

WRECK OF 'MALDIVES VICTORY: a site that needs to be conserved in Maldives

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Even after 30 years of its submergence 'Maldives Victory' still serves a great contribution to the economy of Maldives. The unfortunate events took place on the dawn hours of February 13th, 1981 the huge 35,000 tonne freighter hit the banks of the island at full cruising speed. Although the resultant damage was not extensive, the vessel sank the next day and sat up-straight on the bottom parallel to the reef. Fortunately there was no loss of life and the crew and passengers were safely rescued.

But panic spread through the island when it became known that the long-awaited foodstuffs and building materials were lying on the bottom of the ocean. Divers spent months trying to recover the submerged good and many of them were sold at low prices in the market.

Today, after 30 years, the site is probably the most popular shipwreck open for commercial diving in the country. The wreck hosts almost 75 divers a day, generating a lot of income and job opportunities to the Maldivians. The wreck lies 10 minutes from Male, south west of the airport and is the only wreck in the Male' atoll. The vessel is 110 m long and the main deck is to be found at 12 meters depth. The Maldives Victory Wreck is classified as an advanced dive, mainly because of strong currents and the many sharp objects surrounding the site. The ship that used to be the source long awaited commercial goods has gradually turned into a natural habitat for a colorful and exotic variety of marine life. Divers are often greeted by turtles, lion fish, large groupers, and exotic species of black corals. The adventure becomes more memorable as the divers can still find lot of cargo aboard; sacs of cement, some old electronics, papers, bottles, etc

This site that draws so much attention to our beautiful country now faces different environmental threats such as sedimentation and algae growth. The main reasons include the reclamation work carried out in HulhuMale', waste (mainly plastic bags) dumping, fishing, etc. For the cultural, environmental and economic benefit we get from this 30 year old wreck, the site needs to be conserved and should be declared as a Protected Area.

References: www.maldivesdivetravel.com

<http://maldives.greatestdivesites.com>

<http://www.dive-the-world.com/>



*Wheel House of the Victory
Wreck Dive in North Male Atoll
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