

EXTERNAL

AI Index: ASA 29/07/95

This is a limited action. Please restrict appeals to 20 per Section.

22 September 1995

Further information on UA 115/95 (ASA 29/02/95, 25 May 1995) and follow-ups (ASA 29/03/95, 15 June; ASA 29/04/95, 21 July; ASA 29/05/95, 23 August; ASA 29/06/95, 30 August) - Possible prisoners of conscience / Health concern

**REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES Ali Moosa Didi, writer and politician
 Ahamed Shafeeq, aged 67, former civil servant**

New name: Mohamed Latheef, aged 71, linguist

Amnesty International has learned with concern of the arrest and detention of Mohamed Latheef. He has reportedly been held in solitary confinement at Male' police headquarters since his arrest on 25 August 1995. There is grave concern, given his age, over his state of health. He is said to be extremely weak and suffers from diabetes. His family has requested permission from the authorities to visit him in detention but have so far not been given such permission. It is not known whether he has received any medical treatment while in detention.

It is believed that the arrest of Mohamed Latheef may be connected to the arrest of Ahamed Shafeeq and Ali Moosa Didi on 21 April 1995 in what is now being referred to as "the diary case". Five personal diaries written by Ahamed Shafeeq were confiscated by police officers when they arrested him at his home in April.

According to the latest information, Ali Moosa Didi was transferred from Male' police headquarters to house arrest on 27 August. Ahamed Shafeeq remains under house arrest.

To date, neither Ali Moosa Didi, Ahamed Shafeeq nor Mohamed Latheef have been charged or brought before a court.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Prior to parliamentary elections in the Maldives, Mohamed Latheef was one of a number of people who, in October 1994, tried to register a political party. Three weeks before the election, which took place on 2 December 1994, he was arrested and taken to Dhoonidhoo island detention centre for questioning. He was not charged or tried and was released two weeks later.

There are no political parties in the Maldives; all those standing in elections do so as independent candidates. In the run up to the parliamentary elections in December 1994, several members of parliament and scores of their supporters were arrested. Amnesty International appealed to the authorities for their immediate and unconditional release.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or in your own language:

- expressing concern about the arrest and detention of Mohamed Latheef, who appears to be held in contravention of his right to freedom of expression;
- calling for his immediate and unconditional release, if he is not to be promptly charged with a recognizable criminal offence;
- expressing concern about his state of health and requesting that he be given immediate access to appropriate medical treatment;

- requesting that Mohamed Latheef's family be permitted to visit him in detention;
- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Ahamed Shafeeq and Ali Moosa Didi, if they are not to be charged with recognizable criminal offences. Expressing serious concern at the length of time these detainees have been held without charge or trial.

APPEALS TO:

President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom
The President's Office
Marine Drive (North)
Male'
Republic of Maldives
Faxes: + 960 32 55 00
Telegrams: President Gayoom, Male, Maldives
Salutation: Dear President

Brigadier Adam Zahir
Officer in Charge
Police Headquarters
Bandeyrige
Male'
Republic of Maldives
Telegrams: Brigadier Zahir, Police Headquarters, Male, Maldives
Salutation: Dear Brigadier

COPIES TO:

Abdulla Hameed
Speaker
Office of the Citizens' Majlis
Naadi, Ameer Ahmed Magu
Male', Republic of Maldives

and to diplomatic representatives of Republic of Maldives accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International secretariat, or your section office if sending appeals after 10 November 1995.