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## Maldives-USAID discusses enhancing existing cooperation

Maldives and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has held discussions on enhancing existing cooperation. The discussions were held as part of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Moosa Zameer's ongoing visit to the United States.

As part of his visit to the U.S., Minister Zameer met with the Administrator of USAID Samantha Power.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs disclosed that the productive meeting saw discussions on enhancing existing cooperation. Furthermore, the minister conveyed gratitude for the ongoing support through USAID. The minister and the Administrator held discussions on future endeavours.

Minister Zameer is currently in Washington. In addition to the USAID Administrator, Zameer will be meeting with the U.S. Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, where he will hold discussions on bilateral cooperation between the Maldives and the United States.

In addition to this, Minister Zameer will participate in an interactive discussion at the prestigious Council of Foreign Relations. He will also engage with the Maldivian community in Washington D.C., fostering stronger ties with expatriates.



Following his engagement in Washington D.C., Minister Zameer will travel to New York City. Here, he will meet with the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, and the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Li Junhua. These discussions aim to bolster the Maldives' collaboration with the UN on various global and regional issues.

Minister Zameer's itinerary in New York also includes meetings with local tour operators and travel advisors to promote tourism to the Maldives. Additionally, he will connect with the Maldivian communities residing in New York and New Jersey to discuss their concerns and strengthen community relations. The minister's official visit to the United States which began on June 24, aims to strengthen the Maldives-US partnership and reaffirm commitment to multilateralism through meetings with senior US government and United Nations officials. He is scheduled to conclude the trip on June 27.

Accompanying Minister Zameer on this official visit are Secretary for Bilateral Affairs Dr. Hala Hameed and Senior Undersecretary Hassan Hussain Shihab.

SOURCE : Ministry of Foreign Affairs

## The President decides to implement policy on cost reduction, revenue growth and medium-term revenue strategy

President Dr Mohamed Muizzu has decided to implement a policy focused on cost reduction, revenue growth, and a medium-term revenue strategy, following recommendations from his Cabinet.

The decision was reached after thorough discussions on a paper presented by the Ministry of Finance during the latest Cabinet meeting.

In addition to this policy implementation, the President assigned a Cabinet sub-committee to oversee and facilitate efforts aimed at diversifying the Maldivian economy and exploring avenues for revenue growth.

SOURCE : The President's Office



The Minister of Foreign Affairs Moosa Zameer and Administrator of USAID Samantha Power





## The President decides to implement the "Malé Fahi Programme" in line with the recommendations of the Cabinet

President Dr Mohamed Muizzu has decided to implement the "Malé Fahi Programme" in line with the recommendations of the Cabinet. This initiative aims to effectively address the congestion caused in the greater Malé region due to the increase of land vehicles occupying the streets.

The decision was made following discussions on a paper submitted by the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation during yesterday's Cabinet meeting.

The President additionally decided on adopting an action plan comprising shared timelines amongst responsible institutions involved in implementing the "Malé Fahi Programme".

*SOURCE : The President's Office*



## Sports minister expresses importance of Sports Fund

Minister of Sports Abdulla Rafiu has emphasised the necessity of establishing a Sports Fund to enhance sports development in the Maldives.

In an exclusive interview with PSM News, Minister Rafiu underscored the increasing importance of the Sports Fund, emphasising its role in expanding athlete training programs and supporting the existing Arutha program. He highlighted that scholarships for athlete training will also be administered through the fund.

Furthermore, Minister Rafiu explained that contributions from state-owned enterprises will be directed into the Sports Fund. Additionally, the fund will engage in investments, with the returns from these investments reinvested back into sports development. He also assured transparency in the management of the Sports Fund, noting that it will be utilised to promote sports effectively and responsibly.

*SOURCE : PSM*

## President states majority of Rasmale' to be reclaimed by year-end



President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu has confirmed that the majority of land for Rasmale', Kaafu Atoll, will be reclaimed by the end of this year. During the inauguration ceremony of the People's National Congress (PNC) House, President Muizzu emphasised the significance of the Rasmale' project, which he has prioritised following the land reclamation project at Fushidhiggaru Falhu.

Initially launched on December 18, 2023, the Rasmale' project aims to address the national housing crisis. Although temporarily halted due to global coral bleaching concerns, President Muizzu announced that the project will resume in July, with a goal of completing the dredging of 1,110 hectares by December.

In his speech, President Muizzu also highlighted other ongoing land reclamation projects, including Hulhumale' Phase III, Gulhifalhu, and Giraavarufalhu. He reiterated the government's commitment to launching additional land reclamation projects nationwide, ensuring that no individual will face housing challenges by the end of his tenure.

The Rasmale' project is designed to accommodate 65,000 housing units, involving the reclamation of 1,153 hectares in Fushidhiggaru Falhu. The plan includes the allocation of 11,000 land plots and 26,000 flats.

Moreover, Rasmale' is set to become the first zero-carbon city in the Indian Ocean. The government views this project as a transformative endeavor, both technologically and environmentally. President Muizzu expressed confidence that the Rasmale' project will significantly advance the nation's housing and environmental sustainability goals.

*SOURCE : PSM*





## The Cabinet recommends signing the Samoa Agreement with the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS)



resident Dr Mohamed Muizzu, upon recommendation from the Cabinet, has decided to submit the text of the Samoa Agreement with the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) to the Parliament for approval.

The decision was made following discussions on a paper submitted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during yesterday's Cabinet meeting.

The Samoa Agreement is the overarching framework for EU relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. It focuses on six key priority areas to tackle the main challenges over the next two decades. These priorities include human rights, democracy, and governance; peace and security; human and social development; inclusive, sustainable economic growth and development; environmental sustainability and climate change; and migration and mobility.

By signing the agreement and becoming a full member of the OACPS, the Maldives would be able to access the opportunities provided by the European Union across different sectors more easily. These opportunities would also lead to better prices for Maldivian fisheries products when exported internationally.

*SOURCE : The President's Office*

## Maldivian operated over 100 flights during Eid holidays: IASL

Island Aviation Services Limited (IASL) has revealed that the national airline, Maldivian, conducted over 100 flights during the recent Eid al-Adha holidays. The Eid festivities, which commenced on June 16, saw a significant increase of tourist arrivals to various parts of the Maldives. This year marked a departure from tradition, as the government celebrated Eid on a national scale across three regions which include, Ungoofaaru in Raa Atoll, Kudahuvadhoo in Dhaalu Atoll, and Villingili in Gaafu Alifu Atoll. As such, domestic flights experienced an increase in demand across many regions.

To meet the heightened demand, IASL disclosed that Maldivian increased its domestic flight operations. In light of this, the company announced that Maldivian conducted over 100 additional flights during the Eid holidays, complementing its regular schedule across the country. The national airline operates scheduled flights to 16 destinations within the Maldives.

*SOURCE : PSM*



## Gov't emphasises the significance of healthy work environments

Minister of State for Higher Education, Labour and Skills Development Dr. Abdulla Nazeer has underscored the crucial importance of ensuring healthy work environments. The remarks were made by the state minister during the inaugural ceremony of the Occupational Safety and Health Forum. The forum was organised by Maldives Airport Company Limited (MACL).

Speaking at the ceremony, State Minister Dr. Nazeer highlighted the raising sizzling temperatures worldwide, following climate change. The state minister observed that most of the employee's of the nation are used to work in the average heat temperatures, posing them to significant health effects. Hence, he stated that employees, especially those working in the heat, must be aware of such issues.

Furthermore, State Minister Dr. Nazeer said that all employers must ensure that the work environment does not negatively impact the health of employees. The state minister emphasised the necessity of drafting an emergency procedure or plan to implement during natural disasters or incidents due to climate change. He additionally stressed the significance of all employers to formulate Health Safety Regulations, adding that efforts are underway by the Ministry of State for Higher Education, Labour and Skills Development to amend the Act, such that it mandates all employers to draft Health Safety Regulations.

During the ceremony, Managing Director and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of MACL Ibrahim Shareef stated that the staff working at the air terminals have to work in hot temperatures. The CEO added that the increasing temperatures will undoubtedly affect the employees. Therefore, he also stated that an awareness programme must be held, reiterating that the forum aims to assist in increasing awareness.

This year, the forum's theme is Climate Change and Safety and Health at Work. This theme focuses on establishing a healthy work environment and protecting one's health, despite climate change. MACL revealed that they have provided information on the negative impacts on health due to climate change and also provided tips to protect themselves or reduce the health issues faced due to climate change. A panel discussion has been held within the forum, to provide more information on the issue. Information was provided by experts in the field. The forum was attended by the Maldives National University (MNU), Health Protection Agency (HPA) and the Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy. MACL had previously also organised a similar forum on April 28, 2023.

*SOURCE : PSM*