



## Country Report – Maldives

Overall rating  3  Moderate	Sub-Ratings	1	2	3	4	5
	Political situation	3				
	Terrorism	3				
	Crime	3				
	Health / Natural Risks	3				
Risk Rating: 1: Low; 2: Moderate; 3: Significant; 4: High; 5: Very High						

### General situation

Overall	Head of State: Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom (since November 24th, 2013)
	Capital town: Malé
	Total population: 401 000 residents in 2014
	Official language(s): Dhiveri
	Time zone(s): UTC +5
	International code: +960
	Emergency contacts: 119 (Police)
Economic data	GDP: 235.574 billion USD in 2014
	Currency: Rufiyaa (MVR)
	Exchange rate: 1 euro = 17,23 MVR at 2016/09/13
Administrative	Passport: Should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months
	Visa: Generally mandatory. Conditions may be eased depending on nationality and/or period
	Vaccination: Yellow fever vaccination certificate required for travellers arriving from countries with risk of transmission

### Political situation

Under British protectorate and attached to the Sri Lanka, the Republic of Maldives gained independence in 1965 and was marked, until 2008, by a crystallization of power in the hands of the Chief Executive. Only two presidents have indeed ruled the country until that date and two attempted coups were foiled in 1980 and 1983. At the end of November 1988, a coup led to a partial takeover of the capital, Malé, by a Tamil group opposed to President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, led by businessman Abdullah Luthufi and supported by the Tamil Tigers from LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) then themselves struggling against Colombo power in Sri Lanka. This situation required a military intervention from India (Operation Cactus), at the request of President Gayoom, to restore order.

- Criticism concentrated against President Gayoom...
- During his term, President Nasheed has initiated a number of structural reforms, which led notably to an overhaul of the local government system in 2010. He also began an international campaign on...

### Risk Watch and Analysis Department

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- ...
- Moreover, despite a recent resumption of the growth, the Maldivian economy remains dependent on the fishing industry and tourism. With a total population set to 401 000 inhabitants (2014, World Bank), the Maldives is affected by the effect of overpopulation in the capital Malé and a high unemployment rate (11.7% in 2012), also visible in the capital. Thus, the protest actions organised within the framework of social or religious claims are frequent but limited in terms of mobilisation...

## Terrorism

Given the archipelago's tourist appeal and the high concentration of Westerners, the Maldives remains a potential target for terrorist activities. However, if this threat remains significant, it is mainly concentrated in the capital Malé and constantly monitored by the Maldivian authorities around the country's main tourist sites. Since 2007, no terrorist action has been reported in the Maldives archipelago.

- The terrorist risk is mainly spread by radical groups, which have established some minor branches in the country and whose members maintain close relations with organisations from several South Asian countries (Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, India or Pakistan), particularly through...
- In September 2007, an improvised bomb targeting foreigners exploded in a busy district of Malé (Sultan Park), leaving 12 wounded (Chinese, Japanese, and British)...

## Crime

The criminal risk is significant in the Maldives, mainly concentrated in the capital and in places of average importance spread around the archipelago's various atolls. The entire territory is indeed affected by the presence of numerous criminal gangs and violence related to their activity is increasing for several years. This phenomenon particularly affects...

- Apart from the rise in drug consumption, thefts and burglaries, a main consequence of the high unemployment rate, constitute the main risks incurred in the country. Cases of assault, targeting mainly nationals, are furthermore regularly reported by the Maldivian authorities across the whole territory...
- *Maritime piracy: ...*

## Calendar

## Major events

- **August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016:** Announcing of issuance by the Criminal Court of an arrest warrant for former President Mohamed Nasheed and former Vice President Dr Mohamed Jameel Ahmed.
- **August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016:** Adoption by the People's Majlis (Parliament) of a controversial law against defamation. Several demonstrations and sit-ins in previous and following days resulted in security forces intervention and localized clashes.
- **April 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016:** Clashes between members of two rival gangs near Masjid-al-Noor in Malé.
- **April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016:** Lynching of a man after an attempted sexual assault in Addu City (Addu Atoll, South). 1 injured.

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- **February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016**: Neutralisation of an improvised explosive device near the Presidential Palace in Malé. Strengthening of security measures.

...

## Upcoming events

- **November 11<sup>th</sup> (yearly)**: Republic Day.

## Regional situation

**Malé**: Political heart of the Maldives, Malé concentrates the majority of demonstrations organized by the opposition against the government, traditionally held in the neighbourhood of Muliaage, near the Presidential Palace.

... ..

## Health/Natural Risks

## Health risks

Universal vaccines (hepatitis A and B, DTPP) suffice and typhoid vaccine may be added to them. Moreover, yellow fever vaccine may be required depending on the country or region of residence.

*Diving and animals*: Travellers are advised to be particularly careful when diving under water. A Certificate of Fitness issued by a physician is often required.

Several aquatic species are likely to pose a danger when swimming, diving, or practicing water activities. Therefore, travellers are advised not to...

## Natural risks

The summer monsoon period, Halhangu, usually goes from May to October and results in strong winds and bad weather. However, the Maldives is not affected by passing cyclones because of its geographical proximity to the equator. In addition, the winter monsoon, Hiruwai, stretches from December to March and is characterized by bad weather, especially in Malé.

There is a tangible risk of tsunamis in the Maldives...

## Recommendations

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