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Collaborative efforts vital to protect biodiversity



The International Day for Biological Diversity is observed annually, aiming to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues. The primary objective of celebrating this day is to exert collaborative efforts to protect all animal species.

The theme for this year is: Be Part of the Plan. The theme was chosen to emphasise the need for a collective and coordinated approach to address and reverse the loss of biodiversity and supporting the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. It further encourages the identification of measures to be implemented to protect species at individual and community levels, in collaboration with businesses and the government authorities.

The Maldives is a nation which comprises a vast biodiversity and a good environment. As such, the coral reefs and lagoons of the nation covers an area of 8,900 sq km, contributing to five percent of the coral reefs and lagoons in the world. The Maldives has the seventh-largest coral reefs and lagoons in the world.

While the ocean constitutes to 99% of the Maldives, it is also the home for over 1,100 species of fishes and 180 species living within the corals. Records additionally indicate that over 580 plants and vast variety of 170 species of birds live in the Maldives.

However, the Maldives has been experiencing persistent coral bleaching, exacerbated by rising sea levels. Aiming to address this issue, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recently announced a temporary halt on permits for developmental projects that may impact the reefs directly or indirectly. These projects include land reclamation, reef excavation, sand disposal on beaches, and other initiatives involving machinery near the reefs.

Under the efforts to protect the marine ecosystem, President Dr. Mohamed

Muizzu submitted a proposal seeking parliamentary approval for the Maldives to participate in the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction convention. The Parliament granted approval to partake in the treaty in the General Assembly held on May 13. The government has stressed the significance of small nations like the Maldives to participate in such international conventions to protect the marine ecosystems sustainably. It further stated that this is by far the most important initiative taken to protect the ocean and its resources.

Collaborative efforts from individuals and government bodies are vital to protect the biodiversity.

SOURCE : PSM

Development Bank of Maldives to be operational by July



Minister of Economic Development and Trade Mohamed Saeed has announced that the Development Bank of Maldives (DBM) will be operational by July. These remarks were made during a programme aired on PSM News.

Providing insight into the development of DBM, Minister Saeed underscored the current lack of financial instruments necessary for further economic revitalization, highlighting that few banks facilitate funding to strategic industries, and funds for tourism-related purposes are generally sourced from external foreign parties.

Moreover, the minister reiterated that the development of the bank has been initiated within the first 100 days of President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu assuming office, in line with his presidential pledge. The company has been formally registered, and finance-related works are currently in motion, with the required license expected to be received by next week.

Notably, DBM was established on May 16 in accordance with the presidential powers conferred upon President Dr. Muizzu. The primary purpose of establishing this bank is to facilitate investments for sustainable socio-economic development in alignment with governmental policies. It further aims to alleviate challenges in funding Public Sector Investment Programs (PSIP) through syndicated financing and attract global investments in foreign currency through the Maldivian banking system.

SOURCE : PSM





Maldives and China to facilitate research for new hospital



The Maldives and China have signed a letter of exchange to conduct a feasibility study and research for developing a 100-bed hospital in Villimale’.

The letter of exchange was officially signed by the Minister of Construction and Infrastructure, Dr. Abdulla Muththalib and the Ambassador of China to the Maldives, Wang Lixin. Moreover, the development of the hospital is a project provided as free aid from the Chinese administration during President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu’s official visit to China.

Speaking to PSM News, Minister Muththalib underscored that the letter of exchange would facilitate research on the project’s timeline, design, and necessary resources, with practical work expected to start early next year and completion anticipated within two years.

During an interview with PSM News, Minister of Health, Dr. Abdulla Khaleel highlighted that the hospital would introduce new facilities, revitalizing the health sector significantly. The hospital will include a special center for long-term medical care and elderly patients, providing necessary treatment until full recovery. Special care will also be given to injuries from diving activities and other specialized treatments.

Additionally, the decision to establish a hospital in Villimale’ was influenced by the substantial population increase and the need to provide convenient healthcare services to residents and neighboring islands. Currently, the Villimale’ hospital has only five beds and three consultation rooms, often requiring individuals to seek treatment in Male’ City. Villimale’ has a population of approximately 15,000 people.

SOURCE : PSM

MNDF launches Advanced EOD Course at Southern Command



The Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) has launched the Advanced Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Course at the MNDF Southern Area Command.

The course was inaugurated by Colonel Mohamed Jamshad, Commander of the Southern Area Command. The ceremony featured the presence of Lieutenant Colonel Chamika Jagoda, Head of Training for the Sri Lanka Army Engineers, alongside the course instructors.

A total of 27 soldiers are enrolled in the one-month course, which is taught by experienced Sri Lankan Army Engineers. The Level Three Advanced EOD course covers comprehensive topics, including conventional ammunition disposal, explosive ordnance disposal, safe handling and disposal of various hazardous materials, and advanced identification and maintenance of these materials.

The course is jointly conducted by the MNDF and the Sri Lankan Army. It aims to bolster military cooperation between the two nations.

SOURCE : PSM

“ It is important for us to ensure that Maldives stands on its own feet and remains self-reliant, ”
His Excellency President
Dr. Mohamed Muizzu

Gov’t: Collaborations with China and India Set to Enhance MVR Value

Minister of Economic Development and Trade Mohamed Saeed has announced that collaborations with China and India are expected to enhance the value of the Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR).

Speaking to PSM News, Minister Saeed highlighted that China imports approximately

USD700 million worth of goods annually from the Maldives. Similarly, he said that India’s imports from the Maldives amount to USD1.5 billion each year. Additionally, Minister Saeed mentioned ongoing discussions to facilitate payments in Chinese and Indian currencies through Maldivian banks. He also said that the initiative aims to reduce the dependency on United States Dollars (USD) for importing goods, thereby strengthening the MVR.

Furthermore, Minister Saeed said that the Maldives has recently introduced China’s

WeChat Pay service via the Bank of Maldives (BML). He said that the upcoming launch of India’s RuPay service is anticipated to further bolster the MVR. He also emphasised that addressing the dollar issue and reinforcing the MVR is a top priority for the current administration.

SOURCE : PSM





Civil Society Organisations to be offered financial assistance



The Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Information, and Arts has announced a new initiative to provide financial assistance to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) for community empowerment projects. This initiative invites CSOs to submit proposals for financial aid, provided they are registered under the associations act.

The programme aims to offer not only financial support but also technical expertise and access to the ministry’s resources.

Moreover, Minister of Youth Empowerment, Information and Arts Ibrahim Waheed highlighted that this long-awaited opportunity is part of a broader effort to support small,

medium, and large-scale projects through comprehensive regulations.

Furthermore, proposals must be submitted by July 4, 2024, at 1300hrs via email to csogrant@youth.gov.mv. Submissions should also include a copy of the organization’s registration, national identity cards of project leaders, council office documents, and any relevant project-related documents if it is part of an island development plan.

The initiative’s central purpose is to enhance the role of financial organizations in national development by recognizing and supporting their efforts in community empowerment and societal development.

SOURCE : PSM

MACL cautions against potential disruptions in flight schedules

The Maldives Airport Company Limited (MACL) has cautioned travellers to be vigilant to the potential alterations in flight schedules as a result of the severe unfavourable conditions.

The Maldives has been experiencing highly adverse weather conditions, with the ongoing rainy season compounded by the cyclone brewing in the Bay of Bengal. Consequently, the nation is consistently subjected to powerful gusts of wind and heavy precipitation. The Maldives Meteorological Service (Met Office) has issued an orange alert, forecasting gusts to reach 60 miles per hour amid rough seas.

Stressing that the unfavourable weather conditions may cause disruptions in flight schedules, MACL urged travellers to verify no changes are brought to the flight schedules before heading to the airport in case of a potential flight delay or cancellation. Encouraging travellers to complete the check-in procedures in advance, it further cautioned seafarers travelling to the airport against the adverse weather conditions.

The MET Office have issued severe weather forecasts until May 25.

SOURCE : PSM



Gov’t to complete scientific study for Decentralisation Act reform soon

The Ministry of Cities, Local Government, and Public Works has announced that the scientific study aimed at reforming the Decentralisation Act will be completed soon.

Speaking to PSM News, Minister of State for Cities, Local Government, and Public Works Moosa Fathuhee Adam explained that the Decentralisation Act, initially enacted in 2010, has undergone ten amendments. He, however, noted that these amendments have not fully transformed the law, as changes have often been made without scientific research, based on the preferences of individuals or governments. Consequently, he said that the government now intends to amend the Decentralisation of Administrative Areas Act based on thorough scientific research.

Additionally, State Minister Fathuhee said that the completion of these scientific studies will reveal the necessary changes across various areas. Over the past six months, he said that the government, through meetings held by President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu and the cities ministry with local councils in the atolls, has identified numerous issues.

Furthermore, State Minister Fathuhee said that the issues include budget constraints faced by the councils, challenges encountered by Women’s Development Committees (WDCs), and difficulties in land allocation by the councils. He also emphasised that efforts are underway to address these challenges.

As part of its plan to enhance the decentralisation system, the government has decided to construct 50 council offices simultaneously. In addition, discussions have commenced regarding allocating a portion of tax revenue to councils. The government has also resolved the land allocation issues faced by the councils on the islands.

SOURCE : PSM