

# Democratic Backsliding

How can we as parliamentarians prevent this?

# The story of Maldives from 2013- 2018

How a dictator used his party's majority in parliament to take away basic human rights and attack rule of law and democracy to pave way to loot a nation through corruption.



# Attack on freedom of Assembly

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ARTICLE

## Maldives: President Ratifies First Amendment of Freedom of Peaceful Assembly Act

The amendment stipulates that street protests, marches, parades, and “other such gatherings can only be held with written permission from the police, or in areas designated by the Ministry of Home Affairs.” (President Ratifies Freedom of Peaceful Assembly Act Amendment, VNEWS.MV (Aug.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/maldi...>

Maldives: President Ratifies First Amendment of Freedom of Peaceful ...

**Edh**

Dhivehi | Sign in

News Featured

### Maldives United Opposition

## Permit for MDP rally revoked by Housing

Jul 14, 2016

Like 10 Share



MALDIVES INDEPENDENT

POLITICS

## Riot police switch off microphones at MUO rally

Riot police officers tried to halt an opposition rally Monday night after forcibly entering the Maldivian Democratic Party's haruge (meeting hall) in Malé without a court order.

Published 6 years ago on August 2, 2016



# Actions taken by Parliamentarians

**THE edition**

News / News

## Maldives opposition to defy law restricting protests


Mohamed Visham

18 August 2016, MVT 10:58



# Arresting opposition leaders

Minivan News - Archive



Opposition leaders arrested in late-night crackdown

THE ECONOMIC TIMES


WORLD NEWS

### US expresses concern over arrest of former Maldivian president Mohamed Nasheed




### Ex-President Maumoon arrested

Feb 06, 2018 10:06



07 Apr 2017 | Fri 01:25



Qasim Ibrahim arrested on Thursday night

Politically Motivated Arrests

### JP leader Qasim Ibrahim arrested

theguardian.com

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Maldives

### Maldives court jails opposition figure Sheikh Imran Abdulla for 12 years

# Arresting opposition MPs

**MP Mahloof arrested**

Aug 25, 2017 00:32

Share icons: WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Messenger



**MP Ibu arrested**

Mar 17, 2018 12:31

Share icons: WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Messenger



**Vilingili MP Saud Hussain arrested**

Crackdown on Opposition

Vilingili Constituency MP Saud Hussain Raajeev

Share icons: WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Messenger



**MP Abdulla Riyaz arrested**

Mar 27, 2017 22:01

Share icons: WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Messenger



**MP Ameeth arrested, assures his commitment to opposition's work**

Crackdown on Opposition

Police officers at MP Mohamed Ameeth's residence Twitter

Share icons: WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Messenger



**Police arrest MP Ilham's brother**

Fathmath Shaahunaz

20 February 2018, MVT 22:57



**MP Ilham's wife arrested, accused of helping the lawmaker stay in hiding**

MP Ilham Ahmed

Aminath Maascha Hassan (L) stands beside her husband MP Ilham Ahmed

Share icons: WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Messenger



**MP Faris Maumoon arrested**

Crackdown on opposition

MP Faris Maumoon prior to his arrest Raajeev

Share icons: WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Messenger



**MP Ali Azim placed under house arrest | SunOnline...**

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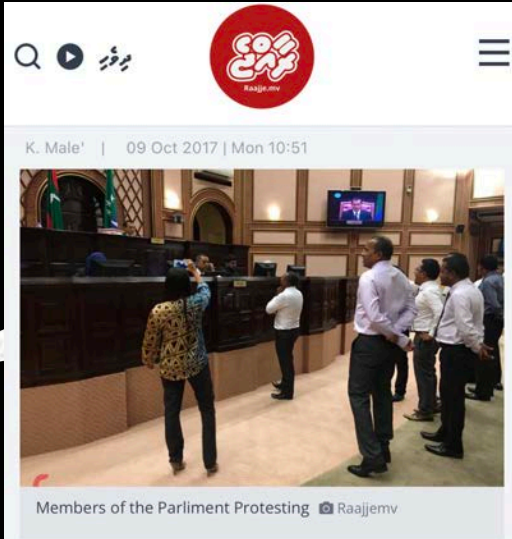


# Action: Helping families of those arrested

- Whatsapp group of wives and families of arrested leaders, MPs and activists.
- Providing financial assistance for detainees' families.
- Helping with shopping and errands for detainees' families.
- Providing free legal counsel for detainees.



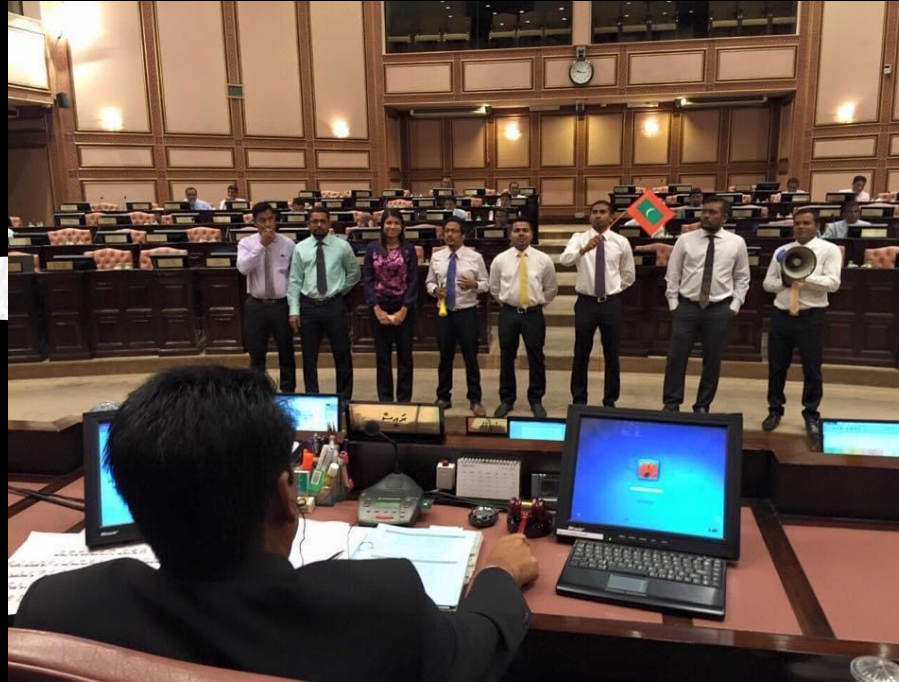
# Action: Protesting in the Parliament



Parliament Watch

## MPs launch protest inside parliament floor

- MPs barred from entering Parliament premises before Speaker
- Opposition MPs had protested on Parliament floor
- Sitting concluded in 15 minutes



0:43



MP Rozaina shares videos from the parliament floor

RaajjeTelevision · 1.8K views · 7 years ago



# Military throws out opposition MPs from the parliament

THE WEEK

f t g+ in y


THE WEEK → News → World →

Maldives crisis: Military throws MPs out of parliament

**EMERGENCY**

## Maldives crisis: Military throws MPs out of parliament

ANI / Male | February 14, 2018



On Tuesday, the military blocked MPs from entering into the parliament building | ANI

The military in the Maldives on Wednesday threw all MPs out of the parliament building.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

## Maldives crises: MPs from joint opposition thrown out of Parliament building

ANI | Published: 15th February 2018 03:29 AM

✉ f t



Maldives MP Abdulla Ahmed being thrown out of the Parliament (Twitter | @MDP\_Thilafaiy)

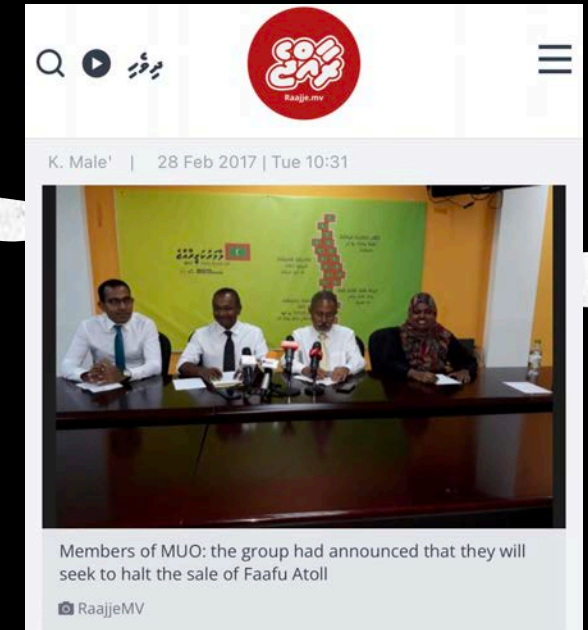


# Action: Using media to inform and educate the public



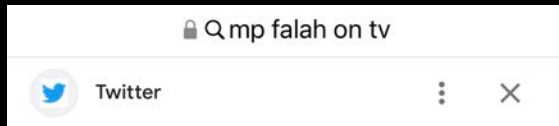
MP Mariya Didi

Stopping us from putting up posters will not silence political leaders: MP Mariya



Faafu Atoll sale

Will recover Faafu Atoll, even if it's sold: MUO



# Attack on media freedom

## SAMSN Digital Hub

Defending Rights of Journalists &  
Freedom of Expression in South Asia

PRESS STATEMENT

### One year on: Maldivian journalist still missing

07 Aug, 2015



fidh

## INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

TAKE ACTION

NEWSLETTER

MAKE A DONATION

MENU

Maldives: Murder of Mr. Yameen  
Rasheed



25/04/2017 URGENT APPEAL

Human Rights Defenders

| Maldives |



MDV 001 / 0417 / OBS 046

Murder

K. Male' | 17 Nov 2019 | Sun 22:08



A screenshot from the CCTV footage publicized by RaajjeTV

Raajjemv

### RaajjeTV Arson Attack

Then-president  
Yameen was told  
"mission  
accomplished" after  
RaajjeTV arson attack

The station was destroyed on the same day as the Supreme Court's much-anticipated ruling on whether to allow elections to go ahead.



Station had requested police protection

# Defamation Act as a tool to curtail freedom of speech

AA amnesty.nl

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

DONEER

## Maldives: Proposed defamation law is an attack on freedom of expression

Pers

Datum: 29 juli 2016

Maldives authorities must immediately scrap a proposed new law that would alarmingly increase the government's control of independent media and have a stifling effect on the right to freedom of expression, Amnesty International said.

rsf.org

REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS

VIOLENCE AGAINST JOURNALISTS  
LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND JUSTICE SYSTEM  
INDEPENDENCE AND PLURALISM NEWS

## Maldives police use violence against journalists, arrest two



Le journaliste Hussain Hassan violemment interpellé puis transféré à l'hôpital, alors qu'il couvrait une manifestation de l'opposition à Malé (photos: Mohamed Sharuhaan - Raajje TV).



MALDIVES INDEPENDENT

SOCIETY & CULTURE

## Raajje TV pays off record fine

The station has been fined millions since an anti-defamation law came into effect.

Published 4 years ago on September 9, 2018



Broadcaster *Raajje TV* Sunday paid off a record fine of MVR2 million (US\$129,807) over content deemed defamatory towards President Abdulla Yameen and a threat to national security.

# Action: Helped raise funds and create awareness

MALDIVES INDEPENDENT

SOCIETY & CULTURE

## Raajje TV launches fundraising to pay record fine

The fundraising effort was launched by opposition candidate Ibrahim Mohamed Solih.

Published 4 years ago on August 11, 2018



Private broadcaster *Raajje TV* launched Friday a new fundraising drive to pay off a record MVR2 million (US\$129,807) fine imposed by the broadcasting regulator.

cpj.org

## Maldives repeatedly slaps Raajje TV with huge fines under defamation law

Aliya Iftikhar/CPJ Asia Research Associate 5 years ago



Supporters donate money to Maldives broadcaster Raajje TV, which has been subject to large fines for alleged defamation in relation to its critical reporting. (Raajje TV/Mohamed Sharuhaan)

cpj.org

CPJ Committee to Protect Journalists

## CPJ calls on Maldives to drop fine against opposition-aligned Raajje TV

4 years ago



# Action: Keeping the world informed

pgaction.org

Parliamentarians for Global Action  
Parlamentarios para la Acción Global  
Action Mondiale des Parlementaires  
برلمانيون من أجل العمل العالمي

## PGA Concerned about Repeated Violations to Human Rights and the Rule of Law in the Maldives

15 February, 2018

Related Campaign: Campaign for Democratic Renewal and Human Rights



PGA Member Hon. Ahmed Mahloof, MP (Maldives)

INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRAT UNION

### EMERGENCY RESOLUTION

#### Stop President Yameen's authoritarian tactics against the people of Maldives and restore democracy

IDU Statement on the situation in the Maldives, February 21, 2018

The International Democrat Union (IDU) expresses its deep concerns about the latest examples of unlawful acts carried out by the Yameen administration and wishes to express its profound concern evoked by the repeated violations of democracy and the rule of law.

Therefore the IDU calls on the Government of Maldives to:

- immediately and fully implement the Supreme Court ruling of February 1 and release the political prisoners concerned,
- release the Chief Justice, Abdulla Saeed and Judge of the Supreme Court, Ali Hameed,
- release President Maumoon Abdul Qayoom, MP Faris Maumoon, MP Abdulla Sinan, MP Ilham Ahmed, their families and all those detained following the state of emergency,
- withdraw the military from Parliament and enable resumption of full parliamentary work.

The IDU emphasizes that the international community must go to great lengths, restoring democracy in the Maldives and ensuring peace and stability in the Maldives and the region. With this regards, the IDU urges

- the International Community to speak up against the authoritarian actions of the Maldives' Government, which threaten the likelihood of elections scheduled for this year,
- the international community to increase targeted sanctions against the Yameen regime and its leadership if the Supreme Court ruling will not be fully implemented by the Yameen regime.

ipu.org

Parliamentary Union  
for democracy for all

## Maldives

Decision adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 204<sup>th</sup> session (Doha, 10 April 2019)



Former president of the Maldives, Mohamed Nasheed (centre), is embraced by Judiciary Party leader, Gasim Ibrahim (left), as President-elect, Ibrahim Mohamed Solih (right), looks on after Nasheed returned from exile to the Maldives, in Male on 1 November 2018 © Ahmed SHURAUFI/AP

MDV55 - Ahmed Mahloof  
MDV60 - Abdulla Riyaz  
MDV62 - Faris Maumoon  
MDV63 - Ibrahim Didi  
MDV64 - Qasim Ibrahim  
MDV77 - Abdulla Sinan  
MDV78 - Ilham Ahmed

**Alleged human rights violations:**

- Arbitrary arrest and detention
- Lack of due process in proceedings against parliamentarians
- Violation of freedom of opinion and expression

**A. Summary of the case**

Between February 2012, following the controversial resignation of the then President, Mohamed Nasheed (Maldivian Democratic Party – MDP), which he claimed was forced upon him, and September 2018, there were serious and credible reports and allegations of arbitrary arrest, ill-treatment, attacks and death threats against several opposition members of the People's Majlis, the majority of them belonging to the MDP. In more recent years, new concerns arose about the arbitrary revocation of the parliamentary mandates of, and unjustified charges against, several opposition members.

**Case MDV-COLL-01**

Maldives: Parliament affiliated to the IPU

Victims: Seven male opposition members of parliament.

Qualified complainant(s): Section 1(1)(a) of the Committee Procedure (Annex I)

Submission of complaint(s): February 2012

Recent IPU decision: February, 2013

IPU missions: March, 2016, October 2016, November 2013, November, 2012

Recent Committee hearing(s): Hearing with the Maldives delegation at the 140<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly (April 2019)

Recent follow-up:

- Communication from the authorities: Letter from the Secretary General of the People's Majlis (April 2019)
- Communication from the complainant: March 2019
- Communication addressed to the authorities: Letter addressed to the Speaker of the People's Majlis (March 2019)
- Communication addressed to the complainant: March 2019

forum-asia.org

FORUM-ASIA

Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development

## The Maldives: Arrest of Journalists Condemned, Protect Freedom of Press

4 April 2016 7:51 pm

(Bangkok, 4 April 2016) – The Asian Forum for

THE WIRE

POLITICS ECONOMY EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

## Maldives Leaves Commonwealth After Warnings Over Democracy

The archipelago had been warned of suspension if it failed to encourage political dialogue, release opposition leaders and improve democratic institutions.

Oct 14, 2016 | Devirupa Mitra

4 April 2016 7:51 pm

(Bangkok, 4 April 2016) – The Asian Forum for



The archipelago had been warned of suspension if it failed to encourage political dialogue, release opposition

# MPs stripped of their parliament seats



MP Saud joins the opposition

Apr 02, 2017 22:55

Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp



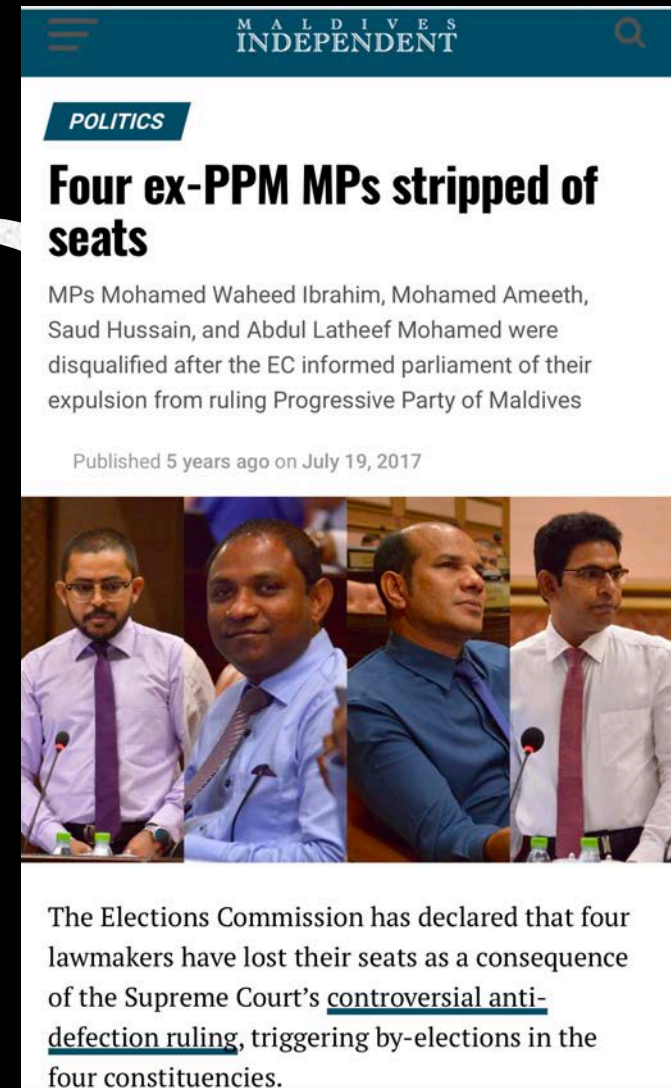
PSM NEWS PSM LIVE

News

MPs will lose seats on defection from their party: Supreme Court

Mohamed Jinah Ali Jul 13, 2017

Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp




MALDIVES INDEPENDENT

POLITICS

Four ex-PPM MPs stripped of seats

MPs Mohamed Waheed Ibrahim, Mohamed Ameeth, Saud Hussain, and Abdul Latheef Mohamed were disqualified after the EC informed parliament of their expulsion from ruling Progressive Party of Maldives

Published 5 years ago on July 19, 2017



The Elections Commission has declared that four lawmakers have lost their seats as a consequence of the Supreme Court's controversial anti-defection ruling, triggering by-elections in the four constituencies.


# Supreme court under fire from lawyers, public and International community

 **icj** International Commission of Jurists  
Advocates for Justice and Human Rights

## Maldives: political crisis erodes rule of law and human rights

Justice Adrift: Rule of Law and Political Crisis in the Maldives  
A Fact-Finding Mission Report

August 2015

 Raajjmv

K. Male' | 28 Sep 2017 | Thu 08:04



A petition signed by 56 lawyers, urging the judiciary's reform, was rejected by the Supreme Court on 30th August

Raajjmv

**ICJ**

### ICJ calls on Maldives to lift suspension of lawyers and "to respect the independence of the legal profession"



**ANI**

### Watch: Massive protests outside Maldivian Chief Justice Abdulla Saeed's house



# Judges arrested – Declaration of state of emergency


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## Maldives declares state of emergency, arrests 2 Supreme court judges and former president

Tara Francis Chan Feb 5, 2018, 8:07 PM

[Download the app](#)



avas.mv

News

## Maldives top court Chief Justice dragged on ground during arrest

Mohamed Rehan Feb 8, 2018 | 1

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icj International Commission of Jurists  
Advocates for Justice and Human Rights

## Maldives: arrest of judges and suspension of human rights a full attack on the rule of law, says the ICJ

06/02/2018

The ICJ today condemned the Maldivian Government's assault on the Supreme Court and its judges and the suspension of human rights protections under the state of emergency.

# Democracy restored!

## Lessons learnt:

- Without the help of parliamentarians President Yameen could not have committed human rights abuses.
- Parliamentarians are a power base and can make a huge difference when they work with their constituents.
- Only the people of a nation can change its course.
- Mass atrocities don't happen overnight.
- Importance of fighting back when you see the first signs of democratic backsliding.

≡ **Firstpost.**

## Maldives election commission declares Ibrahim Mohamed Solih winner; police and military to uphold result

The Election Commission of Maldives on Saturday officially declared Opposition leader Ibrahim Mohamed Solih winner of the country's national election

Reuters | September 29, 2018 16:40:11 IST

