

URGENT ACTION

CAMPAIGNER FOR RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE ARRESTED

An activist who organised a peaceful protest in Malé, Maldives, calling for religious tolerance has been arrested following a call from an Islamic party.

Ismail 'Khilath' Rasheed organized and took part in what he called a "silent" demonstration calling for religious tolerance in the Maldives. The protest took place in Malé, the capital, on 10 December with 30 other activists.

As the peaceful demonstration was taking place, around 10 men attacked them. Ismail 'Khilath' Rasheed was hit with stones. He sustained a skull fracture and was taken to Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital for treatment.

He was arrested on 14 December by police claiming they needed to question him about his involvement in the protest, as "calling for anything against the constitution is illegal". His arrest and continued detention came after an opposition party, the Adhaalath Party, which advocates Islamic Shari'a, wrote to the police urging them to take action against him for organizing the "silent" protest.

Under the 2008 Maldives constitution, Islam is the only religion that Maldivian nationals can practise. Ismail 'Khilath' Rasheed has said he is a Muslim of Sufi orientation and entitled to exercise his faith in peace and without discrimination. Ismail 'Khilath' Rasheed is a prisoner of conscience who has been detained solely for the non-violent exercise of his right to freedom of expression. His detention is in breach of international treaties on freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the Maldives is a state party.

Please write immediately in English or your own language:

- Calling on the President to release prisoner of conscience Ismail 'Khilath' Rasheed immediately and unconditionally,
- Calling on the Speaker of Parliament and Chief Justice to support our call for his immediate and unconditional release,
- Urging the authorities to provide Ismail 'Khilath' Rasheed with compensation for his unlawful detention and to ensure his future safety and security.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 2 FEBRUARY 2012 TO:

President

Mohamed Nasheed
The President's Office
Boduthakurufaanu Magu,
Male' 20113
Republic of Maldives
Fax: +96 0332 5500

Salutation: Dear President Nasheed

Speaker of Parliament

Abdulla Shahid
People's Majlis Secretariat
People's Majlis House
Medhuziyaaraiy Magu
Henveyru, Male' 20080
Republic of Maldives
Fax: +96 0332 4104
Email: admin@mailis.gov.mv

Salutation: Dear Honourable Speaker

Chief Justice

Ahmed Faiz
Supreme Court
M. Theemuge
Orchid Magu
Male' 20208
Republic of Maldives
Fax: +96 0300 8554
Email: info@supremecourt.gov.mv
Salutation: Dear Chief Justice

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

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

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Name: Ismail 'Khilath' Rasheed

Gender m/f: male

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