



Issue

Brief

ISSUE NO. 579
SEPTEMBER 2022

Poverty, Criminality, Extremism: The Interrelated Sources of Insecurity in Maldives

Mohammed Sinan Siyech

Abstract

Maldives, or the Maldivian islands in the north-central Indian Ocean, is widely regarded as a paradise by holiday-seekers from across the world. Yet, its own people are beset by severe issues of insecurity. This brief investigates the various threats to security in the island nation, primary of which is the massive income inequality. It outlines a political and religious history of the nation, and explores their influence in the current state of insecurity.

On 29 September 2007, Maldives was rocked by a deadly bombing in Sultan Park in the capital city of Malé, which injured 12 foreign tourists.¹ It was the first reported terrorist attack in the country. More incidents would then follow, including stabbing of tourists, the disappearance of journalists, and bomb attacks on political figures.² Today, too, Maldives has the unfortunate reputation of being the country of origin of the largest number—as percentage of the population—of fighters in the world who have joined the ranks of the Islamic State (ISIS) in Syria and Iraq.³

This brief explores how Maldives, a nation marketed globally as a tourist paradise, has become a terrorist hub in South Asia. It attempts to provide a context to this growth in extremism, examining the state of the country's economy and focusing on the unequal distribution of wealth. It looks at local religious practices and their correlation with the emergence of jihadist radicalisation.

The brief argues that extremism is only one among a number of challenges that are heightening insecurity among the people of the island nation. The other issues are poverty, inequality, unemployment, and absence of law and order. These factors are interrelated: economic and social insecurities have left Maldivians vulnerable to external influences, including jihadist propaganda; in turn, radicalisation leads to even greater insecurity.

“Extremism is only one among a number of challenges that are heightening insecurity among the people of Maldives.”

Maldives Economy and the Legacy of Corruption

Following Maldives' Independence in 1965, its political history has been largely dominated by a single figure—that of Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, president of the country from 1978 to 2008. During his 30-year-long autocratic rule, Gayoom accumulated much wealth, mainly at the expense of the Maldivian people, leaving in his wake significant discontent.⁴

Part of Gayoom's agenda while in office was to focus on developing the country's tourism industry. Some of the elements of this strategy, like the building of ultra-luxurious resorts,⁵ have had their own consequences. Primary among these was the influx of migrant workers from other parts of South Asia to help service the large number of visiting tourists—this changed the country's demographic composition.⁶ While there were hardly any migrants in Maldives till 1985, about one-third of the country's population of 540,000 today consists of migrant workers.⁷

To be sure, the growth of the tourism industry made significant contributions to Maldives' economy, and the sector comprises close to one-third of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).⁸ By 2010, Maldives had the highest per capita GDP in South Asia—close to USD 7,000 which was almost thrice the regional per capita GDP average.⁹ Maldives had transformed from a 'least developed' economy in the 1970s to a 'middle-income nation' by 2011.¹⁰

However, such economic growth was not accompanied by improvements in equity parameters, and wealth distribution has remained skewed.¹¹ The benefits of a lucrative tourism industry have hardly reached the local population: For example, despite the island nation having multiple island resorts, locals are rarely seen on many of them. Most locals live in cramped conditions on a few islands such as Malé. Finding productive employment is a massive difficulty, as many among the working-age population require 'connections' to get a job.¹²

During Gayoom's term, running parallel to the pervasive income inequality were extensive reports of corruption where even members of the judiciary and anti-corruption committees have been found to be conniving with the former president.¹³ The corruption did not end when he left office, and Maldives ranks 85th out of 180 countries in Transparency International's global corruption index.¹⁴ Another president, Abdullah Yameen (2013–2018) was accused of

Maldives Economy and the Legacy of Corruption

laundering up to USD 1.5 billion during his term.¹⁵ Among the financial scandals was the USD 250-million scam involving the Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC) in 2015 in which several businessmen, ministers, and public officials were implicated.¹⁶

The excesses of the political elite in Maldives helped perpetuate poverty, income inequality, and unemployment in the country. Among the socio-cultural consequences of these economic hardships was a rise in criminal activity. Studies have found that unemployed young people who have had little choice in their lives end up joining criminal gangs and engaging in unlawful behaviour such as drug use.¹⁷ Media reports suggest that there are around 30 gangs in the country, each with membership of anywhere between 100 and 500.¹⁸ These gangs are reported to engage in activities such as illicit drug distribution.¹⁹

“The excesses of the political elite in Maldives has helped perpetuate poverty and inequality in the country.”

The Threat of Radicalism

Maldives has been home to Islam for more than 10 centuries, ever since its locals, who used to be Buddhist, over time converted en masse. Most of the population follow the Shafi'i school of jurisprudence—one of the four schools of Sunni Islam and also practised in Kerala and coastal Karnataka in India, as well as in countries like Yemen, Singapore, and Malaysia.²⁰ In the 1970s, Gayoom began strengthening cultural ties with other Muslim nations. He opened many Arabic language schools and also forged partnerships with *madrassas* and universities in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Pakistan.²¹

This had two consequences. First, Saudi Arabia, which had become extremely wealthy following the sharp spike in oil prices in the 1970s, increased its global funding for the spread of Salafism, the literalist school of Sunni Islam followed there. Second, many Maldivians studying in Pakistan in the 1980s were exposed to the geopolitical tensions in neighbouring Afghanistan, which was then witnessing a massive anti-Russian consolidation of jihadists from the all over the world.²²

These factors led to more exclusivist forms of Islam taking root in Maldives, dislodging the traditional Shafi'i teachings.²³ After the 2004 tsunami which took a heavy toll on Maldives, these influences increased further. Some members of various Saudi Arabia and Pakistan-based groups—such as the Jama'at ud Dawah, the charitable arm of the Pakistani terrorist-designated group Lashkar e-Taiba—distributed aid only to those who agreed to follow their form of Islam.²⁴

To be sure, the emergence of radical teachings predated the tsunami. There were preachers such as Ibrahim Fareed, for example, a Pakistan-educated cleric who came back to Maldives in 1983, who bitterly attacked certain local, traditional practises as “un-Islamic”. Fareed's preaching was so extreme that the government took notice and banished him to one of the country's southern atolls. This did not stop him, though, and in time, he succeeded in radicalising many. Some of the perpetrators of the 2007 Sultan Park bombings, for example, were found to be disciples of Fareed.²⁵

Another factor was Abdullah Yameen's closeness to Saudi Arabia during his tenure as president (2013-2018). Saudi companies acquired multimillion-dollar deals in Maldives which led to an influx of Saudi Arabian religious education.

The Threat of Radicalism

Simultaneously, laws were passed which restored the death sentence for apostasy and banned preaching (especially of other religions) without government consent.²⁶ Maldivians, already struggling with unemployment and crime, then became more overtly religious. As journalist Pravin Swami has noted, families were often relieved to see their children attend lectures in *madrassas*, even those being conducted by foreign preachers, since that meant they were likely to stay away from drugs and gangs.²⁷

Early Influences of Extremism

Many Maldivians were reported to have fought on the frontlines in Afghanistan.²⁸ Others worked with the separatist movement in India's Jammu and Kashmir too, as documented by Indian news magazines.²⁹ It began after Maldivians developed strong links with the Jamiya Salafiya in Faisalabad, Pakistan, a Salafist *madrassa* which was also a recruitment pool for groups like Lashkar e-Taiba. (This became known in 2007, when a Maldivian, who had been in Pakistan, informed the families of two others who had also gone there, that the latter had died.³⁰) Such links became untenable that then President Gayoom asked Pakistan to keep a closer watch on its Maldivian students. Though this hardly helped, the number of such students has declined over time.³¹

New Foreign Fighters

Another disturbing trend was that of Maldivians travelling to Iraq and Syria in 2013-2018 to fight for ISIS. Reports say at least 300 Maldivians did so during that period. (Maldivian authorities have clarified that this number includes the wives and children of the Maldivian fighters.) Many Maldivians are still languishing in Syrian prisons, unable to return due to legal hurdles. Many recruits had criminal backgrounds, highlighting the nexus between terrorist groups and criminal gangs, and suggesting that the motives for joining both, such as social identity and brotherhood, may be overlapping.³²

Maldives also has high internet penetration; and a significant proportion of its citizens speak English. The internet could well have facilitated their radicalisation, given that the Islamic State was churning out massive amounts of propaganda during its heyday in the mid-2010s. There was much propaganda in the local Dhivehi language as well.³³

The Threat of Radicalism

The Maldivians who have gone to Syria and Iraq, or tried to, pose a threat to the government. There are at least 1,400 extremists in the country, according to one security official, some of whom have bomb-making expertise.³⁴ The returning foreign fighters have also become battle-hardened, with their ideology intact, and they could well start new jihadi networks.³⁵

Growing Xenophobia

The attacks in Maldives so far have often targeted foreign tourists. In 2007 there was a massive standoff in a mosque between the police and the 70-odd extremists believed to be harbouring the terrorist perpetrators; the confrontation injured 30 police officers.³⁶

Various individuals who have either criticised the government, or called for more liberal (i.e., Western) norms such as accepting homosexuality, have also been targeted. They include journalist Ahmed Rilwan, who was murdered by an Al Qaeda-affiliated group in 2014, and Yameen Rasheed, a blogger critical of the government, stabbed to death in 2017.³⁷ A government-appointed commission that studied the cases has said that groups like Al Qaeda kept an active hit list of government critics and liberal activists, claiming they were anti-Islamic.³⁸

It remains unclear, however, if these attacks were perpetrated only by the jihadists themselves, or with the covert encouragement by the government. Some commission members have hinted that there were individuals within law enforcement agencies and government who blocked further investigation of these killings. The probe continues to be active, with arrests being made as late as end-June 2022.³⁹

At least two people were stabbed by extremists in 2020 and 2021.⁴⁰ In addition, *Sawt al Hind* (Voice of India) magazine, an Islamic State organ targeted at Indian Muslims, has called for more attacks on Maldivian targets. Some analysts have pointed out that the channel 'TouristwatchMV' set up on Telegram by Islamic State sympathisers seems to target tourists.⁴¹ It is a massive challenge for tourism-dependent Maldives.⁴²

The Threat of Radicalism

There have also been attacks on political figures such as Abdulla Yameen, when he was president in 2015,⁴³ and Parliament Speaker Mohammed Nasheed in 2021.⁴⁴ However, no conclusive evidence have been found pointing to Islamic terrorists as the perpetrators, nor did any terrorist group claim responsibility.⁴⁵

Four different aspects can be isolated relating to terrorism in Maldives. The 1980s stream of Maldivians fighting in Afghanistan and Jammu and Kashmir marked the first wave of terrorism. The second was marked by the 2007 bombing and the subsequent standoff, followed by more attacks on tourists. The third was the targeting of liberal activists and government critics, who were dubbed anti-Islamic and deserving of death. Finally, political actors have also been attacked. The last two developments show how terrorism is also mixed up with political ambitions, making it difficult for outsiders and even security institutions to have a clear grasp of events, while at the same time confirming that extremist ideologies have penetrated the polity.

Indeed, both Al Qaeda and the Islamic State have pockets of influence in Maldives. Al Qaeda-affiliated groups are believed to be targeting government critics and liberal activists, just as Al Qaeda affiliate Ansar al Islam did in Bangladesh. On the other hand, the trend of drawing fighters from Maldives for jihad and attacks on tourists have the imprint of the Islamic State, whose presence is even more entrenched than that of Al Qaeda.

Factors Influencing Terrorism

Social anthropologist Tore Bjorgo has proffered four sets of factors that influence terrorism: structural factors; facilitative factors; personal factors; and trigger factors.⁴⁶ First, a country could have various structural issues such as poverty and poor governance that could alienate its people, making them vulnerable to ideologies that are not conducive to peace.

Second, the media—and this would include news channels and social network platforms—are often a facilitative factor. Personal factors include both the socio-economic conditions under which people live (which in turn are dependent on structural factors) and specific personal issues they may face, such as the death of a loved one, or instances of discrimination and mistreatment by government authorities. Lastly, a trigger factor is one watershed event that highlights the

The Threat of Radicalism

grievances being nursed by citizens. The United States (US) invasion of Iraq, for instance, was a trigger event that pushed people to take up arms against the US.⁴⁷

In Maldives, all four factors seem to have come together to reinforce the insecurity of the people, although the extent to which each one influenced the growth of terrorism is unknown. As described earlier, various structural factors have shaped the demography of Maldives to make many feel disenfranchised and powerless.

The striking contrast between the spacious, opulent structures in which tourists live and the cramped housing conditions of most of the locals has provoked some degree of xenophobia towards tourists.⁴⁸ It is fuelled by seeing tourists getting “privileges” such as the right to freely drink alcohol or wear clothes that the locals would not. The criminal gangs have been a rallying point for future extremists to gain experience and expertise in violence, which groups like the Islamic State have then exploited. Additionally, convicted gang members are stigmatised and fail to find employment even after being released from prison, making fighting in Syria an attractive economic option for them.⁴⁹

Similarly, religious preachers and publishers have produced a huge corpus of literature, which formed the bulk of the facilitative factors that helped keep the message of this form of Islam alive in the pre-internet era (specifically about the non-Islamic nature of the tourism industry). In the 2010s, social media platforms have likely assumed this role, given the high proliferation of propaganda videos. Many foreign fighters, for example, according to a study by Ahmed Nazwan, have either been in personally vulnerable situations, or had failed personal relationships behind them.⁵⁰

Lastly, there are the trigger factors, which are temporary and can be many. This author contends that a trigger was the tsunami of 2004, which affected one-third of the population, damaged more than a fourth of the 198 inhabited islands in the country, killed close to 100, and displaced some 10 percent of the population. It also destroyed infrastructure in about 20 different islands and led to the loss of electricity in about 80.⁵¹ The fallout of the tsunami resulted in a 62-percent loss in GDP that year.⁵²

The Threat of Radicalism

Journalist Naomi Klien has pointed out that apart from the natural disaster, some of the Maldivian government's actions in its wake have also been triggers for disgruntled sentiments. The government used the tsunami as an excuse to evict residents from coastal areas, shifting them to cramped cities, claiming it was for their safety as coastal settlements remained susceptible to tsunamis.⁵³ However, these same areas would later be developed into tourism spots.

“Social anthropologist Tore Bjorgo proffers four sets of factors that influence terrorism: structural; facilitative; personal; and trigger factors.”

New Directions: Indophobia

The fall of the Islamic State has led to a decline in the number of foreign fighters and terror attacks across the world, as documented by the Soufan Group's reports.⁵⁴ This is also true of Maldives, though the threat remains. The official statement that there are 1,400 extremists in the country remains a cause of alarm across South Asia.⁵⁵

The extremist attention could potentially be directed towards the looming presence of India in Maldivian politics. India has been investing in Maldives, has provided aid of around US\$3 billion, and appointed itself as its net security provider. Many are resenting such footprint.⁵⁶ A pointer is the attack on the Indian embassy on 22 June 2022, where about 150 politicians and diplomats were attending a yoga session. Calling yoga “un-Islamic”, the attackers dispersed the gathering forcibly.⁵⁷ Hostility towards Indian citizens working as teachers and medical personnel in Maldives is also visible. Indian diplomats in Malé have received threats on social media.⁵⁸

Numerous factors explain this hatred towards India. Politically, India has always inspired some level of acrimony among the other nations of South Asia because of its sheer size. That Indian visas are difficult to obtain for other South Asian residents is also resented. Most of all, Indian interventions in Maldives are seen as “imperialistic” and an affront to Maldivians.⁵⁹ It is still remembered that the coup attempt to depose Gayoom in 1988 was—at Gayoom's request—foiled by India, which many believe amounted to interference in Maldives' domestic politics. These tensions have always been simmering, waiting for the right opportunity to re-surface.⁶⁰

They did, following ex-president Abdullah Yameen's tenure. Yameen was jailed on corruption charges soon after he lost the 2018 election. He had largely allied with China and its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)-related investments during his term.⁶¹ His successor, Mohammed Solih, reversed this stance and took a more India-friendly approach, even declaring an ‘India First’ policy, welcoming investments from India.⁶²

New Directions: Indophobia

Ever since Yameen was released in November 2021 after the Supreme Court overturned his conviction,⁶³ he has been trying to regain power by criticising the pro-India stance of the current government. He has accused India of having military presence in Maldives—a particularly sensitive issue for Maldivians, who believe it compromises their sovereignty.⁶⁴ Though this was denied by the Solih government, it has been repeated by Yameen ever since he lost power, leading to anti-India protests. The Solih government’s attempt in 2020 to ban protests in response was also seen as an autocratic move, fuelling further unrest.⁶⁵

The Islamic State, through its media outlets like the magazine *Sawt al Hind*, has also been trying to exploit sentiments and events in India that seem to be directed against Muslims, to gain more recruits from Maldives. This has fuelled more Indophobia. In Pakistan and Bangladesh too, the experiences of India’s Muslim minority in recent years have become an issue for jihadists for similar localised reasons.⁶⁶

“Extremist sentiments in Maldives could potentially be directed towards the looming presence of India in the country’s politics.”

Conclusion

National security in Maldives is coming under threat from various fronts, among them, jihadist extremism. While the September 2007 terrorist attack in the capital Malé highlighted the emerging challenge of extremism, conditions for its rise have been present since the 1980s. Poor governance has heightened this phenomenon, as seen from some of the attacks of the last 15 years which also had political motivations.

The underlying conditions which fostered extremism still exist in Maldives. Income inequality and corruption continue to be a hallmark of Maldivian governance. Given the resentment over India's role in Maldives, it is only a matter of time before another watershed event leads to a deadly attack. Governments and political actors should learn from the experience of other South Asian nations and take immediate steps to combat the challenge. [ORF](#)

Mohammed Sinan Siyech is a Non-Resident Associate Fellow with ORF's Strategic Studies Programme.

- 1 Ajay Makan, “Bomb blast wounds 12 tourists in Maldives capital,” *Reuters*, September 29, 2007, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-maldives-explosion-idUSCOL8415420070929>
- 2 Gulbin Sultana, “Attack on Mohamed Nasheed and Challenges Ahead for the Maldives,” *IDSA*, July 01, 2021, <https://www.idsa.in/issuebrief/attack-mohamed-nasheed-and-challenges-gsultana-010721>
- 3 Francesca Bori, “Where jihadists are heroes,” *NRC*, March 14, 2017, <https://www.nrc.no/perspectives/2017/where-jihadists-are-heroes/>
- 4 Ankit Panda, “Former Maldives President Charged With Corruption, Money-Laundering,” *Diplomat*, February 07, 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/02/former-maldives-president-charged-with-corruption-money-laundering/>
- 5 Katie Lockhart, “The most incredible overwater villas in the Maldives,” *CNN*, July 13, 2022, <https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/maldives-best-overwater-villas/index.html>
- 6 Shahida Mariyam Mohamed, “Protecting Migrant Workers in Maldives,” *International Labour Organization*, November 30, 2020, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---inst/documents/publication/wcms_776391.pdf
- 7 chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---inst/documents/publication/wcms_776391.pdf
- 8 *Asian Development Bank*, “Maldives Overcoming the Challenges Of A Small Island State Country Diagnostic Study,” 2015, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/172704/maldives-overcoming-challenges-small-island-state.pdf>
- 9 *Asian Development Bank*, “Maldives Overcoming the Challenges Of A Small Island State Country Diagnostic Study”
- 10 *Asian Development Bank*, “Maldives Overcoming the Challenges Of A Small Island State Country Diagnostic Study”
- 11 *Asian Development Bank*, “Maldives Overcoming the Challenges Of A Small Island State Country Diagnostic Study”
- 12 Antonio Gough, “The Maldives – An Unlikely ISIS Haven,” *Global Risk Analyst*, March 22, 2021, <https://globalriskinsights.com/2021/03/the-maldives-an-unlikely-isis-haven/>
- 13 Panda, “Former Maldives President Charged With Corruption, Money-Laundering”
- 14 “Maldives Corruption Rank,” *Trading Economics*, 2022, <https://tradingeconomics.com/maldives/corruption-rank>

- 15 Zaheena Rasheed, “Top court asked to oust Yameen, investigate corruption,” *Al Jazeera*, January 29, 2018, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/1/29/top-court-asked-to-oust-yameen-investigate-corruption>
- 16 “Transparency Maldives Calls on Authorities to Recover All Assets Lost In The MMPRC Corruption Scandal And Speed Up Investigation And Prosecution”, *Transperency International*, December 14, 2021, <https://www.transparency.org/en/press/authorities-must-speed-up-investigation-prosecution-mmprc-corruption-scandal>
- 17 Praveen Swami, “From Maldives, road to Islamic State goes via drugs, gangs and jail,” *Indian Express*, April 15, 2015, <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/video-from-maldives-road-to-islamic-state-goes-via-drugs-gangs-and-jail/>
- 18 Swami, “From Maldives, road to Islamic State goes via drugs, gangs and jail”
- 19 “Increasing prevalence of gang violence, though not reported”, *Maldives Financial Review*, November 25, 2021, <https://mfr.mv/reports/increasing-prevalence-of-gang-violence-though-not-reported>
- 20 A P Alavi Bin Mohamed Bin Ahamed, “Ancestral Centers of Kerala Muslim SocioCultural and Educational Enlightenments,” *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, 516 – 523.
- 21 Boris Wille, “Defending Islam in an Islamic State” , *Asian Ethnology*, Vol. 80, No. 1 (2021), pp. 199-226
- 22 Pravin Swami, “The Jihad in Paradise”, *Outlook*, February 03, 2022, <https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/the-jihad-in-paradise/236067>
- 23 Swami, “The Jihad in Paradise”
- 24 Swami, “The Jihad in Paradise”
- 25 Swami, “The Jihad in Paradise”
- 26 “President Yameen arrives in Saudi Arabia,” *Presidencymv*, October 03, 2016, <https://presidency.gov.mv/Press/Article/17242>
- 27 Swami, “The Jihad in Paradise”
- 28 Ahmed Niyaz, “Terrorism and Extremism: A Threat To Maldives”, *Revistas*, 2010, https://www.google.com/search?q=Tourism+and+terrorism+maldives&rlz=1C1CHBF_enSG826SG826&oq=Tourism+and+terrorism+maldives&aqs=chrome..69i57j0i512l3j0i22i30l3j69i61.8641j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8
- 29 Swami, “The Jihad in Paradise”
- 30 Raffaello Pantucci and Mohammed Sinan Siyech, “Targeting of a former president highlights the growing challenge of extremism in Maldives,” *Observer Research Foundation*, June 02, 2021, <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/targeting-of-a-former-president-highlights-the-growing-challenge-of-extremism-in-maldives/>

- 31 “Pakistan, Maldives agree to enhance cooperation in education sector”, *Radio Pakistan*, December 09, 2019, <https://www.radio.gov.pk/09-12-2021/pakistan-maldives-agree-to-enhance-cooperation-in-education-sector>
- 32 Azim Zahir, “Islamic State Terror in the Maldives as COVID-19 Arrives”, *The Diplomat*, April 18, 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/04/islamic-state-terror-in-the-maldives-as-covid-19-arrives/>
- 33 Ahmed Nazwan, “Radicalisation and Foreign Fighter Mobilisation: The Case Of Maldives”, *Dissertation submitted to Nanyang Technological University*, 2017.
- 34 Neha Banka, “Explained: What Maldives’ new police academy means for bilateral security cooperation with India,” *Indian Express*, March 27, 2022, <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-maldives-new-police-academy-bilateral-security-india-7838763/>
- 35 Mohammed M. Hafez, “Jihad after Iraq: Lessons from the Arab Afghans,” in *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Vol.32, no. 2 (Jan. 2009), pp. 73–98
- 36 Chan Tau Chou, “Maldives faces social divide,” *Al Jazeera*, November 06, 2007, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2007/11/6/maldives-faces-social-divide>
- 37 Michael Safi, “Maldives blogger stabbed to death in capital,” *Guardian*, April 23, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/23/maldives-blogger-yameen-rasheed-stabbed-to-death-in-capital>
- 38 Zaheena Rasheed, “Missing Maldives journalist killed by al-Qaeda affiliate,” *Al Jazeera*, September 02, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/9/2/missing-maldives-journalist-killed-by-al-qaeda-affiliate>
- 39 Patricia Gossman, “Maldives Arrests Suspects in Cases of Murdered Activists,” *Human Rights Watch*, June 27, 2022, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/06/27/maldives-arrests-suspects-cases-murdered-activists>
- 40 Pantucci and Siyech, “Targeting of a former president highlights the growing challenge of extremism in Maldives”
- 41 Zahir, “Islamic State Terror in the Maldives as COVID-19 Arrives”
- 42 Ahmed Niyaz, “Terrorism and Extremism: A Threat To Maldives,” *Revistas*, 2010, https://www.google.com/search?q=Tourism+and+terrorism+maldives&rlz=1C1CHBF_enSG826SG826&oq=Tourism+and+terrorism+maldives&aqs=chrome..6957j0l5123j0l22303j6961.8641j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8
- 43 Pantucci and Siyech, “Targeting of a former president highlights the growing challenge of extremism in Maldives”
- 44 Pantucci and Siyech, “Targeting of a former president highlights the growing challenge of extremism in Maldives”

- 45 Pantucci and Siyech, “Targeting of a former president highlights the growing challenge of extremism in Maldives”
- 46 Tore Bjorgo, *Root Causes of Terrorism: Myths, Reality and Way Forward* (New York: Routledge, 2004) pp. 1-16.
- 47 Fawaz A Gerges, “ISIS and the Third Wave of Jihadism,” in *Current History*, Vol. 113, No. 767, December 2014
- 48 General Bhopinder Singh, “The Sobering Reality Behind the Lure of Maldives in Lakshadweep,” June 01, 2021, <https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/NewsDetail/index/4/20431/The-Sobering-Reality-Behind-the-Lure-of-Maldives-in-Lakshadweep-->
- 49 Ben Anthony Horton, “The tourism paradox: Is the Maldives facing an existential crisis?,” *Euronews*, March 12, 2022, <https://www.euronews.com/green/2022/01/18/the-tourism-paradox-is-the-maldives-facing-an-existential-crisis>
- 50 Nazwan, “Radicalisation and Foreign Fighter Mobilisation: The Case Of Maldives”
- 51 ‘Tsunami Impact Summary: Maldives’, <https://reliefweb.int/report/maldives/tsunami-impact-summary-maldives#:~:text=The%20Maldives%20was%20the%20only,the%20islands%20were%20totally%20destroyed.>
- 52 “Maldives tsunami impact and recovery: Joint needs assessment, World Bank-Asian Development Bank-UN System,” *World Bank*, February 14, 2005, <https://reliefweb.int/report/maldives/maldives-tsunami-impact-and-recovery-joint-needs-assessment-world-bank-asian>
- 53 Naomi Klein, *Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, (Penguin Books: 2014).
- 54 “Beyond The Caliphate: Foreign Fighters and the Threat of Returnees,” *Richard Barrett*, October 2017, <https://thesoufancenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Beyond-the-Caliphate-Foreign-Fighters-and-the-Threat-of-Returnees-TSC-Report-October-2017-v3.pdf>
- 55 Neha Banka, “Academy means for bilateral security cooperation with India,” *Indian Express*, March 27, 2022, <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-maldives-new-police-academy-bilateral-security-india-7838763/>
- 56 N Manoharan, “India’s challenges in Maldives,” *Deccan Herald*, August 05, 2022, <https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/in-perspective/india-s-challenges-in-maldives-1133187.html>
- 57 “Mob attacks Indian embassy’s Yoga Day event in Maldives,” *Times of India*, June 22, 2022, [mbassys-yoga-day-event-in-maldives/articleshow/92375324.cms](https://timesofindia.com/mbassys-yoga-day-event-in-maldives/articleshow/92375324.cms)

- 58 “Maldives Police Arrests Man for Allegedly Threatening To Bomb Indian High Commission,” *The Wire*, July 07, 2021, <https://thewire.in/diplomacy/maldives-police-arrests-man-threat-indian-high-commission>
- 59 Mohammed Sinan Siyech and Nazneen Mohsina, “Anti-India Sentiments in South Asia: Terrorist Recruitment Narratives,” *Middle East Institute*, July 23, 2018, <https://www.mei.edu/publications/anti-india-sentiments-south-asia-terrorist-recruitment-narratives>
- 60 Neha Banka, “Operation Cactus: How India helped Maldives thwart coup bid backed by Lankan militants,” *Indian Express*, November 03, 2021, <https://indianexpress.com/article/research/operation-cactus-how-india-helped-maldives-end-a-coup-backed-by-lankan-militants-7605322/>
- 61 Seema Guha, “Why ‘India Out’ Campaign Led By Pro-China Yameen Is Gaining Ground In Maldives,” *Outlook India*, December 28, 2014, <https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/india-china-compete-for-relevance-in-the-strategically-important-indian-ocean-island-nation/407058>
- 62 Meera Srinivisan, “Maldives President Solih bans ‘India Out’ campaign,” *The Hindu*, April 21, 2022, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/maldives-president-solih-bans-india-out-campaign/article65341970.ece>
- 63 Mohammed Junayd, “Maldives’ ex-president Yameen walks free after graft conviction overturned,” *Reuters*, November 30, 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/maldives-ex-president-yameen-walks-free-after-graft-conviction-overturned-2021-11-30/>
- 64 Saad Hasan, “Why do some Maldivians want the ‘Indian Military Out’?,” *TRT World*, November 22, 2021, <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/why-do-some-maldivians-want-the-indian-military-out-51899>
- 65 Hasan, “Why do some Maldivians want the ‘Indian Military Out’?”
- 66 Siyech and Mohsina, “Anti-India Sentiments in South Asia: Terrorist Recruitment Narratives”



Ideas . Forums . Leadership . Impact

20, Rouse Avenue Institutional Area,
New Delhi - 110 002, INDIA
Ph. : +91-11-35332000. Fax : +91-11-35332005
E-mail: contactus@orfonline.org
Website: www.orfonline.org