

NGO REPORT - UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW 2010

REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

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Maldives Aid



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A. Current normative and institutional framework

A1. The ratification of the revised constitution in August 2008 laid the groundwork for a fledgling democratic system of governance with separation of powers and paved the way for the country's first multi-party presidential and parliamentary elections.

A2. However, with the partisan politics prevailing in the People's Majlis (parliament) leading to recurrent deadlock, the legislative framework necessary both to enact the changes mandated by the constitution and protect fundamental rights has not been created. The constitutional deadline for local government elections elapsed in July 2009 due to failure to pass bills on local elections and decentralisation. Convened in May 2009, parliament passed eight bills in its 82 sittings last year, while 19 remain pending¹. Among the legislation currently at committee stage include a revised penal code, evidence laws and bills on press freedom and freedom of information.

A3. Although members of the new Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) were sworn-in in August 2009, a dispute between the executive and legislature has held up the confirmation of its constitutionally required fifth member, who was approved by parliament after the president withdrew the nomination. The dispute remains unresolved after the Supreme Court ruled it was not the appropriate forum to give an advisory opinion on a dispute between the executive and the Majlis. The new commission sent seven cases for criminal prosecution in 2009ⁱⁱ. While the Maldives acceded to the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) in April 2007, the deadline to complete the Gap Analysis elapsed in March 2010.

A4. The Human Rights Commission of Maldives (HRCM) was established in December 2003 by presidential decree, while the HRCM Act was passed in August 2005. Further amendments were made in August 2006 to bring it in line with the Paris Principles. The HRCM has noted that the new government has been either slow or non-cooperative in implementing recommendations contained in its reports.

A5. While article 285 of the constitution requires the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) to approve and re-appoint judges before the end of the interim period on 7 August 2010ⁱⁱⁱ, none of the judges have so far been given tenure, leading to uncertainty and fear of job security among the 170 to 200 judges currently on the bench and potentially influencing their judgments.

B. Discrimination and unfair employment practices

B1. Since becoming a member of the International Labor Organization (ILO) in May 2009 the Maldives has yet to ratify its eight core conventions, including the Convention on the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining. The right to collective bargaining is not addressed either in the constitution or the Employment Act of 2008. In the absence of legislation to form trade unions, a spate of strikes by resort workers in November 2008 was violently suppressed by the police. In November 2009, the HRCM confirmed that police used truncheons and spray to quell a protest in the resort island Reethi Rah^{iv}.

B2. When the country's first Labour Tribunal was established in the December 2009, it received over a 100 cases in its first 4 days. But, the tribunal remained inactive for the next six months due to budget constraints and lack of resources^v.

B3. Although both the constitution and the Employment Act provides for equal remuneration and prohibits discrimination, the provisions have not been consistently enforced, no measures have been taken against continuing discrimination and the government has not publicly announced policies to prevent discrimination and provide equal opportunity in employment. Employment-related disputes were the most common complaint lodged at the HRCM over the past two years^{vi}.

B4. In August 2009, President Mohamed Nasheed announced that the country's 32,000-strong civil service will be restructured and halved by 2011^{vii}. The government has promised a lump sum of Rf150, 000 (US\$11,670) for laid-off civil servants as a severance package; earmarking Rf119 million (US\$9.3 million) in the 2010 state budget to this end. But, the downsizing plans have led to anxiety among civil servants, who comprised 14.5 per cent of the labour force in 2006, making the government the main employer in the country^{viii}. The Maldives Civil Servants Association has staged protests condemning both the government's programme of restructuring the civil service and salary reductions imposed for civil servants^{ix}.

B5. The government is currently locked in litigation with the Civil Service Commission (CSC) over controversial and unpopular pay cuts implemented in October 2009. In August 2009, the government introduced a raft of austerity measures to alleviate the budget deficit. Following protracted negotiations with the CSC, the government reduced civil servants' salaries by 10 to 15 percent. In February 2010, the CSC voiced concern that the pay cuts were discriminatory against civil servants as other public officials were not subject to it^x.

B6. In December 2009, the commission declared that the "special economic circumstances" that warranted the measure had passed as the condition agreed upon by both parties was the government's annual revenue exceeding Rf7 billion (US\$545 million). Despite proposing an annual budget with projected revenue above Rf7 billion, the Finance Ministry argued that actual income without foreign aid and once-off revenue fell short of the figure. At the height of the dispute, government offices received conflicting orders to fill salary sheets. Both the Finance Ministry and the CSC threatened legal action against payroll officers who disobeyed the conflicting directives^{xi}. In February, the commission sued the ministry for not reinstating the previous salary. The ministry has since countersued the commission for allegedly pursuing a hidden political agenda to topple the government^{xii}.

Recommendations: Pass and enact legislation for the formation of labour unions; enforce provisions of Employment Act on equal pay and unfair dismissals; strengthen functioning of the nascent Labour Tribunal and Labour Relations Authority; improve coordination among government offices and state institutions to ensure civil servants are not caught in the middle of legal disputes.

C. Ill-treatment of migrant workers

C1. A report in August 2009 by the HRCM identified the plight of migrant workers, who comprise a quarter of the population, as the most pressing employment issue facing the Maldives^{xiii}. While a large number of migrants from India and Sri Lanka work as doctors and teachers, a majority of the estimated 80,000 expatriates are unskilled and employed principally in the construction industry. Aside from unsuitable living conditions and cramped quarters, labourers bear the brunt of institutionalized and widespread racism. A study in 2005 showed that 61 percent of youth felt it was unimportant to learn about other cultures, while 50.7 percent of respondents said it was unacceptable for people of other cultures to live in their neighbourhoods. In August 2007, a Bangladeshi man shackled in iron chains by his employer in a house in Male' was the second expatriate found chained that month^{xiv}.

C2. The absence of a monitoring mechanism and the failure to offer legal protection under the Employment Act leaves migrant workers vulnerable to exploitation. While in most cases their accommodation lacks proper ventilation or supply of fresh water and adequate sanitary facilities, migrant workers who face non-payment of wages have little or no access to justice^{xv}. In October 2009, close to 300 Filipino construction workers in Gaaf Dhaal Atoll alleged they had not been paid for five months. A delegation of the workers met the HRCM and complained of the lack of access to drinking water and sufficient food, forcing the workers to resort to catching fish and seafood^{xvi}.

C4. As identity and travel documents are often confiscated upon arrival, many expatriate workers are unable to quit their jobs before paying the large sums paid as commissions to receive employment, creating debt bondage or forced-labour type situations^{xvii} and a growing problem of illegal immigrants. Of the 2,700 expatriates deported in 2009, over 2,200 were illegal workers from Bangladesh, while 34 women were deported for prostitution^{xviii}. In November 2009, the health ministry revealed that a group of women were being trafficked between Sri Lanka and the Maldives for prostitution^{xix}.

Recommendations: Sign and ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; promulgate laws to enforce stricter punishments for violations and hold employers and employment agencies accountable; criminalise forced labour in the penal code; establish a minimum wage; Formulate and communicate a national policy on migrant workers; regulate the role of employment agencies; allow for registration of workers on islands other than Male'; ensure regular inspection of work sites and accommodation; establish minimum standards of housing through legislation; establish separate bureau for migrant workers to handle complaints and issue quotas and permits.

D. Rights of vulnerable groups

D1. **Rights of persons with disabilities (PWDs).** While the constitution prohibits discrimination based on mental and physical disabilities and stipulates special privileges for and protection of disadvantaged groups^{xx}, the Maldives lacks a comprehensive social security system, including social workers and facilities to ensure mobility and access to public services for PWDs. Although a study by the former gender ministry in 2003 showed that approximately 3.4 percent of the population constituted persons with disabilities, the methodology of the survey was criticized as likely to under-represent

the actual number of PWDs. The Maldives acceded to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPRD) in October 2008. The new government submitted a Disabilities Bill to parliament last year based on the CRPD, which was passed by parliament in December 2009.

D3. However, following an appeal by NGOs, the government decided not to ratify the bill as it was believed to be in conflict with provisions of CRPD. The final legislation was criticized for lack of health rehabilitation and following a medical model instead of being inclusive or rights-based. Moreover, if ratified the legislation would have allowed preventive detention.

D4. **Drug abuse.** High rates of youth unemployment compounds the problem of drug trafficking and abuse, which has reached endemic proportions in the past few years. The number of reported drug abuse cases climbed from 302 in 1999 to 2,618 in 2008^{xxi}. An HRCM report in August 2009 revealed that significantly low participation of youth in the labour market contributed to the 14.4 percent national unemployment rate^{xxii}. Of the 1,417 cases taken to trial in 2008, 406 or one-third were drug-related^{xxiii}. Moreover, drug addicts comprise 80 percent of the prison population, compounding the problem of criminalization of young offenders. The lack of proper rehabilitation and aftercare services coupled with social stigma leaves most addicts without access to treatment or employment for reintegration into society - existing facilities could only treat 200 addicts a year.

D5. In March 2009, five drug addicts died of either overdose or suicide. Four out of the five had received treatment at the main rehabilitation centre operated by the government. Apart from the five fatalities, a 33-year-old died of benzodiazepine overdose in Maafushi prison. Police revealed at the time that an examination of confiscated drugs showed that heroin sold on the streets was laced with the psychoactive drug^{xxiv}.

Recommendations: Expedite passage of disabilities legislation to ensure accessibility for people with special needs to public and private services and establish facilities at public places such as parks and ferries; institute mechanisms for increasing corporate social responsibility; provide affordable rehabilitation and aftercare services for recovering drug addicts; actively curb drug trafficking, utilizing full powers of customs authorities to check private vessels.

E. Child rights

E1. Although the number of reported child abuse cases doubled^{xxv} in 2009 to 1,129 from the previous year, only seven cases reached court last year. In the past four years, the highest number of child abuse cases prosecuted was 11 in 2008^{xxvi}. Despite being a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Maldives has a deplorable record on child sexual abuse. While a survey by the former gender ministry found that one in six women reported sexual abuse when they were under 15 years of age^{xxvii}, if figures from both sexes are taken into account, the Maldives could have the highest rates of child sexual abuse in South Asia.

E2. The gender ministry study further found that child sexual abuse of girls was most often “a repeated form of abuse rather than a once-off occurrence”. In most cases,

perpetrators are treated with leniency or released. In August 2008, the family of a 14-year-old rape victim on Holhudhoo complained that the six teenage suspects who were released were harassing and threatening the girl and her family^{xxviii}. In May 2007, the Imam of Goidhoo island, accused of molesting five students at his Quran recitation class, was released while he was under investigation^{xxix}.

E3. In November 2009, parliament passed a bill on special procedures for child sex offenders with harsher penalties and longer jail terms. The law proposed jail terms without the possibility of parole or early release, and suspended the right to silence and release from detention while investigation is ongoing. However, under article 14 of the Act, if a person is legally married to a minor under Islamic Shariah, none of the offences specified in the legislation would be considered a crime. In a case prosecuted before the law came into effect, a 37-year-old man convicted of sexually abusing 35 under-aged boys was sentenced to six years imprisonment in November 2009^{xxx}.

E4. In October 2009, the HRCM warned that unchecked religious extremism in the country was creating unprecedented social problems and flagged cases of under-aged marriage and parents refusing to vaccinate their children or send girls to school^{xxxi}. Moreover, in December 2009, the Attorney General claimed that female genital mutilation was being practiced in Addu Atoll, warning that religious scholars were issuing *fatwa*'s promoting female circumcision "in the name of Islam"^{xxxii}.

E5. As Islamic Shariah does not include a system of adoption and the constitution stipulates that all Maldivians should be Muslim, the Maldives holds reservations to articles 14 and 21 of the CRC. A report issued by the HRCM in January 2009 noted that the state's children's home in the commuter island of Villigili lacked specialized staff to deal with medical emergencies and most employees had not received training in child psychology^{xxxiii}.

Recommendations: Pass and enact legislation for state protection of neglected children; establish proper social services system; sensitise influential groups, such as island leaders, imams and women's committees, to child rights; review and reform the state protection mechanism for orphans, juveniles and delinquents; consider mechanism for fostering of children under *Kafalah* of Islamic law; Outlaw under-age marriages; improve counselling at schools.

F. Women's rights

F1. Although the Maldives was once a matriarchal society, women in contemporary times face institutionalized discrimination and marginalization in opportunities for higher education and employment. Despite making up 40 percent of government employees, women have a significantly lower participation in public life and the private sector, where they are unlikely to hold leadership positions. Of the 77 members of parliament, only five are women, while there are only four female judges on the bench. In 2007, unemployment among women aged 15 to 24 was 40 percent^{xxxiv}.

F2. The Maldives holds a reservation to article 16 of CEDAW as provisions of Islamic Shariah govern all marital and family relations. In the absence of legislation on women's rights, sexual harassment and domestic violence, other obligations under CEDAW remain unimplemented. Consequently, violence against women goes largely unchecked. A study conducted by the former gender ministry in December 2008 showed that one in three women aged between 15 and 49 reported some form of

physical or sexual violence at least once in their lives, while one in five suffered physical or sexual violence at the hands of their partner.

F3. In most cases of reported physical or sexual violence against women, the perpetrators escape justice. In July 2007, four men accused of raping a 12-year-old girl after breaking into her bedroom with an axe were acquitted. The judge ruled that the girl had reached puberty and was a willing partner as she had not screamed or struggled^{xxxv}. While there have been no criminal prosecutions for rapes in the past four years, 37 cases of forced sexual assault were filed at the criminal court in 2009; the number of sexual assault cases prosecuted in 2006 was six^{xxxvi}.

Recommendations: Establish mechanism for protecting abused women and those vulnerable to abuse; pursue a policy of affirmative action for women and consider quotas for elected representatives; sensitise influential groups to women's rights; conduct programs for economic empowerment of women and raise awareness of women's rights; ensure legal redress for gender-based violence; protect reproductive rights and promote access to contraception; conduct an inquiry to determine if female genital mutilation is being practiced; expedite passage of legislation on women's rights, sexual harassment and domestic violence; increase age of consent for marriage from 14 to 16.

G. Right to adequate shelter and public services

G1. With over a 100,000 people, Male' is among the most densely populated cities in the world. A report by the HRCM in 2009 found that 68 percent of families in the capital were living in accommodation that qualified as slums by UN definitions and a quarter of all families live in one room. Participants in the survey from Male' and Villigili spent 85 percent of their income on rent and utilities^{xxxvii}. Although the provision of affordable housing is a key priority of the new government, action has so far not been taken to tackle skyrocketing rents and implement housing schemes.

G2. In February 2009, the UN Special Rapporteur on Housing warned that the prevalence of drug abuse and crime in the capital as well as other social problems such as violence against women and child abuse was linked to inadequate living space and overcrowding in the capital.

G3. The constitution stipulates that the state shall provide clean water and establish a sewerage system and electricity system on every inhabited island^{xxxviii}. In late 2009, seven Public Utility Companies created by the government began taking over community powerhouses, which were established by islanders through local fundraising, donations and government assistance. In several cases, the powerhouses were taken over without consultation and in contravention to the rulings of island courts. In the wake of litigation over compensation in several islands and backlash from communities, the government dissolved the Island and Atoll Development Committees, which had previously provided municipal services^{xxxix}. In January 2010, the Ministry of Home Affairs requested the Attorney General to seek a valuation of 98 community powerhouses in order to provide legal compensation.

Recommendations: Introduce affordable housing schemes; pass mortgage and real estate laws; ensure access to clean water, electricity and sanitation in all inhabited islands.

H. Torture and rights of detainees

H1. Although torture in jails no longer appears to be sanctioned by commanding officers, allegations of abuse by individual prison guards and issues raised by the National Preventive Mechanism of the HRCM highlight a continuing concern. The detention system is plagued by lack of both trained staff and an oversight mechanism to address allegations of custodial abuse.

H2. In addition, lack of space and facilities in prisons constitute a major hazard to detainee rights. Maafushi jail, the country's largest prison, has a capacity of 400 persons, but was housing close to 700 inmates in October 2009. Acute overcrowding led to three major riots during the past year^{xl}.

H3. Moreover, failure to separate hardened criminals from minor offenders has led to violence among inmates and caused further deterioration of prison safety. Although the Department of Penitentiary and Rehabilitation (DPRS) requested a budget of Rf200 million (US\$15.5 million) for improving communication, surveillance and security, they were granted Rf74 million (US\$5.7 million) for 2010.

H4. While the HRCM continues to strengthen the functioning of the National Preventive Mechanism with more resources and staff, it has complained of requiring clearance from the Home Ministry before visiting detention facilities. Additionally, the reach of NPM across the country is limited due to its staff based in the capital.

Recommendations: Introduce rehabilitation services to inmates prior to sentencing; cease incarceration of drug addicts; strengthen the role of the parole board; improve capacity of the newly introduced juvenile detention centre; Improve capacity at jails and consider investing in a new jail; ensure transparency of the sentencing process; improve mechanism for investigating complaints of custodial abuses; strengthen functioning of the NPM.

I. Rule of law and administration of justice

I1. The routine failure to secure convictions and enforce sentences for drug dealers and murder suspects has led to serious erosion of public confidence in the judiciary. In May 2009, President Mohamed Nasheed revealed that the government had identified the "top six drug lords" in the country. In July 2009, police arrested one of the six suspected drug barons with over Rf5 million (US\$389,100) in his possession. However, in a widely criticised verdict in February 2010, the criminal court acquitted the accused due to lack of evidence^{xli}.

I2. In March 2009, the fatal stabbing of an 18-year-old in the capital was the sixth gang-related murder since December 2007^{xlii}. However, none of the suspects involved in the killings have so far been convicted. Failure to provide protection to witnesses and loopholes in the evidence laws have been cited as the main reasons for failure to secure

convictions. As a result, witnesses from both the police and public are unwilling to come forward, while in some cases police witnesses have retracted statements.

13. In March 2010, the HRCM asserted that the public was living in a state of fear and terror due to escalating crime in the capital, exacerbated by failure to enforce sentences^{xliii}. In March 2009 that over 500 convicts were loose in society due to failure to enforce sentences, while only a small percentage of the 2,764 cases forwarded to the Prosecutor General's (PG) Office in the previous year resulted in convictions.

14. Judicial reform rests on the passage of crucial legislation currently before parliament. Among other challenges facing the judiciary include capacity problems together with a lack of qualified legal professionals in the system - compounded by senior judges who either do not possess the requisite training or show an unwillingness to use it. While there is no minimum educational standard for judges, inadequate infrastructure and space for courtroom makes trials inaccessible to either the media or the public and compromises the transparency of proceedings. Moreover, access to justice is impeded by a lack of access to lawyers and the absence of outposts for independent commissions outside the capital. Islanders forced to travel to Male' face high transport costs, while ongoing cases require that they stay for long periods.

15. Failure to sensitize judges to human rights is believed to be responsible for the low conviction rate and lenient sentences for child abuse cases. In the case of the 12-year-old girl who was gang raped, the four male suspects cleared of the crime were later sentenced to two years of banishment following a High Court appeal and public outcry. Moreover, a lack of creativity in working around the limitations of the existing and outdated penal code and rigidity in sentencing contributes to the low conviction rate.

Recommendations: Form an inquiry commission to identify and resolve problems in securing convictions for serious and organized crimes; expedite passage of legislation necessary for judicial reform; sensitise judges to human rights; re-appoint judges, including justices of the Supreme Court, as stipulated in article 285 of the constitution.

J. Public participation and governance

J1. As the geographic dispersion of the 194 inhabited islands of the Maldives had made the provision of public services increasingly difficult and impractical, the revised constitution stipulates decentralized administration. One-third of the country's population lives in the capital Male' and the population of the other 193 islands range from 100 people to 12,000. In the recent past, the island and atoll offices established by the previous government, assisted by quasi-government bodies known as atoll and island development committees, have stagnated due to a lack of authority and control over resources.

J2. The committees had existed for over 20 years under the former Atolls Ministry, largely as advisory bodies that occasionally assisted with project implementation, with its members elected for two year terms. While the committees were not recognized as legal entities under the previous centralised system of administration, public participation in planning was generally weak and ineffective as communities had little control over allocation of resources for local development.

J3. In 2009, the new government proposed legislation to devolve decision-making powers to elected local councils. However, parliament remains deadlocked following an intractable dispute over the government's policy of dividing the traditional 21 administrative areas into seven provinces for service de-concentration. The opposition insists that the creation of seven provincial councils instead of 21 atoll councils would be unconstitutional. Following the failure of the two main parties to reach a compromise amidst seven consecutive forced cancellations of sittings and protests outside parliament, the bill was withdrawn in December 2009^{xliv}.

Recommendations: Pass bills on decentralised administration and local elections; pass and enact legislation on press freedom and access to information; institute a transparent, fair and open process for NGOs to apply for and attain funding from government; adopt a framework through which all registered and functioning NGOs receive annual core funding; remove from the Associations Act the clause that mandates government approval before contacting foreign donors; introduce civic education and human rights in school curriculum; ensure the ACC and Attorney General work with the UN and civil society to complete the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) Self-Assessment Checklist (which replaces the Gap Analysis); Ratify the UNCAC.

K. Freedom of expression and religious extremism

K1. Although article 27 of the Maldives constitution guarantees freedom of expression, it simultaneously restricts it by stating that “everyone has the right to freedom of thought and the freedom to communicate opinions and expression in a manner that is not contrary to any tenet of Islam.” Moreover, under article 9(d) a non-Muslim cannot become a citizen of the Maldives.

K2. As of March 2009, the new government had blocked eight local websites and one international website perceived as un-Islamic by extremist elements within the Islamic Ministry^{xlv}. The websites were blocked on the instruction of the Islamic Ministry, controlled by the religious conservative Adhaalath party of the ruling coalition. In November 2009, parliament unanimously accepted on to the parliament floor a bill to outlaw places of worship for non-Muslims^{xlvi}.

K3. In February 2010, Vice-President Dr Mohamed Waheed told an Indian newspaper that Maldivian youth were being recruited by militant groups in Pakistan and Afghanistan to wage violent jihad. Further, the Indian media has reported that the extremist group Lashkar-e-Taiba had “nearly 1,000 operatives active in the Maldives”, according to Indian intelligence bureau sources. The Maldivian government estimates that there are between 200 to 300 unregistered Maldivian students in Pakistan^{xlvii}.

Recommendations: Expedite passage of counter-terrorism bill; foster and encourage public dialogue on controversial religious issues.

References

ⁱ The bills currently before parliament include legislation on taxation, broadcasting, gang-related crimes, anti-social behavior, tenancies and rent agreements, an evidence law, a judges' bill, a judicature bill, a bill on the rights of persons with disabilities and amendments to the Employment Act.

ⁱⁱ In 2009, the ACC forwarded seven cases to the Prosecutor General's Office. A total of 779 corruption complaints were reported to the former anti-corruption board between 1991 and 2007. While 16 per cent of cases led to criminal prosecution, convictions were secured for 73 percent of cases.
<http://www.acc.gov.mv/acc/statistics.tepx?hold=33bb8f777db246b8d7684309150c250c>

ⁱⁱⁱ Article 285 of the Constitution states "The Judicial Service Commission established pursuant to Article 157 of this Constitution, shall within two years of the commencement of this Constitution determine whether or not the Judges in office at the said time, possess the qualification of Judges specified in Article 149".

^{iv} http://minivannews.org/news_detail.php?id=5593

^v Of the 137 valid claims filed last year, the tribunal completed 54 cases and resolved 19, while 64 cases are currently ongoing; 64 per cent of the claims dealt with termination.

http://www.employmenttribunal.gov.mv/index_en.html

^{vi} http://minivannews.org/news_detail.php?id=7100,

http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/details/29332/People_are_terrified,_warns_HRCM

^{vii} http://minivannews.org/news_detail.php?id=7108

^{viii} Figures from the 2006 census.

<http://planning.gov.mv/en/images/stories/publications/analysiscd/index.html#>

^{ix} http://minivannews.org/news_detail.php?id=7625

^x http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/details/29091/Commission_raise_concern_for_discriminating_civil_servants

^{xi} <http://minivannews.com/politics/2010/01/21/permanent-secretaries-sandwiched-between-csc-and-finance-ministry/>

^{xii} http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/details/29182/Government_accuses_CSC_of_trying_to_overt_hrow_the_government

^{xiii} <http://hrcm.org.mv/publications/otherreports/TheEmploymentSituationintheMaldivesEng.pdf>

^{xiv} http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/details/17881/Another_shackled_Bangladeshi_expatriate_found_inside_Male%E2%80%99house

^{xv} http://minivannews.org/news_detail.php?id=7125

^{xvi} http://minivannews.org/news_detail.php?id=7379

^{xvii} <http://minivannews.com/society/2009/12/30/forced-labour-and-discrimination-rife-in-the-maldives-claims-report/>

^{xviii} http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/details/29098/Over_2,700_expatriates_deported_

^{xix} http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/details/28706/Health_Ministry:_Probability_of_expatriate_prostitutes_in_Maldives_being_infected_with_HIV_very_high

^{xx} Article 17 of the constitutional chapter on fundamental rights and freedoms states that "everyone is entitled to the rights and freedoms included in this chapter without discrimination of any kind, including race, national origin, colour, sex, age, mental or physical disability" and "special assistance or protection to disadvantaged individuals or groups, or to groups requiring special assistance, as provided in law shall not be deemed to be discrimination".

^{xxi} Page 72: http://www.health.gov.mv/Publications/The_Maldives_Health_Statistics2009_FINAL.pdf

^{xxii} <http://hrcm.org.mv/publications/otherreports/TheEmploymentSituationintheMaldivesEng.pdf>

^{xxiii} <http://judiciary.gov.mv/images/stories/details.pdf>

^{xxiv} http://minivannews.org/news_detail.php?id=6256

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http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/details/29153/Child_abuse_cases_double:_Gender_Departme nt

^{xxvi} <http://judiciary.gov.mv/images/stories/details.pdf>

^{xxvii} <http://www.mgf.gov.mv/downloads/news%20supliment%20on%20the%20survey%20on%20Wom en%27s%20Health%20and%20Life%20Experiences%28english%29.pdf>

^{xxviii} <http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/?page=details&id=24319>

^{xxix} http://minivannews.org/news_detail.php?id=4419

^{xxx} http://minivannews.org/news_detail.php?id=7791

^{xxxix} http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/details/25992/HRCM:_Young_girls_being_deprived_of_educ ation_in_some_areas_of_Maldives_

^{xxxii} <http://minivannews.com/politics/2009/12/10/female-circumcision-occurring-in-addu-atoll- reveals-ag/>

^{xxxiii} <http://www.hrcm.org.mv/news/news3.aspx>

^{xxxiv} <http://hrcm.org.mv/publications/otherreports/TheEmploymentSituationintheMaldivesEng.pdf>

^{xxxv} http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/details/21100/Court_sentences_child_sex_offenders_to_tw o_years_banishment

^{xxxvi} <http://judiciary.gov.mv/images/stories/details.pdf>

^{xxxvii} <http://hrcm.org.mv/publications/otherreports/HousingAssesmentEng.pdf>

^{xxxviii} Article 23 of the constitution states “Every citizen the following rights pursuant to this Constitution, and the State undertakes to achieve the progressive realisation of these rights by reasonable measures within its ability and resources: (a) adequate and nutritious food and clean water; (b) clothing and housing; (c) good standards of health care, physical and mental; (d) a healthy and ecologically balanced environment; (e) equal access to means of communication, the State media, transportation facilities, and the natural resources of the country; (f) the establishment of a sewage system of a reasonably adequate standard on every inhabited island; (g) the establishment of an electricity system of a reasonably adequate standard on every inhabited island that is commensurate to that island.”

^{xxxix} http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/details/28593/Cabinet_to_hand_over_powerhouses_under _island_development_committees_to_Utilities_Companies

^{xi} http://minivannews.org/news_detail.php?id=7465,

http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/details/28136/%E2%80%9CMaafushi_Jail_no_longer_exists%E2 %80%9D

^{xii} <http://minivannews.com/politics/2010/02/28/one-of-top-six-drug-dealers-found-innocent-by- criminal-court/>

^{xliii} http://minivannews.org/news_detail.php?id=6136

^{xliiii} http://minivannews.org/news_detail.php?id=6142

^{xliiv} <http://minivannews.com/politics/2009/12/31/government-withdraws-decentralisation-bill/>

^{xliiv} <http://minivannews.com/society/2010/02/22/maldivian-students-recruited-to-wage-jihad- confirms-vice-president/>

^{xlivi} http://www.minivannews.org/news_detail.php?id=7737

^{xliiii} <http://minivannews.com/society/2010/02/22/maldivian-students-recruited-to-wage-jihad- confirms-vice-president/>