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<http://www.rsf.org/maldives-leading-journalist-released-but-09-01-2012,41646.html>

Asia - Maldives

Blogger freed

Leading journalist released but his blog remains banned

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Reporters Without Borders notes the decision by a Maldivian court to free the blogger **Ismail Kilath "Hilath" Rasheed**, arrested on 14 December four weeks after his blog was [closed down on the government's orders](#).

"We welcome the release of Hilath Rasheed, although belated," the press freedom organization said. "Religion is becoming a taboo subject in the Maldives and media workers are under threat of imprisonment every time it is debated."

"The journalist's unlawful detention is a reminder that it is impossible to establish a totally free press so long as the government subjects itself to religious extremism as displayed by the Islamic affairs ministry."

Rasheed's blog was closed on 19 November on the grounds that it contained anti-Islamic material. He was subsequently [arrested and taken into custody](#) for taking part in a peaceful demonstration in favour of greater religious tolerance. No charges were brought against him.

His detention was extended twice but the investigation into his involvement in the protest produced no conclusion.
