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IN THE MALDIVES



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Press Release

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Death and serious injury of workers at the Waste Management Corporation Ltd (WAMCO): more than an alleged crime – it raises questions over employer responsibilities, workplace safety, labour rights, and accountability.

On 22 February 2026 an employee of the state-owned company Waste Management Corporation Ltd (WAMCO) sustained life-threatening injuries after falling into a waste container and is currently breathing with the assistance of a mechanical ventilation device.¹

On 28 January 2026 the Maldives Police Service declared that the body of 24 year old Ameen Mia, a Bangladeshi national employed by WAMCO, was found under a pile of garbage on Thilafushi landfill where Mia worked on site. He was reported missing on the 26th.² Reports also state the police have confirmed viewing CCTV footage from 26 January showing the bucket of the excavator hitting Mia on the head, alleging homicide against the excavator operator, also a migrant worker, for having continued to operate the machine following the accident.³ The excavator operator's detention was extended to 45 days by the Criminal Court.⁴

While it is unknown, due to the delayed response in finding his body, whether Mia's death was immediate upon contact with the machine, the cause of death of Mia cannot be determined at this time. The criminal justice angle alone pursued by the Maldives Police Service is severely insufficient to hold all those connected to the tragic death of a young worker accountable and hinders efforts to take corrective actions to prevent the full application of legal frameworks on workplace safety. In this regard, we remind the authorities of provisions stated in the Occupational Safety and Health Act which was ratified in January 2024 and came into force in July 2024 which requires employers to establish policies on health and safety as well as emergency responses.⁵

¹ Adhadhu (Dhivehi). *Kuni alhaa container akah WAMCO muvazzafaku vetti ventilatarugai faruvaa dhenee*. 25.02.2026. <https://adhadhu.com/article/78878>

² See Maldives. *Missing expat found deceased identified as 24 year-old Bangladeshi*. 29.01.2026. <https://see.mv/102734>

³ The Press. *Man arrested over the death of expatriate worker in Thilafushi*. 01.02.2026. <https://en.thepress.mv/18703>

⁴ Adhadhu. *Amin Mia's death: Sri Lankan remanded for 45 days*. <https://adhadhu.com/article/78701>

⁵ Nasheed & Co. *All you need to know about the Occupational Safety and Health Act*. 30.07.2024. <https://www.nasheeds.co/blog/everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-occupational-safety-and-health-act>

Human rights groups, environmentalists, and various experts have long flagged health and safety issues, environmental destruction, and modern slavery in connection with the Thilafushi landfill.^{6 7} Mismanagement of garbage and unethical employment practices continue to pose threats to the lives of the workers at the landfill as well as health hazards to everyone living in the surrounding area through ocean and air pollution.

We are aware that colleagues of Ameen Mia at WAMCO had informed the company's Manager assigned to Thilafushi landfill on 26 January that he was missing and that a missing person's report was not filed at the relevant authorities for two days.⁸ Claiming a police gag order, WAMCO has refused to respond to media requests for information seeking answers to the reasons for their delayed response.⁹

These reports raise questions about whether WAMCO is operating in compliance with the Occupational Safety and Health Act¹⁰:

1. Has WAMCO established the necessary policies and procedures in compliance with the Act?
2. If yes, are the policies and procedures translated into languages of its employees?
3. Are employees and their supervisors adequately trained on occupational safety and health measures?
4. Has there been any investigation into the internal processes at WAMCO to establish the extent of any managerial and / or supervisory negligence in relation to the death of Ameen Mia?
5. Has the Labour Relations Authority acted in compliance with Section 23 of the law?
6. Has the Male' City Council acted in compliance with Section 24 of the law?
7. Have workers and families of workers who fall victim to workplace hazards been informed of their right to claim compensation for temporary or permanent disability or loss of life?

We commend the initiative by the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives (HRCM) to conduct an investigation into the measures of workplace safety at WAMCO and call on the relevant committees of the Peoples' Majlis to conduct a full, fair, and timely investigation into these questions and take all measures to ensure the health and safety of workers in the Maldives.

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⁶ Unlocked Curiosities (video document). *Thilafushi an island of trash in the middle of paradise*. 29.07.2024. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_e8Sv8hLk

⁷ Unearth Magazine. *Thilafushi: An analysis into the Maldives' hidden "garbage island"*. 12.12.2025. <https://unearthmag.com/2025/12/12/thilafushi-an-analysis-into-the-maldives-hidden-garbage-island/>

⁸ Adhadhu (Dhivehi Edition). *Bidheysee meehaa hoadhan feshee dhe dhuvas fahun, ihumaaluveekamuge thuhumathu*. 29.01.2026. <https://adhadhu.com/article/77945>

⁹ Adhadhu. *WAMCO refuses to disclose why it delayed reporting Ameen Mia's disappearance*. 12.02.2026. <https://adhadhu.com/article/78472>

¹⁰ Occupational Safety and Health Act (2024). <https://mvlaw.gov.mv/dv/legislations/271/consolidations/1224>