

Press Release

Yameen Rasheed's murder: the government must disclose DDCOM's findings and reopen Investigation.

23 April 2026

Today marks nine years of the heinous murder of Yameen Rasheed. He was a prominent blogger and human rights defender who had led the campaign to find the forcefully disappeared journalist Ahmed Rilwan Abdullah. Yameen was found stabbed multiple times and killed the early hours of 23 April 2017 following at least three years of violent threats and surveillance by those who targeted him.

Together with the family of Yameen Rasheed, we call on the government of Maldives to **fully disclose the findings of the Presidential Commission on Deaths and Disappearances (DDCOM), which have been handed over to President Mohamed Muizzu in May 2024 and reopen investigations against suspects released under questionable circumstances.**

We strongly condemn how successive governments and state institutions have handled Yameen Rasheed's murder, as noted below:

Years 2015 – 2018

Yameen Rasheed's requests for protection against death threats and surveillance were neglected by the Maldives Police Service.

The Maldives Police Service sanitised the scene of crime (landing area at the bottom of the stairs leading up to Yameen's apartment at M. Spatula, Male') within hours of the murder. It was discovered later that sufficient evidence had not been collected from the scene before it was sanitised. We believe this was a deliberate act of obstruction to justice.

The investigation excluded interviews with certain individuals alleged of inciting hate against Yameen and making violent threats against his family and friends following his murder, including threats made by members of state institutions and government agencies who should have been considered persons of interest in the case.

Successive governments have not identified or investigated those behind the attacks on Yameen.

Years 2018 – 2023

The Presidential Commission on Deaths and Disappearances (DDCOM) was established in 2018 as part of President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih's election pledges to "seek justice for Rilwan and Yameen" and dissolved by President Mohamed Muizzu in May 2024. The DDCOM had declared that suspects linked to the cases of Yameen's and Dr. Afrasheem Ali's murders and Rilwan's enforced disappearance were

connected, proceeding to combine the investigations. Despite this, the Commission failed to bring any of the suspects to justice or demonstrate that these cases, along with more than twenty others assigned to them, were thoroughly investigated.

The DDCOM further refused to disclose their findings, which [we have criticised](#) alongside national and international civil society.

In June 2023 the Criminal Court ordered the release of suspects connected to the case. The Prosecutor General's Office decided not to appeal the decision of the court.

In November 2023 the Criminal Court further dismissed charges of terrorism made against three suspects connected with Yameen's murder. The Prosecutor General decided in the eleventh hour not to appeal the decision, leaving no avenue for advocacy on the matter.

Following the 2023 presidential election and shortly ahead of the transition of power to President Muizzu, President Solih gave clemency to over 1,900 convicted prisoners which included Former President Yameen Abdul Gayyoom and Former Vice President Ahmed Adheeb who have been alleged of involvement in the protection of suspects of all three cases mentioned above. As far as we know, neither of the former officials were interviewed or investigated in connection with Yameen's murder.

Years 2023 to present

Following criticism from the civil society on the opacity of conduct by the DDCOM, President Muizzu informed the media in May 2024 that the government would publish the report of the DDCOM "very soon". Regrettably, the report and the findings of the DDCOM remain undisclosed. Upon clarification, the Attorney General Ahmed Usham informally disclosed to civil society actors that he was in charge of publishing the report, stressing that the government had no intention of withholding any information surrounding the findings of the DDCOM. Government delegations to various human rights reviews of the Maldives by the United Nations, headed by the Attorney General, have repeatedly maintained that the government had no intention of withholding the information. The delay of over two years in disclosing the information raises serious questions about the sincerity of the government in this matter.

Shortly before its dissolution, the DDCOM notified ADM and the family of Yameen that all pending investigations had been transferred back to the Maldives Police Service. This development raises concerns regarding the impartiality of these investigations, given that the DDCOM was originally established due to a lack of confidence in the Maldives Police Service's ability to conduct professional inquiries into these particular cases. To date, the Maldives Police Service has not released any information about the status of ongoing investigations concerning the murder of Yameen Rasheed.

ENDS.

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