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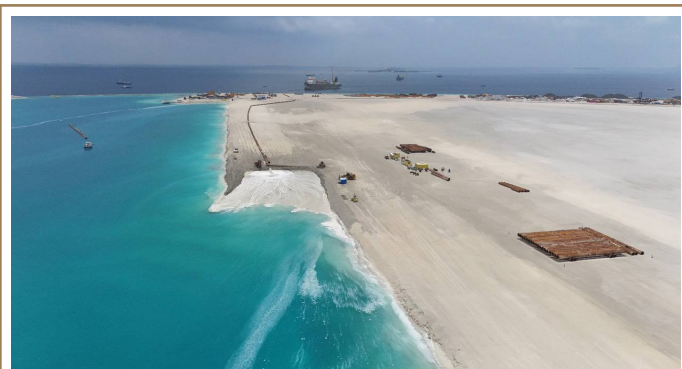
### The President designates Gdh Thinadhoo Council as “Thinadhoo City Council” and Secretariat of the Thinadhoo Council as “Secretariat of the Thinadhoo City Council”

President Dr Mohamed Muizzu has designated the Huvadhoo Atoll Thinadhoo Council as the “Thinadhoo City Council” and the Secretariat of the Thinadhoo Council as the “Secretariat of the Thinadhoo City Council.”

The President made the announcement under Section (d) of Article 51 of the Decentralization Act (Act No. 07/2010), which will take effect from March 26, 2024 onwards. The announcement was issued via a directive from the President’s Office.

The Thinadhoo City Council Office will now be referred to in Dhivehi as the “ދިވެހިރާއްޖޭގެ ސަރުކާރުގެ ސިއްރެޓަރިއާޓް” per the change. According to the directive, all correspondence addressed to the Thinadhoo City Council shall use the number 415, per the numbering system for state agencies.

SOURCE : President's Office



The reclamation work of K. Gulhifalhu is currently in progress. Total 16.9 million cubic meters of sand has been pumped out of the planned 18 million cubic meters.

### Gov't prepares to offer Hiyaavahi Finance Scheme

The Ministry of Housing, Land, and Urban Development has signed an agreement with the Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) to offer low-interest loans for housing construction, in line with President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu’s commitment. Minister Ali Haidar Ahmed and the new Managing Director of HDFC, Ahmed Zeenad, signed the agreement of the venture.

This initiative, named the “Hiyaavehi Finance Scheme,” aims to provide financial support for the construction of individual homes. Minister Ali Haidar provided an overview of the scheme, highlighting President Dr. Muizzu’s pledge to offer low-interest loans. He outlined two categories for loan distribution, with one targeting individuals in Male’ City and other areas designated by President for development as urban centres and another for residents of other islands or regions.



Minister Haidar explained that individuals owning land in Male’ City and urban centers can receive loans of up to USD 195 thousand, with a repayment period of 25 years. Meanwhile, those in other areas are eligible for loans of USD 65 thousand under the same repayment terms.

He emphasised the enhancements made to the loan schemes compared to the previous administration, noting an increase in the maximum loan amount from USD 45 thousand to USD 65 thousand, a reduction in the interest rate from 6% to 5%, and an extension of the repayment period from 20 to 25 years.

The Minister announced that priority would be given to individuals with land plots in urban centers and areas outside Male’ City for loan disbursement. Loan applications will soon be open for residents of urban centers, accessible through the Ministry of Housing’s portal. After a screening process conducted by HDFC, eligible applicants will receive the loans.

President Dr. Muizzu's initiative to provide loans to landowners aims to alleviate financial barriers to home construction, offering support to individuals in need.

SOURCE : PSM





## Expansion of Aasandha healthcare scheme to UAE and Thailand announced



Minister of Social and Family Development Dr. Aishath Shiham has revealed plans to utilise this year’s budget to extend the government’s universal healthcare insurance scheme, Aasandha, to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Thailand. The announcement was made in response to inquiries raised during a parliamentary session.

Parliamentarian Rozaina Adam sought clarification on the availability of Aasandha services in the UAE and Thailand, prompting Minister Aishath Shiham to confirm President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu’s commitment to expanding Aasandha to these countries. She noted that discussions and preparations are currently underway to facilitate this extension.

In addition to the expansion plans, the minister addressed concerns regarding the inefficiencies within the Aasandha insurance system. Despite a budget allocation of USD 65 million in 2023, expenditures soared to USD 150 million by the year-end, with over USD 65 million spent solely on medications.

Furthermore, the ministry highlighted the exorbitant prices of medications in the Maldives, citing statistics from the World Bank. She emphasised that prices in the Maldives are 70 times higher than those in neighboring countries and six times higher than global market rates.

SOURCE : PSM

## BML announces banking hours for last ten days of Ramadan

Bank of Maldives (BML) has announced its operating schedule for the final ten days of Ramadan, accommodating the religious observances of its customers. During the last ten days of Ramadan, BML branches and service centers will be open from 1000hrs to 1200hrs to serve customers’ banking needs.

Throughout the entire month of Ramadan, BML will maintain 24-hour self-service banking centers across the country, allowing customers to perform essential transactions such as deposits, withdrawals, and remittances. Additionally, basic banking services will be available through cash agents located in residential areas, ensuring accessibility for all customers.

Customers can access BML’s services through various channels, including the bank’s contact center, live agents on Ayaa and Facebook Messenger, the BML mobile app, WhatsApp, Viber, and the bank’s website.

During the last ten days of Ramadan, BML will process various transactions daily, including remittances, bank cheques, payrolls, bulk transactions, local transactions, and payments, provided they are submitted by 1000hrs.

It’s important to note that the operating hours for the last ten days of Ramadan have been adjusted due to their significance as public holidays.

SOURCE : PSM

## Relocation of water and sewage network on land plots underway



The relocation of water and sewage systems beneath allocated plots of land in Hulhumale’ Phase II has commenced.

This collaborative effort between the Housing Development Corporation (HDC) and the Male’ Water and Sewage Company (MWSC) was inaugurated by Managing Directors Ibrahim Fazul Rasheed and Abdul Matheen Mohamed.

Ibrahim Fazul Rasheed highlighted the importance of this initiative in expediting the provision of housing to households. He emphasised HDC’s commitment to facilitating faster development while ensuring essential infrastructure is in place. The total project cost is estimated at USD 12.95 million.

Abdul Matheen Mohamed stressed the necessity of placing water and sewage networks

in residential areas before plot allocations. He underscored the importance of completing all road-related work before allocating plots, emphasizing a need for correct prioritization, particularly regarding the Binveriya Scheme.

HDC has also undertaken efforts to clean and clear the allocated land plots, underscoring its commitment to efficient and organised development.

SOURCE : PSM

“Aasandha will not be restricted to medical facilities in specific countries in a specific region, but will be expanded to countries that offer better services”

His Excellency President  
Dr. Mohamed Muizzu





## First high-speed train for Maldivian pilgrims travel from Mecca to Medina

Maldivian pilgrims embarking on the journey from Mecca to Medina have utilised high-speed trains, marking a significant leap forward in pilgrimage transportation.

Traditionally, the journey from Mecca to Medina has been long and challenging. However, with the introduction of high-speed trains, pilgrims can now traverse the distance swiftly and comfortably, revolutionizing the pilgrimage experience.



The Hajj Corporation Limited, recognising the importance of providing relief to pilgrims, has spearheaded the initiative to utilise high-speed trains for pilgrimage travel. President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu has provided instructions to prioritise the comfort and convenience of pilgrims.

With the implementation of high-speed rail, the arduous 7-hour bus journey from Mecca to Medina has been dramatically shortened to a mere 2 hours.

Pilgrims undertaking Umrah during Ramadan were the first to experience the convenience of high-speed train travel between Mecca and Medina. These trains offer spacious interiors and top-notch amenities, ensuring a comfortable and quality transport experience for pilgrims.

The Hajj Corporation anticipates that the introduction of high-speed trains will significantly alleviate the burdens faced by pilgrims. In the past, long bus journeys posed challenges such as the spread of fever and disease, difficulties in prayer and hygiene, and inadequate cleanliness at rest stops.

President Muizzu's vision encompasses providing high-quality and convenient services while simultaneously reducing the cost associated with undertaking the sacred pilgrimages of Hajj and Umrah.

SOURCE : PSM



## Nilandhoo Airport land reclamation awarded to MTCC

The Maldives Transport and Contracting Company (MTCC) has been awarded the land reclamation and coastal conservation at Nilandhoo Airport, Faafu Atoll.

The formal agreement for the project was signed by Minister of Construction and Infrastructure Dr. Abdulla Muththalib and Chief Executive Officer at MTCC Abdulla Ziyad.

A total of 42.6 hectares of land have been allocated for the construction of Nilandhoo Airport. In conjunction with this, 2,089 meters of large stone revetment and 1,400 meters of geo bag revetment will be implemented as part of the coastal conservation efforts. MTCC is tasked with completing the project within 390 days.

President of Nilandhoo Council Ali Ahmed expressed optimism about the project, stating that it would not only rejuvenate the area but also significantly enhance the quality of life for residents. He emphasised Nilandhoo's importance as a central hub for public facilities, highlighting the anticipated improvement in travel accessibility with the establishment of the airport. He extended gratitude to President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu for spearheading this initiative, recognising its substantial benefits for the community.

The Ministry of Construction and Infrastructure has commissioned MTCC to conduct surveys and environmental impact assessments (EIA) as part of the land reclamation project. The project commenced on January 4, with a completion deadline of 120 days. Included in the government's budget, the Nilandhoo Airport project has a total cost of USD 24.45 million.

SOURCE : PSM

## HDC signs with CMEC to develop infrastructure in Hulhumale' Phase III



The Housing Development Corporation (HDC) has formalised a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with China Machinery Engineering Company (CMEC) to overhaul the infrastructure of Hulhumale' Phase III, aiming to introduce advanced developments to improve connectivity and sustainability.

As per the terms of the agreement, HDC will proceed with the completion of the electricity network installation and the deployment of the GPO network to provide telephone and network services connectivity to residences within Hulhumale' Phase III. Additionally, there will be a concentrated effort on road infrastructure enhancements to reinforce fire safety protocols, alongside improvements to the water supply and sewerage systems.

The signing ceremony was conducted by HDC's Managing Director, Ibrahim Fazul Rasheed, and CMEC's General Manager and Chief Representative, Jian Houjun.

SOURCE : PSM