Indian embassy shelters ex-Maldives president - Tehran Times

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Mohamed Nasheed, the former Maldives president, has taken refuge inside the Indian embassy in the capital, Male, after a local magistrate ordered his arrest. “Mindful of my own security and stability in the Indian Ocean, I have taken refuge at the Indian High Commission in Maldives,” Nasheed wrote on Twitter on Wednesday as armed police stood outside the diplomatic compound.

Syed Akbaruddin, the Indian foreign ministry spokesman, said India has not decided whether to grant Nasheed refuge at the embassy.

The new crisis comes amid more political turbulence in the Indian Ocean island nation a year after Nasheed, a former pro-democracy campaigner, was ousted by violent demonstrations and a mutiny by police and security forces.

A local magistrate's court, where Nasheed is on trial for abusing his powers, issued an arrest warrant for him on Monday after he failed to appear for a hearing at the weekend.

A legal challenge to the arrest order in a higher court failed on Wednesday, his party said.

The court charged that he illegally ordered the detention of a senior judge, a move that led to his ouster from power last year.

Ahmed Naseem, Nasheed's former foreign minister, said Nasheed would remain inside the embassy until there was an agreement among all political parties that candidates would be free to campaign before the September 7 elections.

The former president's supporters believe the trial is a politically motivated attempt to prevent him from leading his Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) into upcoming polls.

A conviction would disqualify him from politics.

(Source: Agencies)