

Advocacy dossier

Naseh Shaker

ناصح شاكر

Imprisoned (serving sentence) **Yemen**

Naseh Shaker is an independent Yemeni journalist who disappeared in Aden on 19 November 2023 and was later found to be held by the Security Belt Forces affiliated with the Southern Transitional Council. A court ordered his release on 20 January 2026, but Bir Ahmed prison has not carried out the ruling and he remains detained.

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The case at a glance

Naseh Shaker is an independent Yemeni journalist who disappeared in Aden on 19 November 2023 and was later found to be held by the Security Belt Forces affiliated with the Southern Transitional Council. A court ordered his release on 20 January 2026, but Bir Ahmed prison has not carried out the ruling and he remains detained.

Status	Arrested	Country
Imprisoned (serving sentence)	**19 Nov 2023**	**Yemen**

Sentence: On 20 January 2026 the Specialised Criminal Court in Aden ruled that the more than 25 months already spent in detention were sufficient and ordered his release; the ruling has not been implemented.

Charges: Spreading false news
Inciting against public order
Harming national interests
Providing media support to the Houthi group

What we ask

We call on the authorities to:

01 Release Naseh Shaker 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.

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How the case unfolded

19 November 2023

Start of enforced disappearance

Disappears in Aden before a flight abroad

Naseh Shaker travelled overnight from his home in Sanaa to Aden to catch a flight to Beirut, where he was due on 21 November 2023 for a hostile environment and first aid course organised by the Samir Kassir Foundation. He spoke to his mother at about 5:30 a.m. on 19 November 2023; his phone was then switched off and he never boarded the flight. The authorities refused for more than a year to disclose his whereabouts.

February 2025

Reappearance in custody

Family learns he is held in a Security Belt prison

A released detainee told his family that he had been held at the al-Nasr Brigade prison, an unofficial detention facility of the Security Belt Forces affiliated with the Southern Transitional Council in Aden, and that he had later been moved to Bir Ahmed prison. Until then the family's repeated inquiries had gone unanswered.

February 2025

Transfer between places of detention

Transferred to Beir Ahmed prison

Shaker was later transferred to Beir Ahmed prison in Aden. The sources consulted give no day for the transfer.

9 September 2025

Other act

Journalists' syndicate reports his detention by Security Belt Forces

The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate reported that he was detained by the UAE-backed Security Belt Forces. A syndicate official said he believed the Southern Transitional Council had arrested him; the Samir Kassir Foundation and the Rory Peck Trust also believed he was held in a prison run by the Council.

December 2025

Charge filed

Charging documents accuse him of false news and media support to the Houthis

According to official charging documents reviewed by the Committee to Protect Journalists, he was being tried through the Specialised Criminal Appeals Prosecution in Aden on accusations of spreading false news, inciting against public order, harming national interests and providing media support to the Houthi group.

17 December 2025

Other act

Joint statement by some 45 organisations calls for his release

A joint statement led by the Committee to Protect Journalists and signed by about 45 organisations, including Human Rights Watch, the Gulf Centre for Human Rights and the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate, called on the leaders of the Presidential Leadership Council to release him immediately and unconditionally and to provide him with urgent medical care.

20 January 2026

Verdict

Court in Aden orders his release on time served

The Specialised Criminal Court in Aden issued a ruling ordering his release and deeming the more than 25 months he had already spent in detention sufficient. The Public Prosecution did not appeal within the legal deadline, so the ruling became final and enforceable.

5 February 2026

Detention beyond the end of a sentence

Bir Ahmed prison refuses to carry out the release ruling

The Committee to Protect Journalists and the Yemeni Media Freedoms Observatory (Marsadak) wrote to the head of the Presidential Leadership Council, Rashad al-Alimi, and council member Abdul Rahman al-Mahrami, stating that the security authorities and the administration of Bir Ahmed prison had not implemented the ruling. They said he had been tortured, held in solitary confinement and, for a period, denied visits and access to a lawyer, and asked for an investigation into the non-enforcement.

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The full story

Update, 12 November 2026: Naseh Shaker remains held in Bir Ahmed prison in Aden although a court ordered his release on 20 January 2026. The Yemeni Media Freedoms Observatory reported that he was still detained on 15 August 2026, and no release has been reported since.

Background and Work

Naseh Ahmed Mohammed Shaker is an independent Yemeni journalist from Sanaa. The Gulf Centre for Human Rights describes him as known for reporting on the humanitarian toll of the war in Yemen, in particular on children and civilians. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists and a joint statement of December 2025, he contributed to Al Jazeera English, Middle East Eye, Voice of America, Al-Monitor and The New Arab, provided analysis to CNN, and had work published in Responsible Statecraft, the magazine of the Quincy Institute.

The Disappearance

In November 2023 he was due to travel to Beirut for a hostile environment and first aid course organised by the Samir Kassir Foundation, starting on 21 November. He travelled overnight from Sanaa to Aden, the seat of the internationally recognised government, where the Southern Transitional Council and its Security Belt Forces then held de facto control. He spoke to his mother at about 5:30 a.m. on 19 November 2023. His phone was then switched off and he did not board his flight; his brother, Abdullah Ahmad Shaker, told the Committee to Protect Journalists that the family could no longer reach him.

For more than a year the authorities refused to disclose where he was. His family's repeated inquiries went unanswered until February 2025, when a released detainee told them that he had been held at the al-Nasr Brigade prison, an unofficial detention facility of the Security Belt Forces in Aden, and had later been transferred to Bir Ahmed prison. On 9 September 2025 the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate reported that he was detained by the UAE-backed Security Belt Forces. The Yemeni Media Freedoms Observatory (Marsadak), citing his arrest record, later reported that he had been detained at the Immigration and Passport Authority in Aden and that suspicion arose after he identified himself as a journalist.

Detention Conditions and Health

In February 2026 the Committee to Protect Journalists and Marsadak stated that he had been tortured, held in solitary confinement and, for a period, denied visits and access to legal counsel. Marsadak's August 2026 report on enforced disappearance of journalists in Yemen records that he told the prosecution and the court that during the period of concealment he was subjected to solitary confinement, beatings, physical and psychological torture and denial of medical care, and that access to his lawyer was delayed and some visit authorisations were refused even after his location became known. The December 2025 joint statement called for urgent medical care. The same report describes his elderly mother travelling repeatedly between Sanaa and Aden for at least 441 days to search for him.

Legal Proceedings

According to official charging documents reviewed by the Committee to Protect Journalists, he was prosecuted through the Specialised Criminal Appeals Prosecution in Aden on accusations of spreading false news, inciting against public order, harming national interests and providing media support to the Houthi group.

On 20 January 2026 the Specialised Criminal Court in Aden issued a ruling ordering his release, deeming the more than 25 months he had already spent in detention sufficient. The Public Prosecution did not appeal within the legal deadline, which made the ruling final and enforceable. The security authorities and the administration of Bir Ahmed prison have not carried it out. Marsadak reported that, as of 15 August 2026, he remained in detention for that reason.

International Response

The Committee to Protect Journalists called on the Southern Transitional Council to disclose his whereabouts soon after he disappeared. On 17 December 2025 a joint statement led by the Committee and signed by about 45 organisations, including Human Rights Watch, the Gulf Centre for Human Rights, ARTICLE 19 and the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate, urged the leaders of the Presidential Leadership Council to release him immediately and unconditionally. On 5 February 2026 the Committee and Marsadak wrote to the head of the Presidential Leadership Council, Rashad al-Alimi, and council member Abdul Rahman al-Mahrami, asking them to enforce the ruling, to open an independent investigation into the refusal to implement it and to hold those responsible to account. Alkarama reported that it submitted his case to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention on 2 February 2026, together with Marsadak.

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