

# 919

## PRESS RELEASE

### 919 places coffins in public places to remind people of Gayoom regime's torture



MALE', 07 OCTOBER 2008 – 919, a democracy movement recently established in the Maldives, has placed coffins in public places in the capital Male' to draw attention to the torture and suppression practiced by the ruling regime of Maumoon Abdul Gayoom.

Photos of people who had been tortured and killed in prison were placed on the coffin lid along with messages urging the people not to vote for people with blood on their hands. Flyers from 919 (pronounced as nine-one-nine) were put inside the coffins. The coffins, placed in high profile public places, drew much attention from the people.

The campaign has been launched ahead of the first multi-party election in the Maldives, to be held on 8 October. Gayoom has ruled the country with an iron fist since November 1978. He is Asia's

longest serving ruler, and is one of the last remaining dictators in the world. Under his rule, corruption has surged as reported by Transparency International while press freedom was suppressed for years as documented by Reporters without Borders.

The coffins are a reminder to the people of the atrocities committed by the Gayoom regime, as the dictator runs for a seventh consecutive term. For the first time he is facing opponents in an election. Previous elections were just a farce with Gayoom as the single candidate in a yes or no referendum.

919 urges the people not to vote for Gayoom and neither for other candidates who were once pillars of his brutal regime. Even though 919 is an independent movement, it is endorsing Mohamed Nasheed (Anni), the presidential candidate from Maldivian Democratic Party. 919 urges all citizens of Maldives to rally behind Anni, to bring an end to the dictatorship in the Maldives through ballot box.



Mariyam Manike, mother of Eavan Naseem – the inmate tortured and killed in Maafushi jail on 19 September 2003 – standing near a coffin placed at Gadi Buru area of Male' on Tuesday by 919.

**For more information:**

<http://919movement.wordpress.com>

[919movement@gmail.com](mailto:919movement@gmail.com)