

18 June 2021

Sudan: Charges against human rights defender Hafiz Haron

On 16 June 2021, the second hearing session for human rights defender **Hafiz Haron** was held before of the Criminal Court of Khartoum Bahri Wasat, and the next hearing is scheduled to be held on 24 June 2021. Hafiz Haron is facing several charges including 'threatening the police', 'hindering the police' and 'public annoyance'.

[Hafiz Haron](#) is a Sudanese human rights defender and journalist with Al-Tayar newspaper. His works focuses on documenting human rights violations in Darfur and other conflict areas in Sudan. The human rights defender also works on documenting police violence in Sudan.

On 20 May 2021, Hafiz Haron was subjected to a robbery attempt and found a thief in his house in Al-Khartoum Bahri. The human rights defender attempted to submit a complaint at the local police station, and asked the police to detain the thief. The police refused to log the human rights defender's complaint and after Hafiz Haron insisted, the police detained him for approximately 12 hours. During this time, the human rights defender told Front Line Defenders that he was subjected to verbal and physical abuse. Hafiz Haron was later released on condition that he presented himself at the police station a few days later. Following his release, the human rights defender was hospitalised as a result of the physical abuse he was subjected to during his detention. He had pains in his neck and ear but no severe injuries.

On 23 May 2021, Hafiz Haron went to the administrative police station to submit a complaint against the police who arrested him on 20 May. The police officers asked him to withdraw the complaint. When the human rights defender refused he was arrested again for approximately six hours and was released on bail. On the same day he was charged with several offences including 'threatening the police', 'hindering the police' and 'public annoyance'. However, the human rights defender reported that he is facing another charge, which the police did not disclose to him.

On 2 June 2021, the first hearing session for the human rights defender's case was held before the Criminal Court of Khartoum Bahar Wasat. The court heard from two police officers who testified as witnesses against Hafiz Haron. On 16 June 2021, the second hearing session was held before the same Court, where more police officers testified as witnesses against the human rights defender. The next hearing is scheduled to be held on 24 June 2021, where the Court will be hearing from other witnesses, and the verdict might be announced.

Hafiz Haron has been frequently harassed by the police, including being subjected to frequent stop and searches by the police. Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned regarding the charges and continuous harassment of the human rights defender. Front Line Defenders believes that Hafiz Haron is being targeted solely as a result of his peaceful and legitimate human rights activism.

Front Line Defenders urges the Sudan authorities:

1. Immediately drop all charges against Hafiz Haron, as it is believed that they are solely motivated by his legitimate and peaceful work in defence of human rights;
2. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the arbitrary detention and physical abuse of human rights defender Hafiz Haron, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;

3. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Sudan are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions [including judicial harassment].