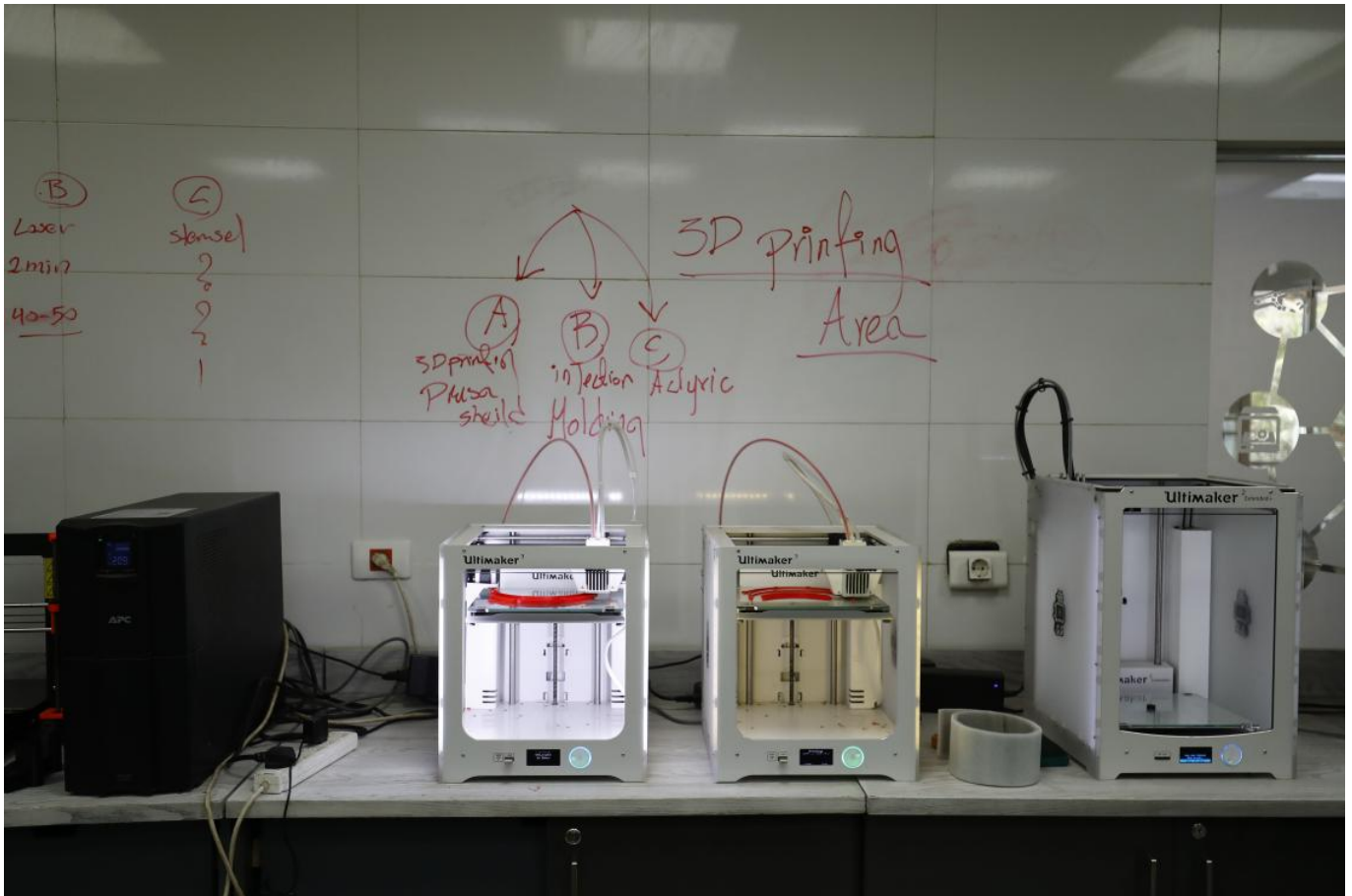
The firm is now distributing around 2,000 face shields a day to medics nationwide and has partnerships with around 25 public and private hospitals. Volunteers such as university student Abdel-Raziq Sabry, 21, help by packing the devices for shipment.

"You don't want to be sitting at home doing nothing when you can be doing something to help doctors and society as well as the country," he said.

The frontline efforts of Diwer's team have been honored. His hospital was chosen by the health ministry as one of the major isolation wards where virus carriers can recover.

In a message he posted on Facebook, the doctor paid tribute to his staff as well as the tech company, saying that "we are so humbled and honored to fight for the people against COVID-19."





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## [Eastern Libyan forces say Turkish drone killed 5 civilians](#)

Author:

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Tue, 2020-04-28 13:36

CAIRO: Eastern Libyan forces laying siege to the country's capital of Tripoli accused their rivals Tuesday of staging an attack in which a Turkish drone hit a food truck convoy in the country's west, killing at least five civilians.

The militia groups loosely allied with a UN-supported but weak government in Tripoli denied attacking civilians, saying they targeted trucks carrying equipment and ammunition for eastern forces trying to take the capital. Khalifa Haftar, who declared the start of an operation to root out the militias and unify the country in 2014, is commander of the east-based forces attempting to take control of Tripoli. They control most of eastern and southern Libya. The besieged administration in Tripoli rules just a corner of the country's west. Both sides are supported by a network of fractious militias and foreign powers.

Haftar launched his Tripoli offensive last April. In recent weeks, violence has escalated, with both sides accusing each other of shelling civilian neighborhoods. The UN has said the violence and worsening humanitarian crisis in Libya could amount to war crimes.

Turkey has sent armored drones, air defenses and more recently, Syrian militants with links to extremist groups to prop up the embattled Tripoli government.

There was no immediate comment from Turkish officials on the alleged drone attack.

Ahmed Al-Mosmari, a spokesman for Haftar forces, said the drone strike took place late Monday near the district of Mizda, 184 kilometers south of Tripoli.

The attack came after Haftar, in an attempted show of strength, declared Monday that a 2015 UN-brokered political deal to unite the oil-rich country was "a thing of the past."

The Tripoli-based government said it wasn't surprised by Haftar's announcement and urged Libyans to join "a comprehensive dialogue and continue on the democratic path to reach a comprehensive and permanent solution based on ballot boxes."

While the 2015 agreement has failed to bring unity or stability to the divided country, Haftar's announcement threatens to further complicate UN efforts to broker a political settlement to the civil war.

In Brussels, European Commission spokesman Peter Stano on Tuesday criticized Haftar's announcement. He said "any attempt to push forward unilateral solutions, even more so by force, will never provide a sustainable solution for the country."

Stano said the December 2015 agreement remains the most viable framework for a political solution in Libya. He called on international stakeholders in Libya to "increase their pressure" on the warring parties to end the fighting and bring about a political settlement.

Jalel Harchaoui, a Libya expert at The Netherlands Institute of International Relations, said Haftar's move was "pretty much a coup" that revealed "aspirations that aren't new."

"Haftar takes yet another step toward full military autocracy and absolute control over the territories currently aligned with the LNA," he said. The move could also give the military commander an opportunity to take economic measures to address serious economic and financial crises in areas under his control.

Libya has been in turmoil since 2011, when a civil war toppled long-time dictator Muammar Qaddafi, who was later killed. The chaos has worsened in the recent round of fighting as foreign backers increasingly intervene, despite their pledges to the contrary at a high-profile peace summit in Berlin

earlier this year.



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Libya's Haftar declares UN unity deal 'thing of the past' War-weary Libyans view virus lockdown as another inconvenience

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## [Egypt registers highest number of new coronavirus infections](#)

Author:

Reuters

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1588089648047924600

Tue, 2020-04-28 15:46

CAIRO: Egypt registered 260 new infections of the novel coronavirus and 22 deaths, the health ministry said on Tuesday, the highest daily rise for both

figures.

In total 5,042 people have been infected and 359 died since the start of the outbreak, the ministry said in a statement. A total of 1,304 have recovered. Egypt, a country of 100 million, has closed its airports to contain the pandemic and imposed a night curfew but pushed back the starting time to 9 p.m., two hours later than initially in place.



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## [Moroccans praised for solidarity, charity in Italy](#)

Tue, 2020-04-28 18:04

ROME: Since the start of the coronavirus crisis, the 700,000-strong Moroccan community in Italy has strived to help those in need, in a country that has been hit particularly hard by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

They have no intention to stop doing so during Ramadan, Moroccan Ambassador to Italy Youssef Balla told Arab News.

“Moroccans in Italy have been living the coronavirus crisis just like their Italian brothers live it: In self-isolation, applying social distancing, respecting the rules imposed by the health emergency,” he said, adding that Moroccans constitute “the biggest Arab community in this country.”

According to Italian news agency ANSA, “Moroccans are currently the largest non-EU immigrant community in Italy.”

With the goal of promoting bilateral friendships, numerous cultural and religious projects have been initiated in recent years.

“We’re talking about a well-integrated community that acts as a human bridge between Italy and Morocco,” said Balla, who has been ambassador in Italy since July 2019, having previously been posted in Peru.

“It’s an economically active community – 20 percent of the Moroccan community is composed of entrepreneurs.”

In the previous legislature, Italy’s Parliament included two MPs of Moroccan origin. Many Moroccans are doctors who have been working in Italian hospitals to combat COVID-19.



The embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in Italy. (Screenshot/AN Photo)

Moroccans in Italy mainly live in the north: In Lombardy, Piedmont and Emilia Romagna. Those are the regions suffering the highest death tolls due to COVID-19, and where infection rates have still not dramatically decreased.

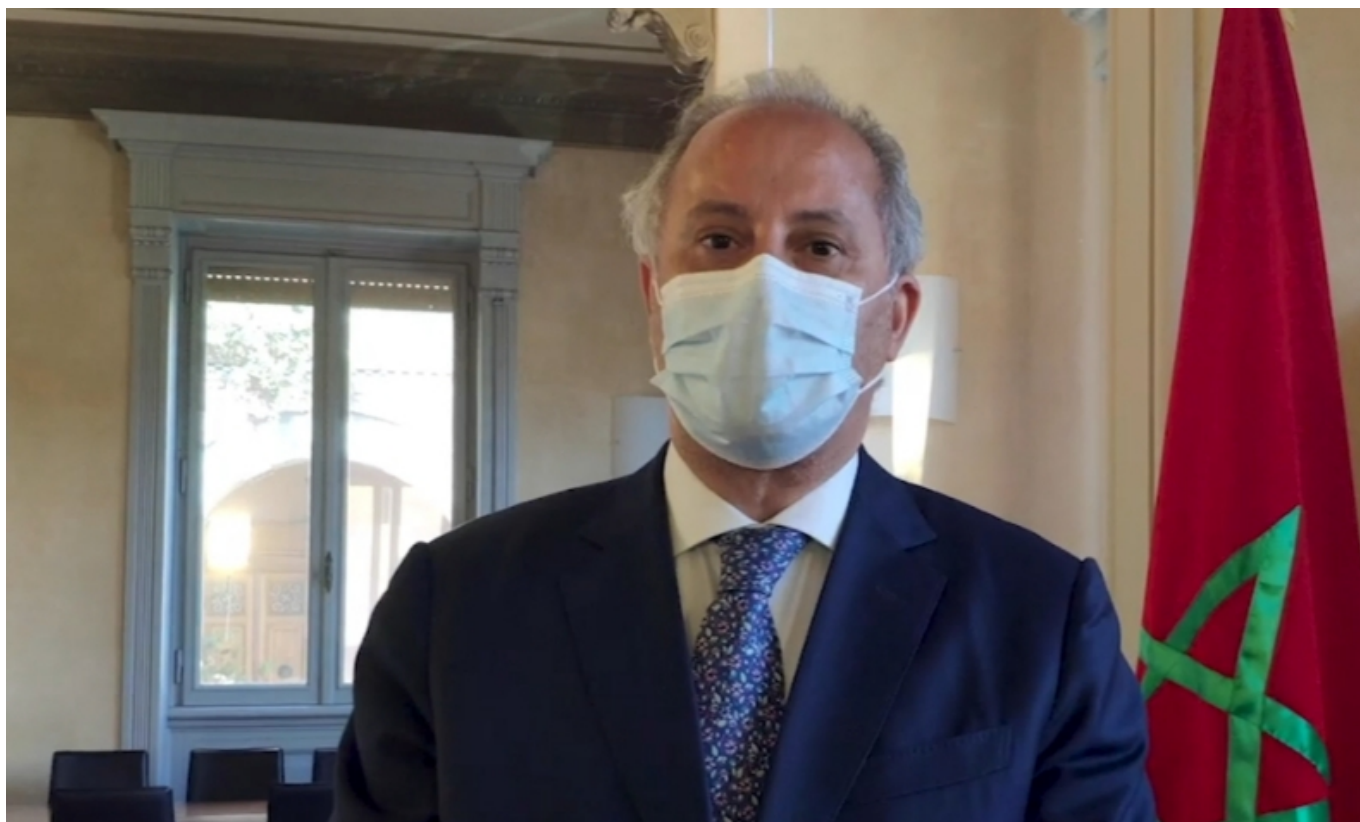
“We’re in the month of Ramadan, a sacred month of spirituality, but also a month of joy during which visits are exchanged, and family and human ties become stronger and stronger. Unfortunately, these traditions this year can’t be respected,” Balla said.

“From the very first moment of the COVID-19 crisis, the Moroccan community has mobilized together with the Italian brothers to bring support and help to both Italian and Moroccan families, without any distinction of race or religion,” he added.

“Moroccans have helped support the impressive effort made so far by the Red Cross and Civil Protection with many donations,” he said.

“We’ve been witnessing many acts of solidarity among Moroccans ... Food aid is donated to the most needy families,” he added.

“There have also been many manifestations of solidarity from Moroccan entrepreneurs ... who have given food to the needy and to medical staff.”



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## [Fuel truck bomb kills more than 20 in northern Syria: monitor](#)

Author:

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1588087004467762600

Tue, 2020-04-28 14:51

Beirut: A fuel truck bomb killed more than 20 people, including at least six Turkey-backed rebel fighters, on Tuesday in a northern Syrian city controlled by Ankara's local proxies, a war monitor said.

"At least 22 people including civilians were killed and 27 others wounded when an explosive device inside a fuel truck exploded in a market" in the Afrin region, said Rami Abdul Rahman, the head of the Britain-based Syrian

Observatory for Human Rights.



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