

Brief Profile of Mr. Ahmed Saleem

Born on 26 May 1949 in Male, the capital of Maldives, Mr. Saleem was educated in the Maldives and in India.

Mr. Saleem joined the Maldivian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1968. He had a distinguished career in the Maldivian Foreign Service spanning for over 26 years during which he was, among others, Secretary, Head of the Multilateral Division and Chief of Protocol, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Mr. Saleem served at the High Commission of Maldives in Sri Lanka and the Permanent Mission of Maldives in New York. He also served as the Maldivian Government's first Alternative Governor for the World Bank, IDA and ADB when he was deputed to the Ministry of Finance for one year in 1977. From 1990 to 1993, he served as the first Director from Maldives at the SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu.

Mr. Saleem served as the 11th Secretary-General of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) with effect from 2012 to 2014. Mr. Saleem was one of the original nine members when the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives (HRCM) was first established by a Presidential decree in December 2003. Subsequently, He served as President of the HRCM from 2006 to 2010 after it became an autonomous body by law.

A regular writer on international and regional issues, Mr. Saleem became the first Editor of the Chronicle of the United Nations Association of Maldives (UNAM) and the SAARC Newsletter, published by the SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu. His contribution to furthering public interest in and awareness of international, regional and social matters and in the advancement of the cause of human rights, is widely recognized in the Maldives.

H. E. Mr. Saleem is married and has four children.

Ahmed Saleem

Ahmed Saleem is a Maldivian diplomat.

He is the eleventh Secretary-General of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), comprising Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The Association's Secretariat is based in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Saleem assumed the Secretary-Generalship of SAARC on 12 March 2012.

Early Years and Education

Saleem was educated in Male', Maldives and in New Delhi, India.

Diplomatic Career

Saleem joined the Maldivian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1968.

He had a distinguished career spanning for over 26 years, during which he served as Controller of Immigration and Emigration, Chief of Protocol and Head of the Multilateral Division at the Ministry, among others.

As a career diplomat, Saleem served at the Maldives' High Commission in Sri Lanka and its Permanent Mission in New York. During his deputation to the Ministry of Finance for one year in 1977, he had the privilege of serving as his Government's first Alternate Governor for the World Bank, International Development Association (IDA) and Asian Development Bank (ADB). From 1990 to 1993, he served as the first Director from Maldives at the SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu.

Democracy and Human Rights

Saleem has been a strong advocate of democracy and human rights.

During his Presidency of the Human Rights Commission of Maldives (HRCM), Saleem played a crucial role in raising awareness about the values of democracy and human rights in the country, which saw democracy in 2008.

Saleem was one of the original nine members when the HRCM was first established by the Presidential decree on 10 December 2003, five years before the first democratic constitution came into force in the Maldives. Subsequently in 2006, Saleem was appointed by the Maldivian Parliament as the President of the newly constituted HRCM,

now a fully autonomous body under the Maldivian law and in full conformity with the Paris Principles. He served in that capacity until August 2010.

Having contributed many writings both in Dhivehi and English, Saleem's role in the promotion of democracy and human rights in the Maldives is widely recognized.

The fact that the first HRCM was established five years before democracy came to the country made it extremely difficult for the Commission to carry out its mandatory functions. Maldives, a country that has never ever experienced democracy in its entire history, was not quite ready to embrace democracy and therefore criticizing or condemning the Government on any issue was tantamount to committing a crime that prompted verbal and physical attacks and threats on members of the HRCM. Partly as a result, most of the members of the HRCM resigned on one pretext or the other. However, Saleem was one of the two members, who refused to quit and remained until the HRCM became an autonomous body under the Maldivian law and in full conformity with the Paris Principles in November 2006.

It was the HRCM which taught the Maldivians that they had a right to free speech and also criticize the Government. Meetings held by the HRCM for advocating human rights and the rule of law and for creating a culture of dialogue among the newly created political parties, were welcomed by the opposition, while the Government resisted them.

HRCM also played a crucial role in internationalizing the human rights atrocities that had taken place in jails. An uprising by convicts in the major jail close to the capital of Malé which resulted in the brutal killing of one of the inmates by the police prompted the anti-government demonstrations, paving the way for the Maldives to turn into a democratic country in 2008.

Secretary-General of SAARC

Established in December 1985, SAARC is the regional grouping of eight Member States in South Asia. Its primary objective is to promote the welfare of its peoples and to improve their quality of life through regional cooperation.

A strong believer of regional cooperation, Saleem took over as the Secretary-General of SAARC in March 2012.

Saleem firmly believes that SAARC is the best thing to have happened to South Asia. He holds the conviction that SAARC is the only vehicle that can contribute to peace and harmony in the region through effective economic integration.

Career Highlights

There are several firsts to Saleem's credit.

Following Maldives' independence in 1965, Saleem was one among the first batch of diplomats to have joined the Maldivian Foreign Ministry. In 1977, he was the first Alternative Governor of Maldives for the World Bank, International Development Association (IDA) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) during his deputation to the Ministry of Finance in 1977. He was the first Director from Maldives to have served the SAARC Secretariat from 1990 to 1993. He was the first Editor of the Chronicle of the United Nations Association of Maldives (UNAM). He was also the first Editor of SAARCNEWS, an official newsletter of SAARC during his assignment at the SAARC Secretariat. He was also the first ever member approved by the Maldivian Parliament for an independent commission in the Maldives.

Personal life


Saleem was born on 26 May 1949 in Male', the capital of Maldives.

Saleem is married to Ayesha Saleem. He has two sons and two daughters.

He has been a keen sportsman throughout his life. At national level, he played competitions in football, tennis and cricket. Even today, he follows these sports and plays tennis regularly.

A prolific writer, he has contributed many articles on regional and international affairs.


One of the articles written by Saleem in 1995, namely, "The Music has begun to change!" about two Maldivian women illegally arrested by the police in the State of Kerala in South India was carried by many newspapers around the region. The article brought to light the sufferings of these two elderly ladies, leading eventually to their release.


 REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

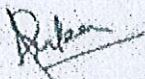
NATIONAL IDENTITY CARD IF 2,185 222-27 1

Number: **A010417** 2011

Name	Ahmed Saleem
Sex	Male
Address	Malé
Mobile	9940 1110



2H0874210


 Signature / Finger Print

	Common Name AC 111 Ahmed Saleem 2011
	Blood Group 133 18 NA Expires on 13/03/2022