

Advocacy dossier

Hassan Bouras

حسن بوراس

Detained (pretrial) **Algeria**

Hassan Bouras is an Algerian freelance journalist and former member of the dissolved Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights, prosecuted repeatedly since 2003. He has been in pretrial detention since 12 April 2026 on charges that include membership of a terrorist organisation, and was still held in El Abiodh Sidi Cheikh prison awaiting trial in late October 2026.

01
The case at a glance

Hassan Bouras is an Algerian freelance journalist and former member of the dissolved Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights, prosecuted repeatedly since 2003. He has been in pretrial detention since 12 April 2026 on charges that include membership of a terrorist organisation, and was still held in El Abiodh Sidi Cheikh prison awaiting trial in late October 2026.

Status **Detained (pretrial)**	Arrested **12 Apr 2026**	Country **Algeria**
Charges Membership of a terrorist organisation Disseminating publications harmful to the national interest		

What we ask

We call on the authorities to:

01 Release Hassan Bouras immediately and unconditionally.

02 Drop all charges related to the peaceful exercise of fundamental rights.

03 Ensure unrestricted access to legal counsel, family, and adequate medical care while in detention.

02

How the case unfolded

6 November 2003

Conviction

Sentenced to two years and barred from journalism for five years

The El Bayadh court sentenced Hassan Bouras, then correspondent of the dailies El Djazaïri and El Youm and a member of the El Bayadh office of the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights, to two years in prison and a five-year ban on practising journalism for defamation, after the El Bayadh public prosecutor complained about two of his articles. In January 2003 he had received a six-month suspended sentence in another defamation case and was assaulted at home days later.

2008

Conviction

Sentenced to two months over articles on corruption and poverty

Hassan Bouras was sentenced to two months in prison and fined 40,000 Algerian dinars over press articles on corruption and poverty.

2 October 2015

Arrest

Arrested at his family home in El Bayadh

About 30 officers of the Research and Intervention Brigades arrested him at his family home in El Bayadh and seized his and his two sisters' phones and computers. He began a hunger strike the same day. On 4 October he was charged with incitement to violence and revolt against the state and insulting state institutions, and was detained pending investigation; Front Line Defenders reported on 13 October that he was on hunger strike and in solitary confinement in Al-Hawd prison. He was released on 18 January 2016; it was unclear whether the charges had been dropped.

28 November 2016

Conviction

Sentenced to one year over a video on local corruption

The first instance court of El Bayadh sentenced him to one year in prison for insulting a judge or public officer, insulting and defaming state institutions and unlawfully practising a regulated profession, over a video in which local residents alleged police and judicial corruption. He was imprisoned the same day.

17 January 2017

Appeal: sentence reduced

Appeal reduces sentence to six months suspended; released

On appeal, his one-year prison sentence was reduced to a six-month suspended term, and he was released.

6 September 2021

Re-arrest

Arrested in El Bayadh and detained on terrorism-related charges

Police arrested him in El Bayadh and seized his phones and computers. On 12 September 2021 investigating judges at the Sidi M'hamed court in Algiers ordered his provisional detention on charges including spreading fake news, harming national security and a terrorism-related offence under article 87 bis of the Penal Code, after questioning him about alleged links to the unregistered opposition group Rachad. He was held in Koléa prison, near Algiers, hundreds of kilometres from his family. Amnesty International found nothing in his Facebook posts that called for violence or hatred.

30 November 2022

Conviction

Sentenced to two years, one suspended, and released

After more than a year in pretrial detention, he was sentenced to two years in prison, one of them suspended, and a fine. He was released after the verdict, having spent about 14 months in detention.

5 December 2023

Appeal: judgment upheld

Appeal court upholds two-year sentence

The Algiers Appeals Criminal Court upheld a two-year sentence and a fine of 100,000 Algerian dinars for insulting a regulatory body and publishing and promoting malicious news. He was acquitted of more serious charges, including conspiracy to change the regime and praising terrorism.

12 April 2026

Re-arrest

Re-arrested outside his home in El Bayadh

Plain-clothes security agents arrested him outside his home in El Bayadh on the eve of the Pope's visit to Algeria, reportedly without a warrant. That evening officers searched his home and confiscated a laptop.

13 April 2026

Pretrial detention ordered

Investigating judge orders pretrial detention

An investigating judge at the El Bayadh court ordered his pretrial detention on four accusations, two felonies and two misdemeanours, including membership of a terrorist organisation and disseminating publications deemed harmful to the national interest.

May 2026

Hunger strike begins

Begins hunger strike against his detention

He began an open-ended hunger strike to protest his detention; Amnesty International gives the start as 3 May 2026, and the UN experts say he was placed in solitary confinement on 2 May for starting it. The UN experts say the strike lasted 26 days, during which he collapsed twice and developed serious health complications without adequate medical care, despite existing cardiac and respiratory conditions; the Algerian government says it ran from 15 to 21 May. Amnesty reported that he also suffers from rheumatism and asthma, which had worsened in prison.

22 June 2026

Referral to trial

Case referred to the criminal court

His case was referred to the local criminal court, where it is pending trial.

10 July 2026

Other act

UN experts call for his immediate release

The Special Rapporteurs on freedom of expression (Irene Khan), on human rights while countering terrorism (Ben Saul) and on human rights defenders, together with the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, expressed deep concern about the risks to his life and health, said his arrest followed a pattern of judicial harassment linked to his journalism and human rights work, and called for his immediate release and access to legal counsel and medical care.

23 October 2026

Other act

Still in pretrial detention in El Abiodh Sidi Cheikh prison

He remains in pretrial detention in El Abiodh Sidi Cheikh prison in south-western Algeria, with no trial date announced. He has complained of being held in a high-risk wing with detainees in terrorism cases; his family said in August 2026 that they had provoked and assaulted him. For National Press Day he released a letter from prison addressed to the journalism profession.

03

The full story

Update, 12 November 2026: Hassan Bouras has been in pretrial detention since 12 April 2026 on charges that include membership of a terrorist organisation. His case was referred to the criminal court in June 2026, and in late October he was still held in El Abiodh Sidi Cheikh prison with no trial date announced.

Background and Work

Hassan Bouras, also written Hassan Bourras or Hacène Bouras, is a freelance journalist, blogger and human rights defender from El Bayadh in western Algeria. In the early 2000s he was the El Bayadh correspondent of the dailies El Djazaïri and El Youm and a member of the El Bayadh office of the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights (LADDH), the organisation later dissolved by the authorities. He has reported on local corruption, poverty and torture, and has documented testimony about abuses during the conflict of the 1990s.

His prosecutions began in 2003. In January that year the El Bayadh criminal court gave him a six-month suspended sentence for defamation, and days later he was assaulted at home. On 6 November 2003 the El Bayadh court sentenced him to two years in prison and a five-year ban on practising journalism over two articles that drew a complaint from the local public prosecutor. In 2008 he was sentenced to two months in prison and fined over articles on corruption and poverty.

The Arrest

On 2 October 2015 about 30 officers of the Research and Intervention Brigades arrested him at his family home and seized his and his sisters' phones and computers. He was charged with incitement to violence and revolt against the state and held until 18 January 2016, part of the time on hunger strike and in solitary confinement. On 28 November 2016 the El Bayadh court sentenced him to one year in prison over a video in which residents alleged police and judicial corruption; on 17 January 2017 the appeal court reduced this to six months suspended and he was released.

On 6 September 2021 police arrested him again in El Bayadh. Judges at the Sidi M'hamed court in Algiers ordered his detention on charges that included a terrorism-related offence, after questioning him about alleged links to the opposition group Rachad, and he was held in Koléa prison. In the same statement Amnesty International noted that the human rights defenders and journalists Kaddour Chouicha, Said Boudour and Jamila Loukil had also been arrested and prosecuted under terrorism charges over alleged ties to Rachad and the MAK. On 30 November 2022 he was sentenced to two years, one suspended, and released; on 5 December 2023 the Algiers appeals criminal court upheld a two-year sentence for insulting a regulatory body and spreading malicious news and acquitted him of conspiracy to change the regime and praising terrorism.

On 12 April 2026, on the eve of Pope Leo XIV's visit to Algeria, plain-clothes agents arrested him outside his home in El Bayadh, reportedly without a warrant, and searched his home that evening, confiscating a laptop.

Detention Conditions and Health

He has cardiac problems, rheumatism and asthma, and Amnesty International reported that his asthma worsened in prison. He began an open-ended hunger strike in early May 2026 and was placed in solitary confinement on 2 May; UN experts say the strike lasted 26 days, during which he collapsed twice without adequate medical care, while the Algerian government says it ran from 15 to 21 May. He was later moved to El Abiodh Sidi Cheikh prison, where he has complained of being held in a high-risk wing with detainees in terrorism cases. His family said in August 2026 that he had been provoked and assaulted there. Amnesty reported that he had no lawyer, as his family could not arrange one for financial and geographical reasons.

Legal Proceedings

On 13 April 2026 an investigating judge at the El Bayadh court placed him in pretrial detention on four accusations, two felonies and two misdemeanours, including membership of a terrorist organisation and disseminating publications deemed harmful to the national interest. According to the UN experts, the case was referred to the local criminal court on 22 June 2026, where it awaits trial. No trial date had been announced by late October 2026.

International Response

CPJ called for his immediate and unconditional release on 16 April 2026. On 13 May 2026 Amnesty International described his detention as arbitrary in a statement on detained journalists in Algeria that also covered Saad Bouakba. On 10 July 2026 the UN Special Rapporteurs on freedom of expression, on human rights while countering terrorism and on human rights defenders, together with the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, called for his immediate release and said his arrest followed a pattern of judicial harassment linked to his work.

Latest updates on this case Scan the code or visit: https://humena.org/defenders/hassan-bouras/

HuMENA for Human Rights and Civic Engagement is a non-governmental organisation documenting the situation of human rights defenders in the Middle East and North Africa. This file is based on the public record of the case in the defenders archive. To report an error: archive@humena.org