

# ELECTION OBSERVATION REPORT

PRESIDENTIAL  
ELECTIONS  
2013

Transparency Maldives (TM), National Contact of Transparency International (TI), is a non-partisan organization that promotes collaboration, awareness and undertakes other initiatives to improve governance and eliminate corruption from the daily lives of people. Transparency Maldives views corruption as a systemic issue and advocates for institutional changes that will punish and prevent corruption.

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# ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Anti-Corruption Commission
CBO	Community Based Organization
DNR	Department of National Registration
EC	Elections Commission
EDR	Elections Dispute Resolution
HRCM	Human Rights Commission of the Maldives
ID	Identification
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IT	Information Technology
JP	Jumhooree Party
LTO	Long Term Observer
MBC	Maldives Broadcasting Corporation
MDP	Maldivian Democratic Party
MPS	Maldives Police Service
NAC	National Advisory Committee
NCB	National Complaints Bureau
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PG	Prosecutor General
PPM	Progressive Party of the Maldives
TM	Transparency Maldives
TVM	Television Maldives
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VTV	Villa Television

# SUMMARY

The Presidential Elections in September 2013 was held under an extremely uncertain political backdrop. However, the elections presented an opportunity for moving forward the democratic transition that got off track because of the controversial change of power in 2012, half way into the term of the first democratically elected government in 2008. The pre-election environment, including campaigning, was largely peaceful. All parties and candidates generally enjoyed the prerequisite freedoms for fair and free elections ahead of the elections. Transparency Maldives' Long Term Observers (LTOs) deployed throughout the country reported that there were a few cases of obstructions to campaigning and several, mostly minor, cases of vandalism to campaign materials.

The legal framework for elections provides minimum standards for democratic elections. Problematic areas do exist. The current legal framework, enacted in a constrained timeframe ahead of the 2008 Presidential Elections, is in need of reform. Most importantly, the loopholes and gaps in political finance regulations created a black hole when it comes to campaign expenditure. There are also no

comprehensive rules or procedures for electoral dispute resolution.

As a consequence of the lack of such rules and because of buck-passing between institutions and because of jurisdictional confusions, investigations into allegations of bribery and abuse of state resources were hindered. As TM's LTOs reported, there were several cases of abuse of state resources for campaigning and cases of vote buying during the elections. None of these cases were successfully investigated or prosecuted.

Some institutions, including the Elections Commission, the Maldives Broadcasting Corporation, the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives, and Transparency Maldives engaged in voter information and education activities. However, voter education on issues such as vote buying was found to be another area that required more attention.

The pre-existing political fault lines only re-surfaced after the announcement of the results of the round of elections of September 7th. Jumhooree Party (JP), the party of the candidate who placed third, contested the results at the Supreme Court as a constitutional

matter, bypassing the electoral complaints mechanism at the EC that were available under the electoral legal framework. The complaints were mainly regarding the voter register that JP alleged had allowed extensive election fraud through double-voting, ghost-voting, and underage voting. Street protests in Malé, a smear campaign against the Elections Commission via TV (mainly VTV affiliated with JP), death threats to election officials, and general lack of focus on campaigning, mired the prevailing electoral environment.

The JP case resulted in unprecedented court interventions in the electoral processes. Delay over a decision on the JP case at the Supreme Court resulted in the postponement of the run-off election beyond the constitutional timeline of 21 days given for run-off election. The Supreme Court finally ruled in favour of JP and ruled that the first round of election was invalid. Along with the verdict, the Court issued a new guideline to conduct elections, which highly constrained the role of Elections Commission. The Supreme Court subsequently intervened in the electoral processes resulting in further delays beyond the constitutional deadline to elect a president and beyond the

presidential term limit stipulated in the Constitution.

The first round of the new election took place on 9 November 2013. The runoff election was finally concluded on 16 November 2013 – five days after the presidential term limit and 35 days after the constitutional deadline for electing a president.

Despite the challenges faced during all rounds of elections, the Election Commission delivered well-administered, generally transparent and peaceful elections.

# POLITICAL CONTEXT

The Maldives transitioned to an electoral democracy after the competitive Presidential Elections in October 2008 and Parliamentary Elections in May 2009.

However, the new government faced immense socio-economic challenges. Weak constitutionalism and rule of law, corruption, weak accountability, and an inchoate civil society characterised the overall governance context. The governance crisis, fuelled in part by economic issues, culminated in the resignation of the first democratically elected President, Mohamed Nasheed, in February 2012 following a series of protests against his government. The judiciary and security services were entangled in bitter political divisions.

In the wake of the change of power, political violence sharply increased. The largest political party, Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP), outright rejected the incoming government of President Mohamed Waheed (the Vice President under Nasheed). MDP staged almost daily protests, demanded the resignation of incoming President Waheed, and called for the investigation of the change of power and early elections. Unprecedented levels of political polarisation gripped society.

The political environment eased following the announcement of Presidential Elections in 2013 as scheduled in the Constitution. The stalling of a court case against MDP's presidential candidate, former President Nasheed, on the charge of illegally arresting a Criminal Court judge in January 2012 and the MDP shifting of its focus on campaigning helped in this regard.

Former President Gayoom's Progressive Party of the Maldives (PPM) fielded Abdulla Yamin Abdul Gayoom (Gayoom's half-brother) as the presidential candidate. Maldivian Democratic Party's candidate and former President Mohamed Nasheed, Jumhooree Party's Gasim Ibrahim, and incumbent President Mohamed Waheed were the other presidential candidates.

The pre-election political environment was uneventful. It was largely peaceful. All parties campaigned generally freely.



# JUDICIAL INTERVENTIONS IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

The Supreme Court was involved in the electoral processes to an unprecedented extent. The Court issued two major rulings on the elections, a 16-point guideline for administering the elections, and no fewer than seven court orders on the elections. Following is a summary of the two rulings and the implications.

## **RULING ON VOTER REGISTRATION**

Just four days before the elections scheduled for 7 September, the Supreme Court made a ruling on a case filed on 22 August by a lawyer associated with PPM. The case was based on allegations that voter registration was carried out in a questionable manner and it sought a Supreme Court order to:

1. Conduct an independent IT audit of the EC's IT system
2. Ensure the authenticity of the voter lists at the polling stations by getting the signatures and seals of presidential candidates on each and every voter list and through having non-partisan election observers to confirm that only those lists are being used at the polling stations.
3. Ensure through the security services that no criminal acts or electoral violations take place

during the elections.

The ruling was by supported by five out of seven Supreme Court justices. The ruling did not decide on the above petitions one way or the other, but contained very broad provisions on the electoral processes and procedures.

However, it is significant to note that the ruling created a precedent on the role of Supreme Court in essentially electoral matters that could be addressed through the normal mechanisms provided in the electoral legal framework. For instance, the General Elections Act has procedures and timelines to submit complaints to the EC and appeals to the High Court (not the Supreme Court) on matters of voter registry. There are also complaints procedures for any issues arising during the elections. The Constitution further stipulates:

**A PERSON MAY CHALLENGE A DECISION OF THE ELECTIONS COMMISSION CONCERNING AN ELECTION OR A PUBLIC REFERENDUM, OR MAY CHALLENGE THE RESULTS OF AN ELECTION, OR CONTEST THE LEGALITY OF ANY OTHER MATTER RELATED TO AN ELECTION, BY MEANS OF AN ELECTION PETITION PRESENTED TO THE HIGH COURT. <sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Constitution, s172(a)

The only implication of such a precedent, in the absence of clear electoral rules, was not that it only risked rule of law, but also that the Supreme Court could negatively impact the electoral process as it was not bound by electoral deadlines and timelines. The latter issues are crucial for elections, which are time-bound. The ramifications played out after the first round of elections.

## **RULING ANNULLING THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS**

The Jumhooree Party (JP) filed a case in the Supreme Court on 15 September, seven days after the first round, alleging systematic irregularities took place during the election. The petition requested an annulment of the first round of election.

In a four to three verdict, the Supreme Court annulled the first round of election on 7 October, a month after the elections and after the 21-day constitutional timeline for holding the run-off election had passed.

Transparency Maldives' quick-count election observation based on a representative random sample of ballot boxes found no systematic

irregularities during the Election Day. International election observers too found the elections to have been held in a well-administered manner without any systematic irregularities that would have impacted the outcome of the election.

The annulment alarmingly cited a secret police report detailing alleged irregularities in the voter lists that in turn allegedly allowed fraud at a large scale. Based on the secret report, the Supreme Court ruling concluded there were 5,623 cases of irregular/invalid votes and argued this was a huge number compared to the vote differences between some candidates in the election.

Out of the two dissenting opinions, the opinion held by Chief Justice and Justice Areef argued that, at most, there must have been 473 votes that affected the electoral outcomes even based on the police report. The other dissenting opinion concluded there was no room for annulment of the elections based on available evidence or witness statements.

The secret police report was not shared with the Elections Commission and the Commission was therefore not able to respond to it. According to the Elections Commission, the report, which was

leaked to the public, contained false data.

The ruling highly impacted the whole electoral process. It required the EC to hold fresh elections within an extremely constrained timeline of 10 days based on a set of 16 guidelines issued along with the ruling.

## **16-POINT GUIDELINE**

The 16-point guideline to conduct fresh elections before 20 October and any run-off election before 3 November negatively impacted the electoral processes.

Firstly, the Election Commission was required to obtain the signatures and fingerprints of all candidates on the voter lists to be used for the polling. This in effect gave a veto power over elections to the presidential candidates as they could refuse to sign the voter lists.

Secondly, the Elections Commission was required to conduct voter registration anew using the database of the Department of National Registration. Thirdly, people who wanted to vote outside their permanent residence were required to submit an application with their fingerprints and those of

two witnesses. Fourthly, EC was also required to verify the fingerprints if any party lodged a complaint questioning the authenticity of fingerprints.

## **ELECTORAL CRISES AND IMPACTS ON THE ELECTORAL ENVIRONMENT**

### **1. PROTESTS AND INTIMIDATION**

Following the involvement of the Supreme Court, the electoral environment sharply deteriorated, impacting the independence of the Elections Commission. Media aligned with JP carried a smear campaign against the Elections Commission undermining its reputation. Supporters of JP held regular protests against the Elections Commission. MDP supporters, in turn, protested against judicial involvement in the electoral process until the Supreme Court made the ruling.

There was a significant increase in cases of intimidation, death threats, and harassment to officials of the EC, polling officials, and election observers such as Transparency Maldives.

These controversies and protests also took the focus away from electoral campaigning that characterised the pre-election environment of the original first round of election.

## **2. EC'S ATTEMPT TO HOLD RUN-OFF ELECTIONS AS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED ON 28 SEPTEMBER**

In its case that was filed in the Supreme Court, JP also sought an interim injunction to postpone the run-off election until the Supreme Court reached a verdict. The Supreme Court issued a stay order in a four to three decision on 23 September, just four days before the scheduled run-off election.

In spite of this, the EC was making preparations for the run-off election. The EC President told media that there was a constitutional requirement on the Commission to hold the elections within 21 days of the first round. However, on 26 September, the Supreme Court issued a follow-up order on the EC to halt any preparations for holding the run-off election. The Supreme Court also ordered the security services to enforce the court orders, including preventing any party from violating the orders.

On 27 September, the Elections Commission issued a statement stating that the run-off election had to be postponed because a conducive electoral environment for conducting free and fair elections did not exist. The Police surrounded the EC building, and the EC claimed staff and members and any outside parties were denied entry to the office. The statement detailed the barriers for holding the elections, including:

- Refusal of the Finance Ministry to provide funds for any expenses associated with the run-off elections
- Non-cooperation from the Maldives Police Service to provide security
- Non-cooperation from the Ministry of Education to provide school premises that were being used as polling stations and releasing government employees who were working as polling officials
- Threats from political parties to damage election materials and threats to election staff
- Home Ministry threatening to arrest members of the EC should they go ahead with preparations for run-off elections

### **3. 19 OCTOBER ELECTIONS ATTEMPT**

The EC re-started preparations for holding elections after the Supreme Court annulled the first round of election and ruled to hold fresh elections before 20 October. The EC decided to hold the elections on 19 October in spite of the extremely constrained timeframe of about 11 days.

The Supreme Court's 16-point guideline stated that the registration of voters must contain the fingerprints of the voters and two witnesses. However, under this guideline, the EC initially opened registration only for those people who would vote outside their previously registered place.

The Supreme Court issued another order on 10 October to re-start the entire registration process anew according to the new guidelines. The EC faced the extremely difficult task of registering over 70,000 people with their fingerprints on the application forms.

JP and PPM continued to question the new voter registration efforts and demanded verification of the application forms. The EC sent application forms to the Department

of National Registration, who forwarded the forms to the police for verification. The DNR did not have necessary resources for fingerprint verification. However, PPM and JP refused to sign the voter register, which was opened for signature just a few hours before the polls were scheduled to open on 19 October. The parties filed a petition in the Supreme Court to halt the elections raising concerns over the process and the readiness of the EC.

Nonetheless, the EC attempted to hold the elections until the last minute. The Supreme Court did not rule on the petition but the EC stopped going ahead stating the Police refused to provide the necessary logistical and security support.

While the 19 October incidents confirmed that the 16-point guideline paved way for political parties to obstruct the elections, there were genuine concerns over voter registration for the 19 October elections given the time and procedural constraints. A number of complaints over the registration were not addressed by the EC before 19 October.

#### **4. 9 NOVEMBER ELECTIONS**

Following the unsuccessful attempt to hold elections within the timeframe required by the Supreme Court's guidelines, the EC announced to hold fresh elections on 9 November and any run-off election to be held on 16 November.

However, at the interventions by the main presidential candidates and the government, the EC agreed to hold the run-off on 10 November so that a president could be elected before the expiration of the incumbent's term on 11 November. Following a joint meeting between MDP candidate Nasheed, PPM candidate Yameen, and JP candidate Gasim, all parties pledged to extend full cooperation to the EC.

While the first round was held smoothly as scheduled on 9 November, the Supreme Court ordered to delay the second round until 16 November, in response to a petition by a JP member in the early morning of 10 November. The second round was subsequently held on 16 November.

The Supreme Court also made another controversial ruling that the term of the incumbent President would continue until such time a

new president was elected.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Parliament to address the issues arising from the 16-point guideline of the Supreme Court by bringing necessary reforms to the electoral legal framework.

# ELECTORAL ADMINISTRATION AND PROCESSES

## 1. MAIN STRUCTURES AND THEIR FUNCTIONING

The Elections Commission is an independent body with five members appointed for a five-year term by the President upon approval by the People's Majlis.<sup>2</sup> The EC has its own permanent secretariat, with separate sections for registration, training and voter education, coordination, and logistics of the elections.

As per the Presidential Election Regulation, the EC appointed atoll-level coordinating committees and island level officials throughout the country for the presidential elections. Unlike the previous Regulations, the new Presidential Elections Regulation extensively details their roles and responsibilities.<sup>3</sup> In terms of coordination and functioning, the committees and officials were generally effective and efficient, although there were areas such as timely reporting of voter registration updates that needed to be improved.

There is a code of conduct for the officials and a pledge of non-partisanship to be signed by officials. However, complaints about the coordinating staff were received as in the previous elections. Transparency Maldives' LTOs in Haa Dhaalu (north), Gaaf Dhaalu (south), and Alif Alif (central) atolls

reported cases of officials being partisan, suggesting that it was a much wider issue.

The EC recruited more than 4108 polling officials for the Presidential Elections. Through a cascade-training model, EC trained more than 60 trainers in August, who then travelled to various parts and trained around 1200 officials, about 3 out of 7 or 10 officials allocated for each polling station. The rest of the polling officials then received some training from those officials.

During the Presidential Elections, Transparency Maldives observers reported only a few instances of the officials' lacking understanding of or not following procedures on the Election Days. This was also evident from the smooth administrative operations on all election rounds.

However, there were some complaints of carelessness in marking off the voter lists after voting, so a few people had their names already marked off when they reported to vote. This gave room to create doubt over the integrity of the process, and was in fact used by Jumhooree Party as "evidence" of double-voting during the court case annulling the Presidential Elections.

<sup>2</sup> Constitution, s173.

<sup>5</sup> Presidential Election Regulations, ss4-10



## **National Advisory Committee**

The National Advisory Committee (NAC) for the Presidential Elections is the highest statutory multi-stakeholder advisory body for the EC. The new Presidential Election Regulations improved on the provisions for the NAC, allowing the EC to convene NAC as soon as the elections are officially announced.<sup>4</sup> The new regulations also widened the membership of the NAC: in addition to representatives from the Police, the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives, the civil society and presidential candidates, members from the Maldives Broadcasting Commission and Maldives Media Council also sat in the NAC.<sup>5</sup> There is also a code of conduct for the members provided in the regulations.

While the mandate and working of the NAC is minimally provided for in the regulations, NAC is a crucial body for increasing transparency and stakeholder confidence in the electoral processes and administration, especially in a polarized political context.

The NAC was first convened on 16 July 2013 and held weekly

meetings and two meetings per week closer to the Election Days. During the Presidential Elections, the NAC proved to be an important platform for political parties and stakeholders to table issues for EC members' consideration, discuss issues of concern, clarify matters, and propose recommendations to the EC.

However, its functioning can be improved with detailed rules of procedure, including setting agenda, in matters of calling for meetings, rules on decision-making within the NAC, and expedited and effective implementation of requests and decisions within NAC.

## **2. ELECTIONS DISPUTE RESOLUTION<sup>6</sup>**

The new Regulations on Presidential Election, which came into force in May 2013, as in the past, stipulates establishment of a multi-level complaints structure: a National Complaints Bureau (NCB), Atoll/City Complaints Bureaus, and island level individual focal points.<sup>7</sup>

The new regulations required establishment of NCB as soon as the EC opens application for

<sup>4</sup> Presidential Election Regulations, s3(a)

<sup>5</sup> Presidential Elections Regulation, s5(a)(b)

<sup>6</sup> Please see section 3.2 below for an analysis of the issues in the legal framework for complaints system and further recommendations

<sup>7</sup> Presidential Elections regulations, s51



candidature of presidency, which is a marked improvement from the previous regulations where NCB was established just 10 days before the Election Day.

EC established a six-member National Complaints Bureau on 28 July 2013, about six weeks before the elections, and established other bureaus ten days prior to the elections.<sup>8</sup>

The EC itself and its island and atoll level administrative officials/bodies receive electoral complaints before official bureaus are formed.

The NCB had functional independence from the EC members in practice. However, the final say in adjudication lied with the EC, where EC could even overturn decisions of the NCB.

The law provides for a speedy resolution of complaints. Any complaint filed with the bureaus must be adjudicated within 2 days.<sup>9</sup> Any eligible voter, candidate, political party or accredited observer or monitor can file complaints with the complaints form provided by the EC, within 5 days after elections.<sup>10</sup>

However, on Election Day the NCB accepts complaints via phone.

The Constitution provides for petitioning the High Court by any person to appeal any decision of the EC, challenge the results of an election, or challenge the legality of any other matter related to elections.<sup>11</sup> General Elections Act stipulates such complaints must be lodged within 14 days of official results, and the High Court must resolve them within 30 days after the official results.<sup>12</sup> The Act also gives specific timeframes for issues such as registration complaints during various stages of the electoral process.

The controversial Supreme Court ruling in October 2013 on elections circumscribed the High Court's role in adjudicating electoral violations of criminal nature.<sup>13</sup> While the High Court can no longer be the first instance court for electoral violations of criminal nature, the Supreme Court itself got involved in EDR during the presidential elections setting new precedents with deep implications.

<sup>8</sup> The regulations required a five-member NCB, but EC appointed six people.

<sup>9</sup> Presidential Elections Regulation, s55 (e),

<sup>10</sup> General Elections Act, s63, Presidential Election Regulations, s55(d)

<sup>11</sup> Constitution, s172

<sup>12</sup> General Elections Act, s64(c); s65(b)

<sup>13</sup> See High Court ruling No. 2013/HC-I-K/02

### **Main issues with the formal complaints bureau**

In spite of a new regulation adopted ahead of the elections, there are still no clear and detailed rules on the powers and authority of the NCB and other complaints bureaus. While they have the broad EDR mandate, their powers of investigation, including powers to summon, are neither clear nor detailed in the law. NCB members disagreed among themselves as to their powers and authority. The General Elections Act nonetheless stipulates all electoral violations of criminal nature shall be forwarded to PG for prosecution by the EC, clearly giving a broad mandate to the EC.<sup>15</sup>

The general lack of a coherent, rationalized law on electoral infractions, timeframes, and punishments, also posed challenges in especially addressing any dispute of criminal nature. The current time limitation of, for instance, completing and submitting cases 14 days after official results, means any violation of campaign finance by candidates could not be prosecuted as candidates are only required to file an audit 60 days after elections. The 14-day period is also not sufficient for investigations if EC

and other authorities are to stick to the criminal procedures in place.

General Elections Act stipulates that High Court must adjudicate on any complaint within 30 days of its filing.<sup>16</sup> This deadline is problematic for especially the Presidential Elections, as any subsequent round of the presidential election must be conducted within 21 days of the previous round.<sup>17</sup>

During the presidential elections, the legal limitation was exacerbated by the lack of coordination between other relevant institutions with investigative powers and capacity, including the Maldives Police Service, the Maldives Broadcasting Commission, and the Anti-Corruption Commission. The ACC, for instance, proposed to release some of their technical staff to assist the NCB with the investigations into alleged bribery cases, huge issue for the presidential election. But no inter-institutional arrangement materialized. Similarly, confusion about or the lack of mutual understanding on their respective jurisdiction and mandate resulted in buck passing between the institutions, including the MPS and the EC.

<sup>14</sup> See Pre-Election Assessment - 2013 presidential elections in the Maldives, Transparency Maldives.

<sup>15</sup> General Elections Act, s64(b)

<sup>16</sup> General Elections Act, s65(b),

<sup>17</sup> Presidential Elections Act, s19 (a)(e)

Internally, the lack of qualified staff and sufficient technical resources supporting the NCB also posed challenges. Because of NCB's temporary nature, there was also no institutionalization as a robust EDR body. This was aggravated by poor or no induction and training.

At the atoll and island levels, the complaints officials were either poorly or not trained at all, limiting their capacity to address complaints. Even minor complaints were therefore forwarded to the NCB. These capacity limitations meant even if the complaints bureaus had clear powers, they would not have been as effective in practice.

As a result of those legal, administrative, coordination, and capacity limitations, in practice, NCB could not address a number of electoral violations, could not conduct effective adjudication, and much less take action against them. Violations that especially fall within these categories included alleged bribery, undue influencing of voters/vote buying, misuse of state resources for campaign purposes, campaign-related violations such as anti-campaigning, and electoral violations during the "silent" period and on the Election Day.

Thus, especially issues that can be seen as blatant cases of vote buying/influencing voters through monetary/material offers went on unabated. Similarly, complaints about violation of the code of conduct for campaigning via broadcast media outlets and during campaign rallies were, for the most part, unaddressed.

### **Recommendations**

- The EC to propose reforms to the electoral legal framework to strengthen complaints mechanisms detailing the powers and authority of them, and;
- EC to propose reforms to the electoral legal framework to rationalize electoral infractions, timeframes, and punishments, and;
- The EC to find, through stakeholder discussions, an effective EDR model to the electoral legal framework where inter-agency cooperation can be obtained, and;
- The EC to provide sufficient training to the officials of complaints bureaus and seek technical expert assistance, and;
- In the short term, EC to take lead in establishing an inter-

agency mechanism to address complaints. ACC, MPS, MBC, PG to cooperate to form such a mechanism

### 3. VOTER REGISTRATION

The EC maintained a continuous voter register, which was based on information from the Department of National Registration's database. For the register used for the 7 September 2013 Presidential Elections, the EC had travelled to individual islands to ensure that it reflected the most accurate and complete data that was available from the local councils. For the first time, the EC also piloted "door-to-door registration" in Malé by sending out voter lists to households. The EC also obtained information for deaths from Malé Aa-Sahara cemetery records and obituary announcements on radio in their attempts to ensure an accurate voter registry.

The EC, as recommended by Transparency Maldives in its Pre-Election Assessment, published the voter registry well before the deadline stipulated in the law for public viewing. The voter registry was published on 14 March 2013 – more than five months before

the Election Day. This gave the members of the public, political parties, and NGOs ample time to check the voter registry and identify any issues. The EC also maintained a web-based and an SMS-based system for verifying registration details.

People listed in Malé's special residential register, Daftar, who were originally from other islands, were given a month's time to provide their current address details to the EC.

The EC then officially published the voter registry in the Government Gazette and in all islands on 30 May 2013, and opened for complaints for 10 days as per the law. Any citizen or a political party could file complaints about voter registry within 10 days of publication of the voter registry<sup>18</sup> and challenge the decisions of the EC through the High Court within 5 days after EC's decision. The High Court is required to adjudicate within 15 days after filing a complaint.<sup>19</sup>

#### ***Main observations***

Voter registration was a major issue during the Presidential Elections in 2008.<sup>20</sup> Transparency Maldives observed that the voter registry had become cleaner in the Parliamentary

<sup>18</sup> General Elections Act, s10 (c)

<sup>19</sup> General Elections Act, s10(e)

<sup>20</sup> Commonwealth Secretariat (2008), Report of the Commonwealth Observer Group. Retrieved from [http://www.thecommonwealth.org/files/185267/FileName/FINALREPORTTransparency MaldivesALDIVESCOG2008PRINTVERSION.pdf](http://www.thecommonwealth.org/files/185267/FileName/FINALREPORTTransparency%20MaldivesALDIVESCOG2008PRINTVERSION.pdf)

Elections in 2009 and was not a significant issue during the Local Council Elections.

Similarly, the voter registry for the Presidential Elections was comprehensive, as was indicated by the high voter turnout rates. Transparency Maldives' own statistically-based observation showed that only 0.2% of all voters were affected because their names were not on the voter registry and only 0.05% complained at the polling stations that they were unable to vote at that location. These numbers were similar or less for the subsequent rounds, suggesting the voter registry was generally clean.

The EC also implemented earlier recommendations by election observers and international experts in the matter of registration of about 6,000 Malé Daftar residents by registering them based on their current address. This allowed the EC to assign those people to ballot boxes closer to their place of living. Besides providing more convenient voting, for local and parliamentary elections this would have ensured better representation and more rationalized boundary delimitation.

There were indeed some issues in the voter registry, mainly because of larger systemic issues that cannot be addressed solely by the Elections

Commission. A major challenge for ensuring a continuous voter register that is accurate and comprehensive is that no institution is mandated to manage a comprehensive, accurate and continuously updated civil registry. In the absence of such a mandate, not even the Department of National Registration has set up mechanisms, much less has resources, to ensure a comprehensive and fully accurate database of Maldivians.

There are also larger issues of adopting a streamlined system of updating births, deaths, house registrations, assigning ID numbers, change of names, all which affected the accuracy of the voter registry vis-à-vis the official National ID card used for voting.

### **Recommendations**

- People's Majlis should bring reforms to the legal framework to address issues such as giving a clear mandate for maintenance of a civil registry, alternative voting, assisted voting, and absentee voting, and;
- The EC should move to adopt, in its strategic plan, the recommendations by the IFES on voter registration as proposed in their assessment for the EC

# VOTER EDUCATION

Article 170 of the Constitution and Section 21(g) of the Elections Commission Act stipulate that the Elections Commission is mandated to educate and create awareness among the general public on the electoral process and its purpose.

Voter information on issues such as registration was widely disseminated as evident from the high percentage of registration and unprecedented voter turnout rates. Political parties with mobilization networks played a crucial role in spreading voter information messages, especially via social media and loudspeakers. Social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter, aided by high mobile network and Internet penetration, proved to be particularly useful during the Presidential Elections.

There was however no nationwide extensive voter education campaign on recurring issues such as vote buying, which was reported to be a serious issue for the Presidential Election. The Maldives Broadcasting Corporation partnered with the EC along with TM, ACC, HRCM, and MPS, to organize weekly voter and civic education and information programmes dubbed Votah Thayyaaru (“Ready for Vote”) via public broadcasters

TVM, Voice of Maldives, Dhivehi FM. Transparency Maldives assisted with content production from May 2013. Topics, among others, included importance of democracy, human rights, vote buying, abuse of state resources, and electoral processes such as registration. Transparency Maldives also utilized several other broadcasting outlets and its social media pages to spread voter education and informational messages throughout the electoral process.

The EC used several other mainstream media platforms for voter information. These included the use of billboards, loudspeakers, and social media outlets to spread voter information, educational messages, and video spots.

The Human Rights Commission of the Maldives conducted about six voter education sessions targeted for new voters and on electoral rights. The UNDP, the EC and DhiYouth Movement, joined for a campaign under the name Faahaga (“check/tick”) and distributed materials throughout the country.

The public broadcaster, Maldives Broadcasting Corporation, in partnership with Maldives National University organized

two widely watched debates for the vice presidential candidates and presidential candidates, respectively, ahead of the 7 September elections.

### **TRANSPARENCY MALDIVES' VOTER EDUCATION EFFORTS**

With assistance from the UNDP, Transparency Maldives conducted voter education for 407 people from all 19 atolls and Malé. There were two separate full-day sessions targeted for Malé, which included 128 participants from various islands but who are based in Malé. The target groups included both women and men, above 18 years old.

The contents of voter education sessions were wide-ranging, including:

1. Familiarization of participants to the General Elections Act, Presidential Elections Act, Presidential Elections Regulations and Administrative Procedures in the Handbook for Polling Officials. In particular, participants were given presentations on Election Day processes and complaints mechanisms.

2. Familiarization of participants to the concepts of democracy and importance of elections in a democracy, the role of civil society in democracy and importance of public participation. Participants were made aware that public participation in elections was vital for democracy.
3. Presentations also highlighted the importance of free and fair elections and the roles of key institutions such as Maldives Police Service and Elections Commission in the elections for them to be administered smoothly to ensure they are free and fair.
4. Importance of transparency for elections for them to be credible and the need for citizen observation of elections. Participants were familiarized with methods for observing elections and standard questionnaires that can be used for observing elections.

### **Recommendations**

- EC to continue to conduct voter information in a timely manner, and;
- EC and civil society to conduct voter education on issues such as vote buying in general, and

on issues of abuse of state resources for campaigning targeted especially for civil servants and officials of the state, including councils, and;

- International community to support long-term civic and voter education initiatives to ensure that citizens, especially young and first-time voters, are made aware of how unchecked money in politics and vote buying can undermine democracy.



# ELECTORAL ENVIRONMENT

## ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The highly polarized political environment especially since 2012, did not negatively impact the pre-election campaign environment prior to the 7 September round of elections. The pre-election environment was generally peaceful and calm. Freedom of expression, assembly, and movement of presidential candidates/parties throughout the country were generally respected.

The de facto halt on President Nasheed's trial and the confirmation of his candidacy by the Elections Commission, greatly relaxed the pre-election environment. MDP, which had regularly held protests following the change of power on 7 February, stopped street actions and focused its energies on highly visible campaigning. Similarly, all candidates freely campaigned.

However, as TM's LTOs reports show, there were a number of cases of vandalism and defacing of campaign materials and several cases of damage to campaign offices. There were isolated cases of obstruction to campaigning by all political parties, and a few cases of violence. The "anti-campaign" rhetoric and the use of the religious

card to unduly tarnish the image of rival candidates by some actors was widespread as in the previous Presidential Election and violated the code of conduct for campaigning.

The campaign environment deteriorated following the first round of election on 7 September and as a result of the postponement of the run-off election, and subsequent annulment of the 7 September election. Supporters of Jumhooree Coalition accused the EC of rigging the election in favour of MDP and regularly protested near the Elections Commission and near the residence of the EC president on a few occasions before the Supreme Court decided on the elections.

There was a smear campaign against the EC and its members by actors and broadcasters affiliated with the losing candidates, undermining public confidence in the electoral process. Similarly, MDP staged its own protests against the Supreme Court's interventions in the electoral process, which included protests near the Supreme Court.

While these political actions did not have a significant impact on the freedom for campaigning, focus was less on actual campaigning as was seen prior to 7 September.

## **VOTE BUYING**

As in all other previous elections, TM received several complaints of vote buying and bribery. However, TM's own LTOs observed only a few instances of vote buying and other cases that can be considered forms of vote buying. The ACC and NCB also received complaints of vote buying and bribery. It is however unclear how widespread the issue was, as the law was not determinate on the issue and given the extreme difficulty in observing every instance of vote buying.

The electoral legal framework has minimal provisions on vote buying and bribery in elections. However, the Penal Code and the General Elections Act clearly criminalize it.<sup>21</sup> A donation even directly from a candidate that has general benefits is not considered vote buying or bribery under the Penal Code. This meant during the presidential elections the several highly visible instances of "gift" donations (e.g. laptops, TVs, sports equipment, and even cash checks) to schools, clubs, and island communities by parties associated with some presidential candidates went on unhindered. Those instances were difficult to be classified as bribery or vote buying under the existing laws.

However, the ACC attempted to explore how to address such complaints of vote buying and made a public statement to that effect.

Complaints of vote buying in the form of cash-handouts increased especially around the eve of Election Days. Instances of people showing their ballot papers after they voted dramatically increased on 16 November Election Day. This could be indicative of possible influence in the form of bribery or vote buying as parties try to make sure people actually voted the way they wanted them to.

No case of vote buying has so far been prosecuted.

## **ABUSE OF STATE RESOURCES**

As with the case of vote buying, TM's own LTOs reported a few cases of abuse of state resources in their communities. Reports include abuse of government boats and vehicles for campaign purposes, abuse of government employees for campaigning, and the misuse of Malé City Council facilities for campaigning purposes. These reports themselves did not show the playing field was grossly tilted in favour of one particular candidate

over the other.

The issue of abuse of state resources received much media coverage in the early part of 2013, especially following Transparency Maldives' Pre-Election Assessment in March 2013. Transparency Maldives, along with ACC, highlighted the issue on several broadcast media. Haveeru News especially brought up several stories on the issue. The President's Office was prompted to announce the incumbent President's plans on campaigning and the resources he would use for the purpose.

The Auditor General's Office and the ACC were quoted in the news as being concerned about the presidential trips to islands in the pre-election time as being potential cases of abuse of state resources for campaigning. In the absence of an audit, it is not clear the extent, if any, of abuse of state resources by the incumbent president for his campaign purposes.

As with the case of vote buying, there are no details in the legal framework regulating the use of state resources by the incumbent presidents in the context of elections. While the Anti-Corruption Act prohibits abuse of state resources by all state officials, there are ways to escape charges

easily such as through engaging in some level of official business during trips that are otherwise made for campaign purposes.

### **Recommendations**

Introduce a comprehensive regulatory framework to address the issue of unchecked money in politics including vote buying, campaign financing, and abuse of state resources.

# ELECTION DAY OBSERVATION

## OBSERVATION METHODOLOGY

Transparency Maldives conducted a systematic election observation using the “quick count” methodology, which is a form of Parallel Voter Tabulation based on a random sample of ballot boxes.<sup>22</sup>

Transparency Maldives drew a sample of 238 ballot boxes for the 7th September election, and a sample of 243 ballot boxes for the elections held on 9th and 16th November. The samples used for all the rounds were drawn randomly. The total number of ballot boxes was approximately 470.

The sample points were divided into 6 stratas: resorts, Malé, South, North, abroad, and prisons. A total of 7 ballot boxes were located outside Maldives and ballot boxes

were placed at all the 5 prisons throughout Maldives. The capital city of Male’ was considered a single strata because Malé has the largest urban population concentration in the country with nearly one third of the total population.

## FINDINGS

### Quick Count Results

From Transparency Maldives’ quick count, on 7th September, Mohamed Nasheed made it to the second round with 44.48%. The margin of error was larger than the difference between the votes of Abdulla Yameen and Gasim. Thus, Transparency Maldives decided to share the quick count results for the candidates Abdulla Yameen and Gasim Ibrahim only with the Elections Commission.

CANDIDATES	VOTES	% (VOTES CAST)
Gasim Ibrahim (Jumhooree gulhun)	50,422	24.07 %
Mohamed Waheed (Independent)	10,750	05.13 %
Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom (PPM)	53,099	25.35 %
Mohamed Nasheed (MDP)	95,224	45.45 %

Total Valid Votes Cast	209,495
Total Invalid Votes	2,395
Total Votes Cast	211,890
Total Registered Voters	239,593
Turnout	88%

The quick count results for 9th November showed that Mohamed Nasheed and Abdulla Yameen made it to the second round with 46.08% and 29.22% respectively, leaving Gasim Ibrahim in the third place with 24.70% of the votes.

<b>CANDIDATES (BALLOT ORDER)</b>	<b>VOTES</b>	<b>% (VOTES CAST)</b>
Gasim Ibrahim (Jumhooree gulhun)	48,131	23.34 %
Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom (PPM)	61,278	29.72 %
Mohamed Nasheed (MDP)	96,764	46.93 %
Total Valid Votes Cast	206,173	
Total Invalid Votes	2,331	
Total Votes Cast	208,504	
Total Registered Voters	239,105	
Turnout	87%	

The quick count results for 16th November showed that, Abdulla Yameen won the Presidential Elections 2013 with 52.20% while Mohamed Nasheed secured 47.80%.

Transparency Maldives' observation of the 7th September Presidential Elections was with a margin of error less than +/- 1%, and 9th November and 16th November, was with a margin of error less than +/- 1.5%.

<b>CANDIDATES</b>	<b>VOTES</b>	<b>% (VOTES CAST)</b>
Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom (PPM)	111,203	51.39%
Mohamed Nasheed (MDP)	105,181	48.61%
Total Valid Votes Cast	216,384	
Total Invalid Votes	2,237	
Total Votes Cast	218,621	
Total Registered Voters	239,165	
Turnout	91.41%	

Transparency Maldives systematic observation found the polls to have been excellently administered by the Elections Commission for all the rounds of the 2013 Presidential Elections.

The Election Day processes, including opening and counting, were transparent and efficient during all rounds. For all the rounds of Elections, the opening of polls was smooth, and the administrative preparation and execution went well.

### Opening Time

On 7th September, 99.5% of all polling stations opened by 08:30am and 83% of polling stations opened within the first 10 minutes of the required opening time. On 9th November, 99% of all polling stations opened by 08:00am and 86% of polling stations opened within the first 10 minutes of the required time. The final round of elections held on 16th November showed an improvement with 100% of all polling stations having been opened by 08:00am and 91.89% of polling stations opened within the first 10 minutes of the required opening time.

Table 4. Opening time of polling stations

<b>POLLING STATIONS</b>	<b>07<sup>th</sup> September</b>
Opened by 08:30	99.5 %
Opened within first 10 mins of required time	83 %

  

<b>POLLING STATIONS</b>	<b>09<sup>th</sup> November</b>
Opened by 08:00	99 %
Opened within first 10 mins of required time	86 %

  

<b>POLLING STATIONS</b>	<b>16<sup>th</sup> November</b>
Opened by 08:00	100 %
Opened within first 10 mins of required time	91.89 %

## **Polling Officials and Materials**

Nearly all polling station officials were properly in place at all the polling stations. The queue controller was absent at 4.1% of polling stations on 7th September, 2% on 9th November, and 0.9% on 16th November.

For all the rounds, the required materials for voting were in place and the ballot papers were counted and reconciled at all the polling stations and all ballot boxes were verified as empty at the start.

Table 5. Presence of queue controller at polling stations

<b>QUEUE CONTROLLER ABSENT</b>	<b>% (POLLING STATIONS)</b>
07 <sup>th</sup> September	4.1%
09 <sup>th</sup> November	2 %
16 <sup>th</sup> November	0.9 %

## Candidate representation

Candidates were well represented at the polling stations. Two or more candidate/party observers were present at 82.4% of all observed polling stations whilst no candidate/party observer was present in 4.1% of cases on 7th September.

Candidate/Party representation was improved on the Election held on 9th November with two or more candidate/party observers present at 94.6% of all polling stations while no candidate/party observer was present in 5.4% of cases.

On 16th November, one or more candidate/party observers were present at 92.4% of polling stations whilst no candidate/party observer was present at 7.7% of polling.

Table 6. Candidate representation at polling stations

<b>07<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>% (POLLING STATIONS)</b>
Two or more candidate/party observers	82.4 %
No candidate/party observers	4.1%

  

<b>09<sup>th</sup> November</b>	<b>% (POLLING STATIONS)</b>
Two or more candidate/party observers	94.6 %
No candidate/party observers	5.4 %

  

<b>16<sup>th</sup> November</b>	<b>% (POLLING STATIONS)</b>
Two or more candidate/party observers	92.4 %
No candidate/party observers	7.7 %



## Security Presence

The Maldives Police Service provided security for the majority of cases observed. On 7 September, police presence was at 95.9% of polling stations; on 9 November, it was at 95.1% of polling stations; and, on 16 November, police were observed to be present at 95.9% of polling stations.<sup>23</sup>

Table 7. Security presence at polling stations

<b>PRESENCE OF SECURITY</b>	<b>% (POLLING STATIONS)</b>
07 <sup>th</sup> September	95.9 %
09 <sup>th</sup> November	95.1%
16 <sup>th</sup> November	95.9%

## Violence, Interruptions and Police Interventions

Despite a few cases of violence, all the rounds of Elections went smoothly and peacefully.

On 7th September, violence was reported at 1.4% of polling stations, and 1.8% of 9th November. There were no reported cases of violence on 16th November.

On 7th September voting was temporarily halted in 3.8%; half of these cases were interventions at the direction of the Presiding Officer. On 9th November voting was temporarily halted in 3.2% of polling stations out of which 85.7% of these cases were interventions at the direction of the Presiding Officer. On 16th November, voting was temporarily halted at 4.4% of polling stations; again half of these cases were interventions at the direction of the Presiding Officer.

<sup>23</sup> This does not conclusively prove that police were absent in the rest of the areas. If, for example, police did not wear their uniform as may be the case in resort islands, our observers may report an absence.

On 7th September, 9th November, and 16th November, it was observed that police entered 18.8%, 14.5%, and 14.2% of polling stations respectively.

These interventions were at the invitation of the Presiding Officer 80%, 84.4%, and 60% of the times respectively.

Table 8. Violence, interruptions and Police interventions at polling stations

	07 <sup>th</sup> Sept	09 <sup>th</sup> Nov	16 <sup>th</sup> Nov
Violence reported	1.4 %	1.8 %	0 %
Voting temporarily halted	3.8 %	3.2 %	4.4 %
Police entering polling stations	18.8 %	14.5 %	14.2 %

### Voter List Issues

On 7th September, less than 0.2% of all voters were unable to vote because their names were not on the voter registry. Only 0.05% complained at the polling stations that they were unable to vote at the location.

On 9th November, 0.35% of voters were unable to vote because their names were not on the voter registry; out of which 23.1% complained at the polling stations that they were unable to vote at the location.

On 16th November, 0.07% of all voters were unable to vote as a result of their name not being on the voter registry; 0.04% of voters complained at the polling station that they were not able to vote at the location.

Table 8. Voter list issues

	07 <sup>th</sup> Sept	09 <sup>th</sup> Nov	16 <sup>th</sup> Nov
Unable to vote as names not on registry	0.2 %	0.35 %	0.07 %
Complained at polling stations that they were unable to vote	0.05 %	23.1 %	0.04 %

## Closing

On average, 98.4% of polling stations closed by the required closing time.  
On average 0.16% of ballot boxes were disputed by the candidate/party observer during counting.

Table 9. Closing

% polling stations closed on time	98.4 %
Disputed ballot boxes during counting	0.16 %

## Representation During Counting

Candidates were well represented during the counting contributing to the transparency and credibility of the counting process.

On 7th September, during the counting of votes, Gasim Ibrahim was represented at 73.3% of polling stations, Mohamed Waheed Manik was represented at 29.6% of polling stations, Abdulla Yameen was represented at 74.2% of polling stations, and Mohamed Nasheed was represented at 91.5% of polling stations.

For the round of elections held on 9th November, Gasim Ibrahim was represented at 83.7% of polling stations, Abdulla Yameen was represented at 85.1% of polling stations, and Mohamed Nasheed was represented at 91% of polling stations.

On 16th November, Abdulla Yameen was represented at 87.1% of polling stations during the vote count, and Mohamed Nasheed was represented at 93.3% of polling stations during the vote count.

Table 10. Candidate representation on 07th September

<b>CANDIDATES</b>	<b>% (POLLING STATIONS)</b>
Gasim Ibrahim (Jumhooree gulhun)	73.3 %
Mohamed Waheed (Independent)	29.6 %
Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom (PPM)	74.2 %
Mohamed Nasheed (MDP)	91.5 %

Table 11. Candidate representation on 09th November

<b>CANDIDATES</b>	<b>% (POLLING STATIONS)</b>
Gasim Ibrahim (Jumhooree gulhun)	83.7 %
Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom (PPM)	85.1 %
Mohamed Nasheed (MDP)	91 %

Table 12. Candidate representation on 16th November

<b>CANDIDATES</b>	<b>% (POLLING STATIONS)</b>
Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom (PPM)	87.1 %
Mohamed Nasheed (MDP)	93.3 %

### **Others**

#### **Assisted Voters**

According to the observation findings for the rounds of elections held on 9th and 16th November, an average of 1.55% of total voter turnout were assisted voters spread across 80.5% of polling stations.

## **OBSERVER NETWORK**

### **Recruitment and Training**

Observers were recruited through CBOs, travels to islands, contacting island councils, and from the Transparency Maldives' existing network of volunteers. Phone interviews were conducted as part of screening and in many instances volunteers were cross checked. One of the main conditions for an observer was being nonpartisan. None of the observers were registered in any political parties. All observers were required to sign a code of conduct and a pledge.

For the 7th September elections, TM recruited and trained over 400 observers. Training teams travelled to 11 different regions of Maldives, covering all 20 atolls, to train the recruited observers. Training teams consisted of 2 to 3 members, led by a lead facilitator/trainer. Trainings were held at one island from each region. Recruited participants from the region travelled to the island for the daylong training.

Intensive trainings were conducted in order to ensure that the observers were knowledgeable to conduct a quality observation, covering four main areas, including:

1. Familiarization with concepts of democracy, free and fair elections, election observation, and voter information.
2. International human rights and elections legal framework.
3. Rights and responsibilities of observers, communication limitations within the voting area, vote-counting process, announcing of provisional results, elections complaints system, and communications between observers and media.
4. Observation standards, techniques, guidelines and checklists.

Transparency Maldives also conducted phone trainings for the observers who were unable to attend the trainings held at regions for various reasons. Transparency Maldives recruited an additional 134 observers for subsequent rounds. Most of the new recruitments were also trained via phone.

### **Structure**

Before and during the training of first round of observers for the 7th September election observation, TM identified and allocated regional coordinators. Regional coordinators function was to mediate communication between observers and TM.

Their specific responsibilities included:

1. assisting Transparency Maldives in recruiting observers;
2. assisting Transparency Maldives in arranging regional trainings;
3. mediating communication between observers and Transparency Maldives;
4. representing Transparency Maldives in the region;
5. ensuring that the observers are at the allocated ballot boxes on time on the day of elections; and
6. assisting observers by answering to any questions that the observers might pose regarding observations.

Each regional coordinator monitored and managed 10 to 15 observers.



Transparency Maldives



26 Coordinators

Coordinator



400+ Observers

Observer

Observer

Observer



## **OBSERVATION HEADQUARTERS (HQ)**

Transparency Maldives established a special headquarters with phone and computer networks for coordinating the observation. It was the central operations center to coordinate the observer network and receive observation data from the observers.

The HQ was divided into four main functional areas:

1. Data entry: data entry area was equipped with eight laptops, eight telephones with headsets, and a network printer.
2. Server and Analysis: the server room had a MySQL Database server, a backup server, and a laptop with a direct printer for purpose of analysis.
3. Recovery: recovery area was equipped with two laptops and two telephones with headsets.
4. Emergency: was equipped with one laptop connected to a printer, and three telephones with headsets.

More than 35 volunteers worked at the HQ on specific tasks. All the volunteers were well trained and required to sign a pledge of non-partisanship and abide by code of

conduct for observers.

### **Data Entry**

17 trained volunteers worked as “digitators” for data entry. Observers made two phone calls to the HQ on the Election Day. First call was made after filling Form 1 (F1), and the second after filling Form 2 (F2).

Filling and reporting of all F1 forms took approximately two hours from the time of opening of the polls. Filling, and reporting of all F2 forms took approximately four hours from the time of closing the polling stations. However, depending on the situations, reporting of F2 for some ballot boxes took longer.

When observers made the call, a digitator entered the data to a computer software especially designed for the purpose. The software contained two separate sections to enter F1 data and F2 data. Before entering data, observers were authenticated by requesting for the ballot box number they observed and the unique observer code they were given. Observer codes were randomly generated unique numbers provided to each observer. The data entry process could proceed only if the provided ballot box number and the observer

code matched with that stored in the central database. This ensured greater security for the process.

The data entry software is connected to the MySQL server, which stored all the data. At a time, a total of eight digitators were stationed, supervised by a lead digitator who answered to questions when and if a digitators faced an issue. The digitators were granted permission only to enter data, and not to modify any of the entered data. A username and password was provided to each digitator to access the data entry software.

When an observer reported, if the digitator finds that any data is missing or observed any irregularities with the provided data, observer details along with the issue was passed on to the recovery section.

### **Recovery**

The recovery section had eight well-trained volunteers. At a time, five volunteers were active, observed by a recovery head. Recovery volunteers were trained to collect missing data, correct and update already entered data, and to contact observers or regional coordinators to collect missing data.

Recovery was divided into two main components. Two volunteers were responsible to contact observers or regional coordinators to collect missing data, and another two volunteers entered or updated the data using the recovery software.

The recovery software was a replication of the data entry software with extra privileges to edit and update already entered data.

Recovery section was tasked with two main functions:

#### 1. Collection of incomplete data

When an observer calls the data entry and fails to provide all the required information, the observer details are passed onto Recovery. The Recovery is to contact the regional coordinator who coordinates the particular observer. Recovery will try to see if the incomplete data could be recovered via the regional coordinator.

If the required information could not be recovered via the regional coordinator, recovery would contact the observer to collect the incomplete data. Once recovered, the data will be entered or updated on the software.

## 2. Collection of missing data

There are situations when observers fail to report within the given time frame, for different reasons. This could be due to issues surrounding a ballot box, or an observer being unable to contact the HQ for some reason.

In such a case, recovery will contact the regional coordinator to get a status update of the observer. If the observer is present at the ballot box and if no specific issues have been observed, recovery would try to get the data via the regional coordinator, if not directly from the observer. Once the data is recovered, the database would be updated.

## **Emergency**

Emergency section had six trained volunteers. Three volunteers were dedicated to answering phones and writing the received reports on a paper. Two were dedicated to enter the received reports to a software. The team was coordinated and lead by the emergency head.

The software used at emergency is custom developed software for the purpose of recording emergency reports. Once the data is entered to the software, reports could be

saved both on the local computer and the server with a single click.

The main tasks of emergency section were to receive and record emergency reports, and to follow up on the reports that had been received; the information would be shared with the management and the board members.

# APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE AND OBSERVERS (7 SEPTEMBER 2013)

BALLOT BOX NO.	NAME
A01.01.1	Ali Shareef
A01.02.1	Imad Abdulla
A01.04.2	Hammadh Abdulla
A02.05.2	Jeelaan Haaron
A02.10.1	Hassan Riza
A03.12.1	Abdul Rahman Ageel
A03.14.1	Ibrahim Marufu'u
A03.14.2	Yoosuf Ali
A04.08.2	Ahmed Inadh
A04.08.4	Mohamed Nooh
A05.06.1	Mohamed Hameed
A05.09.1	Ahmed Azmeel
B01.02.1	Hassan Rasheed
B01.03.1	Ahmed Suroor
B02.05.1	Humaid Ali
B02.07.1	Nuskha Ibrahim
B02.07.2	Ali Adam
B02.10.1	Inaya Ahmed
B03.12.1	Majid Adam
B04.09.1	Inayath Abdul Wahhab
B04.09.2	Ahmed Adam
B04.09.4	Samaahath Arif
B05.09.3	Lubna Mohamed
C01.01.1	Jinan Mohamed Shameem

<b>BALLOT BOX NO.</b>	<b>NAME</b>
C01.03.1	Mohamed Nizaar
C01.06.1	Ahmed Mauroof
C02.05.1	Hussain Ali
C03.09.1	Visam Amjadh
C03.11.2	Hussain Azmee
C04.10.1	Ibrahim Naumoon
C04.13.1	Aishath Asifa
C04.13.2	Ahmed Nawad
D01.02.1	Ahmed Shiham
D01.03.1	Fathimath Sama
D01.05.1	Aishath Easa
D02.06.1	Hassan Naufal
D02.07.1	Ibrahim Naeem
D02.08.1	Sharuwaan Ahmed
D02.10.2	Aishath Shaazlee
D03.12.1	Ahmed Asfaau
D03.13.3	Jadulla Hassan
Z05.1.1	Ibrahim Aslam
Z57.1.1	Ahmed Shameem
E01.01.1	Ismail Aksam
E01.01.2	Abdulla Rasheed
E01.04.1	Faruzaanaa Abdulla
E03.07.1	Mohamed Saamee
E03.07.2	Abdulla Shareef Abdu Shakoor

<b>BALLOT BOX NO.</b>	<b>NAME</b>
E03.07.4	Mohamed Musadhdhiq
E04.09.1	Aishath Reemaa
E04.10.1	Hussain Shazeen
E04.12.1	Asfaq Alifulhu
E04.14.1	Mariyam Naazleen
E05.11.1	Sham'aa Rasheed
F01.09.1	Amany
F01.09.3	Neema
F01.11.1	Waudhulla Muaz
F01.13.1	Zaeema
F02.08.1	Sajaa-ath Ibrahim
F02.08.3	Aminath Shiuraa Siraj
F03.01.1	Mariyam Yumna
F03.03.1	Fathmath Shinaza
F03.05.1	Mohamed Shahudhaan Abdulla
Z08.1.1	Mohamed Shareef
Z11.1.1	Matheen Faisal
G01.01.2	Mohamed Muneeb
G01.01.4	khadheeja Yoosuf
G02.02.2	Shafaq Mohamed
G02.02.4	Aminath Reema Mahfooz
G02.02.5	Khadheeja Abdulla
G03.03.1	Hawwa Samaahath
Z13.1.1	Mariyam Abdul Qafoor

<b>BALLOT BOX NO.</b>	<b>NAME</b>
H01.01.2	Aishath Nauma
H01.02.1	Futhiha Shakir
H02.04.1	Hussain Shamin
H03.07.1	Fathmath Samah
H02.06.1	Abdulla Shafeeu
H03.09.1	Maisha Mujuthaba
Z19.1.1	Azim Musthaq
Z21.1.1	Ali Ibrahim
Z23.1.1	Fathimath Yashfa
Z27.1.1	Saddam Shareef
Z17.1.1	Ali Rasheed
Z25.1.1	Aminath Seema
Z29.1.1	Yamin Saleem
Z32.1.1	Fathimath Ashvaa
J01.02.1	Amshad Ibrahim
J02.04.1	Moosa Naajee Nizar
I01.07.1	Shazra Shaheem
I01.10.1	Ahmed Siraj
I01.10.2	Sofiyath Saleem
I01.10.3	Nuzhua Yoosuf
I02.01.1	Mohamed Muneer
I02.03.1	Aishath Azhana
I02.05.1	Mohamed Shamoon
Z38.1.1	Aminath Sazla

<b>BALLOT BOX NO.</b>	<b>NAME</b>
Z42.1.1	Ibrahim Abdulla
Z44.1.1	Ahmed Nabeel
Z34.1.1	Fathmath Nuha Shakir
Z36.1.1	Ahmed Rasheed
U01.06.1	Khadheeja Ibrahim
U01.05.1	Riyas Mohamed
U01.08.1	Mohamed Adhil
U02.02.1	Mohamed Nihaan
K01.01.1	Mohamed Niyaz
K01.04.1	Ahmed Shareef
K01.08.1	Rahma Mohamed
K02.05.1	Hawwa Liusha
L01.01.1	Aishath Niuma
L01.03.1	Hawwa Thoobaa
L02.04.1	Rashfa Moosa
M01.01.1	Hassan Fahumee
M01.03.1	Mohamed Atheef
M02.06.1	Ahmed Ihsan
M02.07.1	Aminath Nahula
M02.07.3	Juwairiya Ahmed
Z49.1.1	Ahmed Jameen
N01.01.1	Zainab Zoonaa
N01.02.1	Mariyam Shahuma
N02.05.1	Mohamed Haneef



<b>BALLOT BOX NO.</b>	<b>NAME</b>
N02.05.2	Ismail Ali
N02.09.1	Nahidha Ali
N03.06.1	Hawwa Juwaida
N03.08.1	Ali Saffaah
N03.12.1	Hussain Shammaah
O01.01.1	Shahula Rushdy
O01.02.1	Aiminath Irusha
O02.05.1	Hussain Habeeb
O03.07.1	Aishath Nathasha
O03.07.2	Hawwa Najuja
O03.07.3	Aishath Fainaaz
O03.09.1	Mohamed Sajid
O04.09.1	Aishath Miusha
O04.10.1	Mariyam Leesha
P01.01.2	Rishwan Ali
P01.02.1	Ahmed Binaal
P01.02.3	Mariyam Shaagiba
P02.04.1	Inayath Latheef
P02.05.2	Shujau Mohamed
P03.06.1	Ahmed Nifaah
P03.08.1	Yamin Abdulla
V03.1.1	Abdulla Shakir
Q01.01.1	Ahmed Aalaf Mohamed
Q01.01.2	Ibrahim Ahmed

<b>BALLOT BOX NO.</b>	<b>NAME</b>
Q01.01.4	Rishfa Ali Shareef
Q02.01.2	Asna Hassan Ahmed
Q02.02.2	Mohamed Ahmed
Q02.04.1	Maajidha Abdul Kareem
Q03.08.1	Hadheeja Nafhaa
Q04.05.1	Ishaq Rasheed
Q04.05.2	Mohamed Shafaz
Z51.1.1	Ali Mohamed
R01.01.1	Shama Shareef
R01.02.2	Sheemath Ibrahim
R02.05.3	Sausan Saeed
R03.06.1	Aishath Ahmed
R03.08.3	Aminath Minha Mohamed
S01.1.2	Nuzhathunnisa
S01.1.4	Aishath Nasma
S01.1.6	Liyagath Abdulla
S02.1.2	Fathmath Zulfa
S02.1.4	Hawwa Athika
S03.1.1	Abdulla Vishaah Ibrahim
S03.1.3	Ibrahim Hussain
S03.1.5	Mariyam Maavee Saeed
S04.1.2	Fasyha Solih
S04.1.4	Hawwa Amaanath Fahumee
S05.1.1	Aminath Safwa Mohamed

<b>BALLOT BOX NO.</b>	<b>NAME</b>
S05.1.3	Naseera Ibrahim
S05.1.5	Mariyam Maahee Hassan
S06.1.2	Fathimath Ziya Zaki
S06.1.3	Asima Najmee
S06.1.4	Nuha Haneef
FT.0.1	Aishath Azza
IT.0.1	Enas Mohamed Riyas
V05.1.1	Abdul Majid Aboobakr
RT.0.2	Aishath Muna
T04.1.1	Mariyam Shaanee Mohamed
BT.0.1	Nauma Ahmed
T01.1.4	Ahmed Imdhah Mohamed
T08.1.3	Afia Jaufar
T06.1.2	Mariyam Raula Ahmed
BT.0.3	Fathmath Lamyia Abdulla
X02.1.1	
ST.0.4	Mohamed Ansaar
DT.0.2	Aishath Jinan Abdul Rasheed
GT.0.1	Shauya Luthfee
YT.0.1	Shiyama Ahmed
YT.0.5	Aishath Shiuna
T02.1.4	Aishath Shahurunaaz Moosa
YT.0.3	Mariyam Shifa
QT.0.1	Mariyam Ahmed

<b>BALLOT BOX NO.</b>	<b>NAME</b>
ST.0.6	Hawwa Naufa Nisam
ST.0.2	Suzana Rasheed
X01.1.2	Mariyam Shiunaz Ali
ET.0.2	Fathimath Shamha
LT.0.1	Naeesha Ibrahim
PT.0.1	Arushad Ali
T07.1.4	Jooda Ahmed
NT.0.1	Ahmed Saif
NT.0.3	Mariyam Shaffaana
HT.0.1	Fathmath Aroosha
OT.0.2	Mariyam Iana Nashid
JT.0.1	Hassan Haisham Ahmed
X01.1.1	Aiminath Naseem
X03.1.1	Zeeshan
X04.1.1	Naufal
T09.1.3	Fathimath Ahmed
T11.1.2	Aishath Noora
T09.1.2	Mariyam Shazra
T10.1.2	Ali Shareef
T10.1.3	Aiminath Shamha Abdul Sattar
AT.0.2	Nishfa Ibrahim
YT.0.7	Abdul Hameed
T11.1.5	Abdul Hameed
T08.1.1	Dhunya Ahmed

BALLOT BOX NO.	NAME
T08.1.4	Hamdha Abdul Rahman
T11.1.4	Aishath Rasheed
YT.0.9	Fathimath Shafa Moosa Naseer
T02.1.2	Mariyam Niyaf Mohamed
T03.1.4	Lizfa Ali Manik
QT.0.3	Arooza Rasheed
T05.1.3	Aminath Dheema Shakir
T07.1.2	Ismail Zaan Fathuhulla
T05.1.1	Hussain Ibrahim
T01.1.2	Ali Samaah
T05.1.5	Mohamed Shujau
T03.1.1	Ibrahim Firushan Hameed
T06.1.4	Yusrib Khaleel
CT.0.1	Fathmath Nishama
V03.1.1	Abdulla Shakir
W02.1.1	Saddam Ibrahim
W03.1.1	Mariyam Gaanithaa
W04.1.1	Mariyam Gasim
W05.1.1	Ali Nash'ath Mohamed
W01.1.1	Aminath Umar
W01.1.2	
V01.1.1	Ali Wisam

# APPENDIX 2: PRESS STATEMENTS

## **TRANSPARENCY MALDIVES COMMENDS THE ELECTIONS COMMISSION FOR THE SMOOTH OPENING OF THE POLLS**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

**DATE: SEPTEMBER 7, 2013**

Transparency Maldives' observer network has a wide national coverage spanning resorts, prisons, and abroad, including London, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Delhi and Colombo. Transparency Maldives thanks the 400+ observers deployed across the country for their dedication in observing the election processes.

The results we report are generalisable to the entire country. These results are based on the observation at the time of opening of polls.

The opening of the polls was smooth, and the administrative preparation and execution went well, for which the Elections Commission and relevant stakeholders deserve credit. The opening procedure went well with 99.5% of all polling stations open by 8.30 am and 83% of polling stations open within the first 10 minutes of the required opening time.

Nearly all polling station officials were properly in place at all polling stations. The queue controller was absent at 4.1% and the polling station controller was absent at 7.2% of observed polling stations.

The materials required for voting were present and the ballot papers were counted and reconciled at all polling stations and all ballot boxes were verified as empty at the start.

Candidates were well represented at polling stations. Two or more candidate/party observers were present at 82.4% of all observed polling stations. One candidate/party observer was present at 13.6% of polling stations whilst no candidate/party observer was present in 4.1% of cases.

Transparency Maldives also notes that police were present at 95% of the observed polling stations at the opening time.

Observers concluded that the polling stations were set up to ensure a secret vote in the vast majority of cases (98.2%). This was less clear in about 2%

of all cases observed. These polling stations will be closely watched.

We encourage all parties to maintain the peace. Our observers are working hard at polling stations and will be present at the polling stations till closing. We will be informing you the precise time of our next press conference later this afternoon.

ENDS

## **TM APPEALS TO ALL ACTORS TO REFRAIN FROM UNDERMINING THE INTEGRITY OF ELECTION DAY PROCESSES WITHOUT EVIDENCE**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

**DATE: SEPTEMBER 19, 2013**

In view of the cases submitted and allegations made at the High Court and Supreme Court of the Maldives regarding systematic vote rigging, Transparency Maldives notes that it did not find any evidence that support allegations of systematic election day fraud during the nation-wide observation.

Transparency Maldives conducted the only systematic and nation-wide domestic observation in the 2013 Presidential Elections. Key findings of the election observation include:

- All ballots were counted and accounted for and ballot boxes were shown to be empty before commencement of polling;
- Only 0.2% people were turned away because their names were not on the registry;
- Transparency Maldives' observers have not reported any incident of double voting, impersonation, underage voting or of indelible ink washing off;
- Candidate representativeness was high during the counting process; and
- The counting process proceeded without incident in 85.5% of the polling stations with all ballot papers accounted for. All issues raised during counting at polling stations were resolved at the stations where provisional results were announced.

Transparency Maldives appeals to all actors and institutions to refrain from undermining the integrity of and confidence in the election day processes without credible evidence of fraud.



## **TRANSPARENCY MALDIVES CALLS TO ENSURE A PRESIDENT IS DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED BY 11 NOVEMBER 2013**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

**DATE: OCTOBER 19, 2013**

Transparency Maldives is concerned that the Presidential Election had to be once again called off, and that a new date has not been set.

While the Constitutional deadlines for conducting the election have already been breached, we urge setting a new date immediately to ensure there is a democratically elected President by November 11, 2013.

The Maldivian Constitution enshrines separation of powers as fundamental and provides different roles and responsibilities to different independent institutions. As such, the Elections Commission has the mandate to conduct elections and set administrative procedures for holding such elections within the ambit of the law. Transparency Maldives therefore calls on all actors to refrain from obstructing this mandate and to respect the independence of the Commission.

Transparency Maldives reiterates that its extensive and systematic observation of the September 7 elections found no evidence of systematic fraud and no such evidence has so far been made public.

As all the powers of the state are derived from and remain with the people, and elections allow free expression of people's will, Transparency Maldives appeals to all actors to facilitate the conduct of the Presidential Elections without further breach of the constitutionally stipulated electoral deadlines. Transparency Maldives also believes that for long-term national interest and democratic consolidation, the Presidential Election must ensure the participation of all political actors and parties.

**ENDS**

## **TM CONDEMNS ABUSE OF PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

**DATE : 31 OCTOBER 2013**

Transparency Maldives condemns the attempts to shape laws and rules for protecting personal interests of the Members of the Parliament and abuse of parliamentary privileges and the institution of the Parliament.

Such attempts weaken the legal system and obstruct the rule of law. Similarly, such acts undermine the integrity of the Parliament, eroding public confidence in the institution.

Members of the Parliament must be provided with appropriate privileges and immunities in order to carry out their duties as lawmakers. However, Transparency Maldives reiterates its concern that the Parliamentary Privileges Act affords undue privileges and powers to the MPs.

Prosecutions through the courts must not be politically motivated. Transparency Maldives therefore calls on the courts, especially the Supreme Court, to ensure that cases against Members of the Parliament are treated impartially and without political motives.

ENDS.

## **TRANSPARENCY MALDIVES COMMENDS THE ELECTIONS COMMISSION FOR A WELL ADMINISTERED ELECTION DESPITE CHALLENGES**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

**DATE: NOVEMBER 9, 2013**

Transparency Maldives appreciates and thanks the 400+ observers and volunteers in our observer network, based in 20 atolls and a number of foreign countries. Without them this domestic observation would not have been a success. Transparency Maldives believes that an independent observation effort at this scale promotes greater levels of trust in our electoral processes. Our observers have ensured increased public participation and the transparency of electoral processes in the Maldives.

The methodology used for this observation was based on systematic random sampling. Our observers collected both qualitative and quantitative data and our approach allowed us to generate results from the sample to the entire population, within a known margin of error. In this case our margin of error is less than +/- 1.5%.

The following are the key findings we would like to highlight.

48% of polling stations closed at 3:30 p.m and 96% of polling stations closed by 4.30 p.m.

There were reports that people were not able to vote because their names were not on the voter registry, but this affected very few cases (less than 0.35% of all voters). Out of those affected 23.1% complained at the polling stations that they were unable to vote at their designated polling location. 1.4% of the total voter turnout were assisted voters spread across 81.4% of the polling stations.

Voting was temporarily halted in 3.2% of polling stations. 85.7% of these cases were interventions at the direction of the Presiding Officer. Despite a few isolated cases of reported violence (1.8%) at the polling

stations, we are happy to report that this election has been peaceful. Where there were incidents of violence, they were reported to the relevant authorities, and we will be closely monitoring any further developments.

We note that the police entered 14.5% of polling stations. However, in 84.4% of such cases, interventions occurred at the invitation of the Presiding Officer as the rules allow.

Candidates were well-represented during the counting, making the process transparent and adding to its credibility. Gasim Ibrahim was represented at 83.7% of polling stations during the vote count. Abdulla Yameen was represented at 85.1% of polling stations during the vote count. Mohamed Nasheed was represented at 91% of polling stations during the vote count.

Only 0.15% of ballot papers were disputed by the candidate/party observers during the counting process.

ENDS.

**TRANSPARENCY MALDIVES IS DEEPLY CONCERNED THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE MALDIVES WERE DENIED THE RIGHT TO ELECT A PRESIDENT WITHIN THE CONSTITUTIONAL DEADLINES**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**DATE: NOVEMBER 11, 2013**

Transparency Maldives is deeply concerned that the people of the Maldives have been denied the right to elect a President before the constitutional five-year term of the incumbent government expired on 11 November 2013. Transparency Maldives condemns the continued breach of the electoral deadlines, in contravention to the spirit of the Constitution.

It is regrettable that political actors failed to find a democratically inclusive solution to the constitutional crisis that respects the spirit of the Constitution. The spirit of the Constitution reflects the basic democratic principle that state power must always lie with the people and their elected representatives.

Transparency Maldives calls on all relevant actors to allow the people to elect a president to ensure that all powers of the state are derived from and remain with the citizens as stipulated in the Constitution of the Maldives.

ENDS.

## **THE OPENING OF THE POLLS WAS EXCELLENTLY ADMINISTERED, AS IN THE PREVIOUS TWO ROUNDS OF THE 2013 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

**DATE: NOVEMBER 16, 2013**

Transparency Maldives thanks our observers deployed across the country for their dedication in observing the election processes. Transparency Maldives' observer network has a wide national coverage spanning resorts, prisons, and abroad, including London, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Colombo, Trivandrum and Delhi.

The results we report are generalisable to the entire country. These results are based on the observation at the time of opening of polls.

The opening of the polls was smooth, and the administrative preparation and execution went well, showing an improvement over the previous two rounds of the Presidential Election. The Elections Commission and relevant stakeholders deserve credit for the smooth opening of polls. The opening procedure went well with 100% of all polling stations open by 8.00am and 91.89% of polling stations open within the first 10 minutes of the required opening time, compared to the first round's 86.2%.

Nearly all polling station officials were in place at all polling stations. The queue controller and polling station controller were absent at only 0.9% of polling stations.

The materials required for voting were present and the ballot papers were counted and reconciled at all polling stations. All ballot boxes were verified as empty at the start.

Candidates were well represented at polling stations. One or more candidate/party observers were present at 92.4% of all observed polling stations whilst no candidate/party observer was present in 7.7% of cases.

Transparency Maldives also notes that police were present at 95.9% of the

observed polling stations at the time of opening, similar to the last round.

Observers concluded that the polling stations were set up to ensure a secret vote in 100% of polling stations.

We encourage all parties to maintain the climate of peace. Our observers are working hard at polling stations and will be present at the polling stations till closing and during counting.

We will be informing you the precise time of our next press conference later this afternoon..

ENDS.

## **TRANSPARENCY MALDIVES CALLS ON ALL ACTORS TO ACCEPT THE RESULTS AND MAINTAIN THE ENVIRONMENT OF PEACE**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

**DATE: NOVEMBER 16, 2013**

Transparency Maldives appreciates and thanks all observers and volunteers in our observer network, based in 20 atolls and in London, Singapore, Colombo, Kuala Lumpur, Delhi and Trivandrum. The observers were key to the success of the observation. Transparency Maldives believes that an independent observation effort at this scale has instilled greater levels of trust in our electoral processes. Our observers have ensured increased public participation and the transparency of electoral processes in the Maldives.

Transparency Maldives has participated in international election observation missions, including Nepal, Bangladesh, United States, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Transparency Maldives is also affiliated with many domestic and international elections observation and electoral knowledge networks including ANFREL and GNDEM. The election observation effort by Transparency Maldives in this Presidential election has been guided by the National Democratic Institute.

The methodology used for our observation was based on systematic random sampling. Our observers collected both qualitative and quantitative data and our approach allowed us to generate results from the sample to the entire population, within a known margin of error. In this case our margin of error is less than +/- 1.5%.

The elections were credible, transparent and extremely well-administered, as were the two previous rounds. Transparency Maldives congratulates the Maldivian citizens for their spirited engagement in the democratic process, with unprecedented voter turnout. Transparency Maldives congratulates the winning candidate Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom and his supporters. Transparency Maldives also congratulates President Nasheed and his supporters, in this closely contested election. Transparency Maldives urges all actors to respect and accept the election results and swear in the next



president at the earliest.

The following are the key findings which we would like to highlight. 99.6% of polling stations closed by 5.00 p.m.

There were reports that people were not able to vote because their names were not on the voter registry, but this affected very few cases (less than 0.07% of all voters). Out of those affected (0.04%) of voters complained at the polling stations.

1.7% of the total voter turnout were assisted voters spread across 79.6% of the polling stations.

Voting was temporarily halted in 4.4% of polling stations. 50% of these cases were interventions at the direction of the Presiding Officer while 60% were interventions by political party supporters/affiliates.

We are happy to report that this election has been peaceful with no reported incidents of violence inside a polling station.

We note that the police entered 14.2% of polling stations. However, in 84.4% of such cases, interventions occurred at the invitation of the Presiding Officer as the rules allow.

Candidates were well-represented during the counting, making the process transparent and adding to its credibility. Abdulla Yameen was represented at 87.1% of polling stations during the vote count. Mohamed Nasheed was represented at 93.3% of polling stations during the vote count.

Only 0.11% of ballot papers were disputed by the candidate/party observers during the counting process.

While election day administration has been excellent, we believe that the real electoral issues are those of lack of political financing transparency, failure of the state to hold to account parties and individuals in violation of electoral offenses, the loopholes in the legal framework which paves way for abuse, all of which ultimately reduces trust and confidence in the electoral

system.

Transparency Maldives calls on all relevant actors to reform the electoral systems to increase confidence in and improve the electoral systems in the Maldives.

ENDS.





[www.transparencymaldives.org](http://www.transparencymaldives.org)