

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGNER ATTACKED, INJURED

Human rights campaigner Ismail "Hilath" Rasheed was attacked in the evening of 5 June by men who slashed his throat, near his house in the capital, Malé. He survived but is at risk of further attacks and is in need of effective protection.

Ismail Rasheed needed hours of emergency medical treatment in the ADK hospital in Malé. Hospital sources have said the knife missed a vital artery by millimetres. He is under close medical attention, and unable to speak. No one has been brought to justice for this attack.

Religious groups opposed to Ismail Rasheed's long campaign for religious freedom are suspected of being behind the attack. People linked to these groups hit him with stones in December 2011, fracturing his skull, because he had arranged a rally to call for religious tolerance. Although that attack took place in front of onlookers and there is photographic evidence that can be used to identify the attackers, no one has yet been brought to justice for that attack. Since then, Ismail Rasheed has continued with his campaign, mainly through his blog.

Under the 2008 Maldives constitution, Islam is the only religion that Maldivian nationals can practise. Religious groups interpret this to mean only Sunni Islam. Ismail Rasheed has declared that he is a Sufi. He has been subjected to an online hate campaign in the social media for advocating religious freedom in the Maldives.

Please write immediately in English, Dhivehi or your own language:

- urging the authorities to provide effective protection to Ismail "Hilath" Rasheed;
- urging them to bring to justice the people who carried out the 5 June attack and those who attacked him in December 2011.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 27 JULY 2012 TO:

President

Mohamed Waheed
The President's Office
Boduthakurufaanu Magu, Malé 20113
Republic of Maldives
Fax: +960 332 5500

Salutation: Dear President Waheed

Minister of Home Affairs

Dr Mohamed Jameel Ahmed
Ministry of Home Affairs
10th Floor Velaanaage, Ameeru Ahmed
Magu, Malé, Republic of Maldives
Fax: +960 334 2064

Email: info@homeaffairs.gov.mv

Salutation: Dear Minister

And copies to:

Chief Justice
Ahmed Faiz
Supreme Court
M. Theemuge
Orchid Magu
Malé 20208
Republic of Maldives
Fax: +960 300 8554
Email: info@supremecourt.gov.mv

**** Fax machines may be switched off outside office hours (GMT+5) ****

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Freedom of religion is restricted in the Maldives under a constitutional provision that states: “a non-Muslim may not become a citizen of the Maldives”. Religious groups allied to some of the political parties have reacted strongly to any attempt by Maldivian citizens to engage in a debate about this constitutional provision. Ismail "Hilath" Rasheed has been one of few Maldivians who have promoted this debate. It is widely believed that the recent knife attack might have been a response to his campaign against religious intolerance.

Ismail "Hilath" Rasheed organized a “Silent Protest” rally in Malé with some 30 demonstrators on 10 December 2011, calling for religious tolerance in the Maldives. A group of about 10 men attacked them. They threw stones, injuring Ismail "Hilath" Rasheed. Police arrested him on 14 December, saying that “calling for anything against the constitution is illegal”. He was released without charge after a month. None of his attackers was brought to justice.

Name: Ismail Rasheed

Gender m/f: m

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