

## **1000 Days since Rilwan's Kidnapping!**

He was kidnapped. No other way around that truth. God knowing, he's also human, born unto this land, both a Muslim and a Maldivian. He is well taught, and a journalist to boot. Yet, it has been exactly 1000 days without knowing his whereabouts; whether he is dead or alive, the current government has been unable to explain.

Even when this innocent victim's family has counted a 1000 days since his kidnapping without relief, are they not allowed to call out on the failure and negligence of the authorities? Still, the family continues to firmly hold onto the hope of seeing him being returned alive; Rilwan's whereabouts maybe known only to the perpetrators, but God is all-knowing, nothing escapes his knowledge, be it acts in the open or in secrecy.

No matter how the incident may be portrayed, there're countless facts and evidence pointing to what truly happened on that day. Sadly, even after a 1000 days, apart from confirming the narrative of Rilwan being forced into a red car, and matching the DNA from the scene to his, the police have failed to report back any progress to his family. Even this reinforces the notion that the police are not investigating the case seriously.

What can be said with conviction though, is that Rilwan was kidnapped in Hulhumalé. As such, it is completely unacceptable when the police patrols there at the time, claim not to be aware of, or to not have received an indication of any such incident occurring. If such an act of transgression can be carried out without them being none the wiser, what point is there to these patrols?

While there're enough reasons for Rilwan's family to label this incident premeditated, there's also room for them to call out negligence on part of the police on duty there that ill-fated night.

Whilst an eyewitness immediately informed the police of Rilwan being held hostage at gunpoint from his apartment and being whisked away in a red car; apart from collecting said knife from the scene, no further action was taken, leaving no doubt about the level of negligence on behalf of all officers on duty that night. To this day, no action has been taken against the suspects except for being brought in for questioning, and the fact that they continue to roam free, brings further grief to the family.

Wherever the government has vested interests in, we see cases being investigated and prosecuted within an astoundingly brief period of time. Whereas, when this level of commitment is not afforded to cases of ordinary citizens like Rilwan's, there's nothing more left to say. After Rilwan's kidnapping, his family, friends and likewise concerned, took to the streets hoping to bring attention and justice to his plight; today, the person who was at the very forefront of this movement, his best friend Yameen Rasheed, lies dead, butchered mercilessly, after numerous death threats, once again unheard by the authorities. Misery without an end, tragedies one after the other, leaving the stark reminder that in this country, there is no protection to the ones who do not follow a particular doctrine.

This is why Rilwan's family finds the government authorities incapable and incompetent to find Rilwan. Rilwan and Yameen brought such tragedies unto themselves, only when they decided to address the underlying corruption in this country. Even after realizing the extent of corruption in the underbelly of this society, the acute dangers posed by the individuals pulling the strings, they refused to bow down. The end result was as such. A 1000 days since then.

Their families remain steadfast, praying for Rilwan and Yameen.