Worsening Indo-Maldives Ties

What is the issue?

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Various actions of Maldivian administration has put Maldives on a collision course with India.

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What are the reasons behind worsening ties?

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- There has been a series of setbacks in India-Maldives ties, starting from March 2015.
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- Recently, India criticised the Maldives government for imprisonment of former president and Chief justice for an alleged plot to unseat the then President.
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- India has also showed discontent over the conduct of polls, treatment of the judiciary and, and declaration of a state of emergency.
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- Even the presidential election which India has been calling for is a point of contention.
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- Indian administration cancelled a visit to Maldives in a show of disapproval of actions of Maldivian administration.
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- The strain is now evident in strategic relations and people to people engagement which had been the strongest in the past.
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- Maldives is bolstered by a newly strengthened relationship with china and showed no inclination to heed India’s advice.
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What are the impacts of the worsening ties?

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- The Maldives has conveyed to India that it will not extend the lease of Indian helicopters or the visas of personnel manning them.
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- The worsening signals between the two nations has marked downturn in defence cooperation between the two countries, which normally coordinate maritime and EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone) patrols together.
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- Meanwhile, hundreds of Indians offered employment in the Maldives at resorts, hospitals and colleges have been denied work visas for the past few months.
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What measures needs to be taken?

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- Maldivian government must reconsider its policies and revive its co-operation with India.
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- India too must pause to consider why relations have soured so badly.
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- India’s vocal protests on democratic rights in the Maldives have been at variance with the past policy of taking a more muted line in public while encouraging democracy in official conversations.
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- India’s interventions in the island nation always aimed at strengthening the government there, with any misgivings conveyed only through quiet diplomacy.
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Source: The Hindu

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