

National Counter Terrorism Centre



NCTC Newsletter - Volume 49: April 2021

Ramadan: A Month of Tolerance and Respect

By Lieutenant Colonel Amanulla Rasheed



photo: Wikipedia

A year has passed since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic and we are moving to a new normal of living. When the pandemic was hit hard and the world was in lockdown, even in the Maldives, people showed cohesiveness and tolerance a society should always have in any calamity. This societal spirit should carry forward even post pandemic (the new normal), and in times of peace. Just like during and after a

conflict, when people reconcile and come together and live in harmony. At present, the Muslim world is observing the holy month of Ramadan. This is the time of remembrance of peace and tolerance. Paying sadaqah ("charity", "benevolence", plural *ṣadaqāt*, صدقات in the modern context has come to signify "voluntary charity") to the needy and close ones as a gesture of kindness.

...continued on page 2

“We can transform our communities and our lives through adopting the values of altruism, cooperation, and social engagement, rather than living in despair and social isolation. Peaceful coexistence is the path to happiness.” (@SawabCenterEN) As such, the holy month teaches that humanity is bound by a religious unity.

This is the time of remembrance of the starving population in the world, who really are in need of food, clothing and shelter, which are the aftermath of violence and conflicts for unjust causes for the innocence. From these irritable lessons, we should carve the future of the Maldives to create a more cohesive society. Increasing social engagements to address the susceptibility issues of the young and youth and working in a whole-of-nation approach should be a priority. Despite the differences in ideologies, it is vital to note that the leaders and scholars of the nation should try to emphasize the people to work as one nation.

Ramadan is a month of humanity and respect to each other. It is a month of cooperation within families, community and among different islands. Hence, facilitation of social engagements via government agencies and civil society organizations would prepare the society for tolerance and enhance social cohesion.

The month is also symbolic of unity. Traditionally, the Maldivian society has been a vibrant and cohesive society during Ramadan, which involved family and social gatherings for iftar (breaking of fast or dinner, is the evening meal with which Muslims end their daily Ramadan fast at sunset) bringing family bonds closer.

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“I have always found that mercy bears richer
fruits than strict justice.”
Abraham Lincoln

Abraham Lincoln

The iftar dishes on the table might differ from Morocco to Indonesia, from Palestine to Bahrain, but the sentiment they are served with is the same: a message of peace, spirituality and calm. Nevertheless, during the past year (2020) these engagements have almost faded due to Covid-19 and its restrictions.



Ramadan teaches us all how to be tolerant. The lesson in abstinence is more than one of refraining from

the physical gratification of eating, drinking or smoking from dawn till dusk. Furthermore, Muslims are to exercise restraint in their thoughts and actions; also, to express empathy for the less fortunate people whilst performing prayers. Love and mercy are the core of Prophet Muhammad's message which

calls for preserving high morality and good manners. The Prophet (PBUH) said, "The most beloved and nearest to me on the Day of Resurrection among you are those of you with the best character and manners."

Fasting helps repress pride of the ego and maintains humbleness. Therefore, a pure heart and intent of positive actions are obligatory during Ramadan. This is the time to reflect, to think for others, return to core values of respect and tolerance and set the tone for the rest of the year and beyond.

NCTC Briefs NSA Office on the Work Done in CT and P/CVE

22 April 2021

NCTC officials met with the newly established National Security Advisor's Office. During this meeting, NCTC gave a background of NCTC beginning from its inception and the reasons for a national coordinating agency on CT and P/CVE.

NCTC also briefed officials from the NSA Office on work done by the NCTC in CT and P/CVE. Furthermore, NCTC officials highlighted work done by its various departments and also shared challenges faced in the scope of their work.

The meeting concluded with officials from both agencies promising to work together to address challenges facing the nation as well as assisting in ongoing work by the NCTC to ensure synergy among different instruments of the government in the work done in CT and P/CVE.

Defence Advisor of UK to the Maldives Calls upon DG

7 April 2021

Defence Advisor of UK to the Maldives, Colonel David Ashman called upon DG to discuss work done by NCTC. During this meeting, officials also discussed areas of collaboration in CT and CVE in a whole-of-government approach. Delegates also deliberated upon collaborative interagency response to terrorism and violent extremism in the Maldives.

The United Kingdom is one of the closest allies that assist in building capacity in emergency response across different government agencies. A core component of UK's assistance has been to improve interagency operations and communication, to develop a comprehensive emergency response framework in the Maldives.



SawabCenterEN @SawabCenterEN · Apr 30

The month of Ramadan reminds us to close the gap between people and different cultures and instill values of tolerance, compassion and cooperation. Share with us a story of harmonious coexistence that has impacted you this Ramadan.

[#RamadanEssence](#)



Director of NCTC Attends Online Meeting on “UN Global Programme on Security of Major Sporting Events & Promotion of Sport and its Values to Prevent Violent Extremism”

22 April 2021

“

Sports push people to be better, to aim higher and further. It promotes tolerance and gender equality. It strengthens communities, builds resilience and channels natural competitive instincts in a harmonious way. We therefore have a moral obligation to protect sports and promote them as a powerful means to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism.

”

Vladimir Voronkov
Under-Secretary-General
UN Office of Counter-Terrorism



Director of NCTC Lieutenant Colonel Ibrahim Naeem attended the online discussion on “UN Global Programme on Security of Major Sporting Events and Promotion of Sport and its Values to Prevent Violent Extremism.” The discussions aimed at providing updates of the program to national focal points and identifying future programs for Maldives with a focus to promote sports and its values as means to prevent violent extremism.

The program is an initiative of UNOCT in partnership with relevant agencies to:

- increase Member States awareness of terrorism-related threats against vulnerable targets in the context of major sporting events and their the ability to prevent and counter terrorist acts;
- promote sport and its values to build resilience to violent extremism, especially among youth;

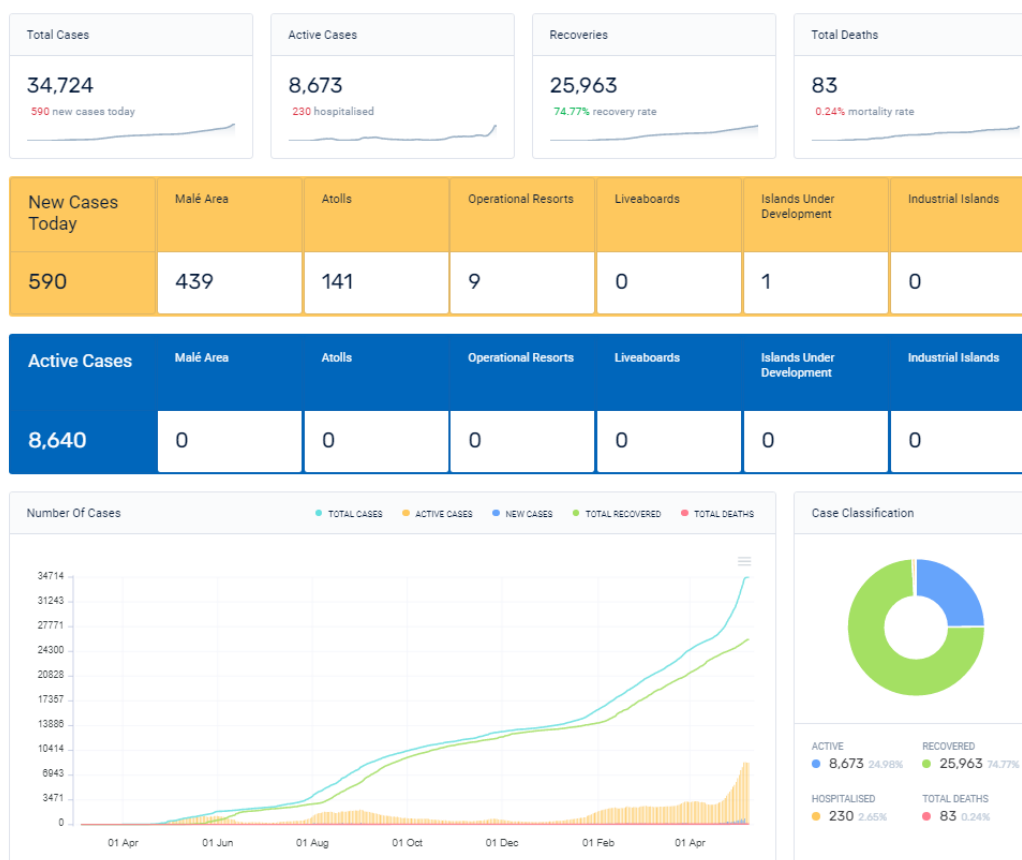
- support Members States to integrate sport values-based initiatives within national action plans for PVE.

In addition to NCTC, officials from Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment and the Maldives Police Service attended the discussion.

Sports is an important developmental and empowerment tool for youth, especially in a country like the Maldives that can be used to foster camaraderie and cohesiveness through friendly rivalries and social interactions, in addition to developing social etiquettes and tolerance. Further information about the interlink between sports and security can be accessed at this [link](#).

COVID-19 LOCAL UPDATES

09 May 2021 - 15:00
 This dashboard will be updated within 2 hours of any new live updates.
 For live updates follow us @hpa_mv.



Source: covid19.health.gov.mv

UNODC ROADMAP 10 PRINCIPLES

- 01 Preserving public safety and protecting child rights are complementary
- 02 Children recruitment is a serious form of violence against children
- 03 Children should be considered and treated primarily as victims of crime
- 04 Prevention of child involvement should be a priority
- 05 The best interests of the child must always be the primary consideration
- 06 Key objective should be rehabilitation and reintegration
- 07 No child recruitment process can be regarded as truly voluntary
- 08 Children are entitled to all rights in relation to juvenile justice
- 09 Related initiatives must adopt child and gender-sensitive approaches
- 10 Child recruitment is not only a crime problem but a developmental issue and requires concerted, multidisciplinary efforts

photo: @UNODC

Activities of the MNDF Contingent at IMCTC in Saudi Arabia



MNDF delegation attended a presentation entitled "Indicators of Violent Extremism", presented by Dr. Abdulrahman bin Mohammad Asiri, in which he addressed the main extremism indicators identified by scientific studies and research. During the presentation, Dr. Asiri highlighted the main indicators identified by scholarly studies and researches through analyzing thousands of cases and reports of those involved in terrorist cases. The presentation was held on the 5th of April.



The Maldivian delegation also attended a presentation entitled "Cyberattacks and their Methods", presented by Dr. Sultan Al-Farhood, Cyber Security Assistant Professor at King Saud University on the 7th of April. During the presentation, he addressed the risks of malicious hacks on smart devices. Affirming the need to use various protection mechanisms, Dr. Al-Farhood also emphasized the tremendous development and spread of malicious software and tools used to hack information among phones and portable devices to achieve detrimental goals.



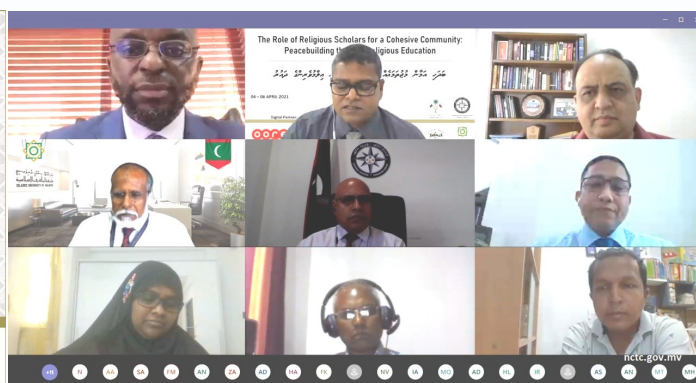
Members of the Maldivian delegation also participated in a presentation entitled "Linkages of Terrorism to Smuggling", presented by Colonel Roger NIKAPISSE, Delegate of the Gabonese Republic to IMCTC on the 11th of April. In this presentation, he addressed various themes about the relation between terrorism and smuggling.



Members of the Maldivian delegation also participated in a symposium entitled "Sources of Terrorist Financing and Countering Methods" held on the 21st of April. The session was conducted by by Col. Ibrahim Mousa and Mr. Khalid Arab, Delegates of Niger and Afghanistan to IMCTC, and moderated by Col. Ali Mohammad Mahmoud, Delegate of Bahrain to IMCTC. The symposium also addressed the main sources and lifecycle of terrorist financing and countering methods.

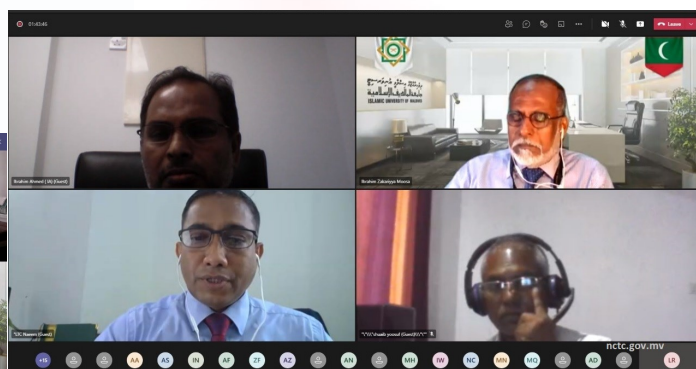
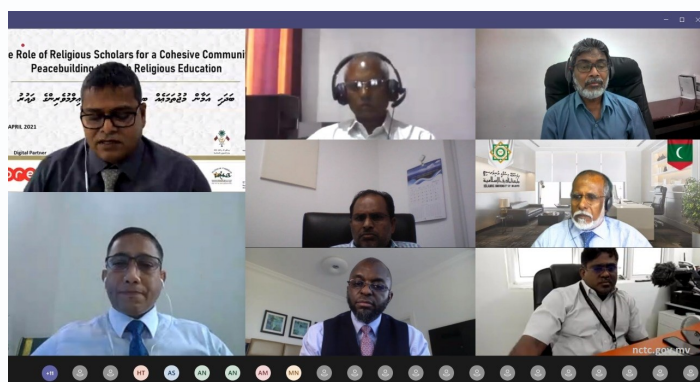
NCTC Conducts Webinar for Religious Scholars: “The Role of Religious Scholars for a Cohesive Community”

4-6 April 2021



NCTC conducted a webinar for religious scholars titled “The Role of Religious Scholars for a Cohesive Community: Peacebuilding through Religious Education.” The 3-day webinar was conducted jointly with the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Islamic University of Maldives, and Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) of India with Ooredoo Maldives as the digital partner.

DG of NCTC Brigadier General Zakariyya Mansoor addressed the participants on the opening day. He highlighted the role of religious scholars leaders to prevent disunity in a society such as the Maldives, where everyone speak the same language, share the same culture, and follow the same religion.



The webinar aims to build the capacities of religious scholars to develop and implement religious interventions and approaches that contribute, effectively and appropriately, to the prevention and countering violent extremism through resilience building and the promotion of global citizenship, tolerance and respect for diversity. Over 60 religious scholars participated in the webinar.

Vice Chancellor of IUM Dr. Ibrahim Zakariyya Moosa, Sheikh Ibrahim Ahmed, Consultant of IUM Dr. Abdul Haqq Baker, and Dr. Adil Rasheed from IDSA conducted the sessions during the webinar. The webinar concluded with an discussion forum for participants to discuss how they, as religious scholars, could work to counter the menace of violent ideologies and build a more cohesive community.

This webinar is a continuation of the serial engagements with religious scholars, with two major workshops conducted in 2019.

NCTC Official Participates in “Media Operations” Program Conducted by the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst

19-22 April 2021

Head of Research, Publications and Communication of NCTC participated in the “Media Operations” program conducted by the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. The 4-day online workshop focused on enhancing good practices in military media relations, using social media channels to best effect, and best practices in dealing with the media as a whole.

Media and communication are a vital aspect of the government’s response to terrorism and violent extremism as counter terrorist and counter violent

extremism effort relies a lot on accessing and garnering public support as much as direct action. Given today’s changing mediascape, government agencies need to use media as a tool to spread their message and increase awareness among the public about the ill-effects of terrorism and violent extremism, especially in a small society such as the Maldives.

NCTC Official Participates in “Scenario-Based Dialogue Around PVE-Related Policy Making” Discussions organized by UNDP Regional Bureau For South Asia

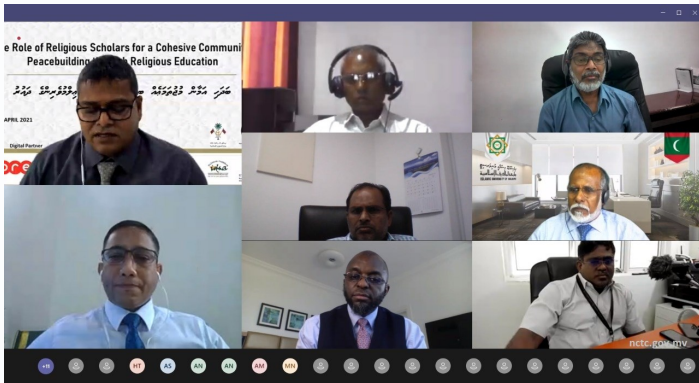
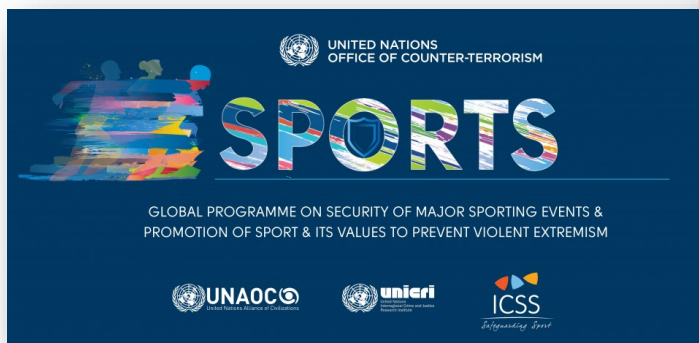
21-22 April 2021

Head of Awareness and Programmes of NCTC participated in an online discussion on “Scenario-Based Dialogue Around PVE-Related Policy Making” organized by UNDP Regional Bureau for South Asia. The 2-day program was attended by multiple government agencies.

The sessions covered policy discussions based around rehabilitation and reintegration of returning FTFs as well as establish new partnerships between the government and civil society organizations including media and academia.

Rehabilitation and reintegration are one of the most vital components of PVE as countries across the globe observe an increase in returning FTF

from war-torn countries. Such an effort, is beyond the scope of government alone and demands a whole-of-nation approach to curb the menace plaguing the world and our society.

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Please tell us how we can do better

National Counter
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