

Sudanese Journalists Launch Historic Hunger Strike against Free Press Crackdown

By [Nadia Prupis](#)

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Image: Al-Tayyar's journalists launched a hunger strike on Tuesday. (Photo: [Sudan Today](#))

More than 30 Sudanese journalists [have launched](#) the country's biggest-ever hunger strike to protest the forced closure of their newspaper.

The journalists, who work for the newspaper *Al-Tayyar*, which was [shuttered](#) by the government for the second time late last year, launched the movement on Tuesday to protest what they called "arbitrary procedure" against the press in Sudan.

"This is the first ever hunger strike by journalists in the history of Sudanese press, and the first to happen outside a prison," reporter and columnist Shama'il Alnour [told the Guardian](#).

"Of course we have the immediate goal of having the suspension lifted," she said. "But in general we are using [*Al-Tayyar's*] case as an example while we defend freedom of expression."

The journalists, standing in lines wearing chains, announced the strike in an action outside of the newspaper's offices in Khartoum, where they were greeted by crowds of supporters. They then entered the building to begin their sit-in.

According to the paper's editorial director Khalid Fathy, the strike also includes other journalists as well as Sudanese politicians and activists.

Editor-in-chief Osman Marghani [currently faces](#) the death penalty over claims that he used the paper to "incite an Arab Spring" in Sudan. He told the *Guardian*, "The best outcome we anticipate from this [strike] is that the culture of protest, peaceful protest that is, spreads among Sudanese people."

Al-Tayyar was first shut down by the Sudanese government in 2012, but won an appeal in the country's constitutional court two years later.

Musa Hamid, a journalist who joined the crowd of supporters, told the *Guardian*, "This movement must be supported and is bound to achieve something positive."

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