

23 May 2018

Iran: Human rights defender Mohammad Habibi denied bail

On 16 May 2018 human rights defender **Mohammad Habibi** was denied bail. He remains, to this day, detained in Great Tehran Prison with no access to his legal counsel. He sustained injuries during from his violent arrest outside the building of the State Budget and Planning Organization in Tehran on 10 May. He had been participating in a peaceful demonstration against the unjust economic situation of teachers and the ongoing privatisation of the educational system in Iran.

[Mohammad Habibi](#) is a human rights defender and an active member of the board of directors of the Teacher's Trade Union of Tehran, through which he organizes regular assemblies. He has been a teacher for eighteen years, employed by the Iranian Ministry of Education. He also runs a Telegram channel, through which he broadcasts messages to a large audience, and updates people on news about the status of teachers' demands.

Seven other human rights defenders were detained along with Mohammad Habibi on 10 May, but they were released on bail after three days. Mohammad Habibi was transferred from section one to section two of Great Tehran Prison on 21 May. He remains in urgent need of medical treatment for the injuries he sustained during his arrest.

On 15 May 2018, Mohammad Habibi called his family to inform them that he would be released on bail. But his application for bail was denied after his family came to the prison the following day. The human rights defender is being denied access to and communication with his legal counsel.

The human rights defender was also targeted on 3 March 2018, when he was arrested in front of the school where he teaches. He was taken to his home, where security agents ransacked his house. He spent the first two weeks of his detention in solitary confinement, before being transferred to a communal block of Evin prison. He was released on bail on 15 April 2018. Mohammad Habibi was charged with "collusion with the aim of disrupting national security" and "propaganda against the regime".

Mohammad Habibi's detention is part of the ongoing repression of labour rights defenders in Iran, which has intensified in recent months. The majority of the labour rights' defenders have been protesting the poor working conditions contained in their contracts and extended periods of unpaid wages. Since the beginning of this year labour rights demonstrations have taken place in various Iranian cities, which have frequently been disbanded by state security.

Front Line Defenders believes that the detention of Mohammad Habibi is directly related to his work in defence of human rights.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Iran to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally release Mohammad Habibi, as Front Line Defenders believes that he is being held solely as a result of his legitimate and peaceful work in the defence of human rights;
2. Drop all charges against Mohammad Habibi as it is believed that they are solely motivated by his legitimate and peaceful work in defence of human rights;
3. Allow Mohammad Habibi immediate and unfettered access to his lawyers;
4. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of Mohamad Habibi;
5. Cease targeting all human rights defenders in Iran and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.