

Joint Press Statement regarding plans to arrest and deport migrant workers involved in organising a peaceful protest in G.Dh. Thinadhoo

We are gravely concerned by the decision taken by the Ministry of Homeland Security and Technology to arrest and deport the Bangladeshi migrants involved in the organizing of the protest that took place in G.Dh. Thinadhoo last week.

According to Article 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights everyone has the right to peaceful assembly and association. These rights are also enshrined in the second chapter of the Maldivian constitution; Article 32 of the Constitution grants everyone the right to freedom of peaceful assembly without prior permission of the State.

On 25 July 2025, in an interview to a local paper, Minister Ali Ihusaan stated that the organizers must be deported as it is a visa violation for migrants to partake in “political activities”. The peaceful protest organized by Bangladeshi migrants in G.Dh. Thinadhoo was in solidarity with the ongoing protests across Bangladesh.

Imposing a condition on visas that deprives fundamental right guaranteed under the Maldivian Constitution is illegal. It is a grave violation of fundamental rights given to workers and it is concerning that such restrictions are being used to justify arbitrary arrests, termination and deportation of migrants in Maldives.

We call on the State to:

- Uphold Constitutional and International Human Rights Conventions and revoke the decision to deport migrants for exercising their Constitutionally guaranteed right.
- Adopt the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.
- Refrain from the use of arbitrary measures and discrimination when it comes to protecting the rights and protections guaranteed to all migrants under our laws.

Migrants, making up 32% of the working population, play an integral role in our society and make significant contributions across sectors. Our Constitution guarantees all migrants freedom from discrimination, the right to form associations, and the right to strike & peaceful assembly. We call on State and non-State actors to work towards ensuring these fundamental constitutional and international human rights of migrants in the Maldives.

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