

Advocacy dossier

Imtithal Abdelfadeel

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At liberty **Sudan**

Imtithal Abdelfadeel is a journalist and member of the Sudanese Journalists Syndicate who reports on displaced communities and women's rights. She was arrested in Kassala in April 2025, held incommunicado for three days and released under a travel ban that, as far as is known, remains in force.

01

The case at a glance

Imtithal Abdelfadeel is a journalist and member of the Sudanese Journalists Syndicate who reports on displaced communities and women's rights. She was arrested in Kassala in April 2025, held incommunicado for three days and released under a travel ban that, as far as is known, remains in force.

Status	Arrested	Country
At liberty	**19 Apr 2025**	**Sudan**

What we ask

We call on the authorities to:

01 Immediately lift the travel ban imposed on Imtithal Abdelfadeel and on any family members affected by the same order.

02 Restore valid travel documents and remove any border-watch flags placed in connection with peaceful human rights work.

03 Comply with the ICCPR Article 12 guarantee of freedom of movement.

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Documented violations

Each violation and the international standard it breaks.

Arbitrary detention International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9

Denial of family visits UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules), Rule 58

Denial of legal counsel International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 14(3)

Judicial harassment UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Articles 9, 12

Press freedom violation International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 19

Threats and intimidation UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, Article 12

Travel ban International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 12

Unlawful surveillance International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 17

03

How the case unfolded

April 2025

Context

Journalists Syndicate condemns her arrest

The Sudanese Journalists Syndicate condemned her arrest and demanded the lifting of all pledges and restrictions imposed on her.

19 April 2025

Arrest

Arrested at bus station in Kassala

Military officers arrested Abdelfadeel at approximately 5:00 a.m. as she prepared to travel to Port Sudan for a journalism assignment. She was blindfolded and her phone was confiscated.

22 April 2025

Conditional release

Released after signing travel ban under duress

After three days of incommunicado detention, Abdelfadeel was released after being coerced into signing an agreement imposing an arbitrary travel ban preventing her from leaving Kassala State or Sudan.

22 April 2025

Travel ban imposed

Barred from leaving Kassala State or Sudan

As a condition of her release she was forced to sign a pledge that bars her from leaving Kassala State or Sudan. No judicial authority ordered or reviewed the ban.

24 April 2025

Call by others

CPJ calls on the army to lift her travel ban

The Committee to Protect Journalists reported that soldiers had searched her phone and social media accounts and questioned her about a journalist safety training she was travelling to and about any funding from international rights groups. It called on the Sudanese Armed Forces to lift the ban barring her from leaving Kassala.

8 May 2025

Call by others

Front Line Defenders calls for restrictions to be lifted

Front Line Defenders reported that she remained under surveillance and arbitrarily banned from travelling, and called for all restrictions on her movement to be lifted immediately and unconditionally.

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The full story

Update, 12 November 2026: this record was checked again. Imtithal Abdelfadeel is free but, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, remains under the travel ban imposed on her release in April 2025; no report of the ban being lifted has been found.

Background and Work

Imtithal Abdelfadeel works as a journalist for Al-Jareeda, a Sudanese daily newspaper. Her reporting focuses on the social and economic rights of internally displaced people, a population that has grown dramatically since the outbreak of armed conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces in April 2023. She is a member of the Sudanese Journalists Syndicate and among a small cohort of young female journalists working in Sudan on issues of women's rights and justice.

Sudan's press environment has deteriorated sharply since the 2021 military coup and the 2023 outbreak of hostilities. Many journalists have fled the country or ceased reporting. Those who remain face checkpoints, arbitrary detention, and restrictions on movement. Abdelfadeel's work on displacement and women's issues places her in a particularly exposed position in a militarised context where such reporting is treated as a threat.

The Arrest

On the morning of 19 April 2025, Abdelfadeel arrived at a bus station in Kassala to begin a journey to Port Sudan, intending to continue from there on a journalism assignment abroad arranged by her employer. At approximately 5:00 a.m., military officers arrested her. They blindfolded her and confiscated her mobile phone. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, soldiers searched her phone and social media accounts and questioned her about a journalist safety training she was travelling to and about any funding from international rights groups.

The arrest occurred hours before her scheduled departure, and authorities appear to have known her travel plans in advance. The timing and circumstances suggest the detention was designed not only to prevent her from leaving but to disrupt her reporting assignment.

Detention and Coercion

Abdelfadeel was held at a detention facility in Kassala State for three days. During that time, she was held incommunicado and subjected to interrogation. She had no access to family members or legal counsel. Authorities provided no formal charge or legal basis for her detention.

On 22 April 2025, she was released after being coerced into signing an agreement under duress. The document imposed an arbitrary travel ban that prohibits her from leaving Kassala State or Sudan. No judicial authority reviewed or authorised the terms of the ban. She was compelled to sign as a condition of her release.

Ongoing Restrictions

Since her release, Abdelfadeel remains under surveillance by state authorities. The travel ban prevents her from undertaking journalism assignments outside Kassala, effectively limiting her

ability to report and earn a living. As of May 2025 the restrictions remained in force without legal review or any stated expiry date. No later information on whether the ban has been lifted has been found.

The ban is part of a broader pattern in Sudan in which journalists and human rights defenders are subjected to arbitrary movement restrictions, interrogation, and harassment designed to silence reporting on abuses committed during the ongoing armed conflict.

International Response

Human rights organisations have called for the immediate lifting of all restrictions on Abdelfadeel's movement and an end to surveillance and harassment. No government authority has provided a legal justification for her detention or the travel ban she was forced to accept. In April 2025 the Sudanese Journalists Syndicate condemned her arrest and demanded the lifting of all pledges and restrictions imposed on her.

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

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