

Sudan arrests journalists, confiscates papers for reporting on inflation protests

Sudanese authorities should cease harassing and arresting journalists and confiscating newspapers, and should allow journalists to report on matters of public interest without fear of reprisal, the Committee to Protect Journalists said today.



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Sudan's National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) on January 16 and 17 separately arrested seven journalists while they were reporting on anti-inflation protests in Khartoum state, according to [news reports](#) and the independent Sudanese Journalists Network (SJN).

Reporters Magdi al-Ajib of the local privately owned newspaper *al-Watan*, Rishan Oushi of the local privately owned newspaper *Mijhar al-Siyasi*, Imtenan Al-Radi of the local privately owned newspaper *al-Youm al-Tali*, and freelance journalist Amal Habani were arrested on January 16; Shawky Abdelazim, *al-Youm al-Tali* editor, Khalid Abdelaziz, Reuters' Sudan correspondent, and Abdelmunim Abudris, AFP's correspondent, were arrested yesterday, according to [news reports](#) and [SJN](#). All remain in custody.

A spokesperson for SJN who does not want to be named for safety reasons told CPJ in an emailed statement that the journalists' families could not determine their whereabouts or if they are facing any charges.

NISS agents also confiscated at least three newspapers multiple times this week over critical coverage of the protests, according to [news reports](#).

"By arresting and intimidating journalists, confiscating newspapers and attempting to censor news dissemination, the Sudanese authorities keep trying to get journalists to stick to the official narrative or pay the price," CPJ Middle East and North Africa program coordinator Sherif Mansour said. "We call on the authorities to release the seven journalists immediately and allow the press to do its job."

NISS did not respond to CPJ's request for comment sent via email.

The authorities detained at least four other journalists covering the protests on January 16, and released them after a few hours. Sudanese authorities "briefly detained" BBC reporter Mohamed Osman and cameraman Muhannad Bilal, but allowed them to continue reporting after a "short delay," a BBC spokesperson told CPJ via email.

Additionally, NISS held Abdelaziz Ibrahim, a producer with the Saudi-owned Al-Arabiya TV, according to a [statement](#) from his employer, and Maamoun Al-Tilib, a reporter for the privately owned *al-Sudani*, according to [news reports](#).

Agents confiscated privately owned newspaper *al-Jarida* today and on January 15, after editors refused to follow an agent's order and remove all their coverage of the protests, according to news reports.

NISS confiscated privately owned newspaper *al-Tayar* on January 16, and the socialist party's paper *al-Midan* for the past three days, according to [news reports](#) and SJN.

Earlier this month, NISS agents confiscated all copies for six newspapers, including *al-Tayar* and *al-Midan*, for their critical coverage of rising food prices in the country, CPJ [reported](#) at the time.

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