



Press releases

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Maldives security forces must stop using violence against supporters of Mohamed Nasheed

Maldives security forces must stop using violence against supporters of Mohamed Nasheed's Maldivian Democratic Party, a day after he was forced to resign the presidency under the threat of violence by the military and police, Amnesty International said.

Eyewitnesses told Amnesty International that Nasheed and a large number of Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) members were marching peacefully through the streets of the capital Malé when police attacked them first and then failed to protect them from a violent counter demonstration.

Some of the MDP demonstrators were cordoned off by the police in a narrow alley where a mob shouting anti-MDP slogans began to beat them. One eyewitness saw Nasheed's face covered in blood. He was then seen to be rushed away. Later a video emerged on the internet showing the police arresting him.

Police also beat some 40 demonstrators with batons. Some sustained serious injuries. There are reports that at least one demonstrator may have died as a result of the beating. MDP chairperson, and Member of Parliament, Reeko Moosa was first attacked by the police and then a mob attacked him with

broken glass bottles. Police reportedly did not stop them. He is in a critical condition from the injuries and is receiving treatment at the intensive care unit of the Indira Ghandi Memorial Hospital.

At least five MDP members of parliament are detained at the Dhoonidhoo Detention Centre.

One of the detained MPs, Mariya Ahmed Didi, who had been released from police custody last night was attacked by the police as she was attending today's demonstration.

An eyewitness told Amnesty International that she was beaten up and pulled away by her hair from the scene by a policeman. Another MP, Imtiyaz Fahmy was also beaten and taken to Dhonidhoo detention centre.

Sam Zarifi, Amnesty International's Asia-Pacific director, said: "We are extremely concerned about the latest developments in The Maldives. "The new authorities must ensure the right to freedom of expression and assembly and we want to see an investigation into the attack on Mohamed Nasheed and other protesters. Those responsible for the attack on demonstrators must be brought to justice.

"MPs and others held in Dhoonidhoo detention centre should have access to their family and lawyers, and they must receive adequate medical treatment and a thorough and independent investigation should be made into the reasons for their arrest.

"They should be released unless the government can charge them with a cognizable criminal offence through a fair and impartial process."