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Footballer Baka Left Teaching Invaluable Lessons: Vice President

Vice President Hussain Mohamed Latheef stated that Maldivian football star Mohamed Arif, known as Baka, passed away, leaving behind invaluable lessons that should be emulated in all facets of life. Speaking at a special program broadcast by PSM in memory of Baka, the Vice President highlighted Baka's profound impact on the nation.

"Baka taught us that life is unpredictable and that we should always be prepared. His life has been an exemplary model for the younger generation, demonstrating the importance of maintaining faith regardless of life's circumstances," said the Vice President. Recalling his personal experiences, the Vice President spoke of his friendship with Baka, which began at Galolhu Stadium and through various tournaments in their hometown of Faresmaathodaa, Gaafu Dhaalu Atoll. This friendship rooted in sports remained strong over the years.

"Baka is the best midfielder ever born in Maldivian football. He worked tirelessly to become a great player, achieving numerous accolades for the national team and contributing significantly to the development of club football," he added. The Vice President emphasized Baka's discipline on the field and his dedication during matches. "Baka spent 90 minutes on the pitch, tirelessly playing beautifully and with great discipline. These are qualities that every player should learn from him," he said.

Furthermore, the Vice President noted Baka's commitment to religious matters. Despite his busy schedule, Baka always prioritized prayer and religious practices, setting an example for everyone around him. Describing Baka as a kind and family-oriented man, the Vice President admired how he balanced his professional and personal life. "He always put his family first, ensuring his children were well-cared for and attended school on time. Baka was a true example of family love," he remarked.

Baka was beloved by the entire community, and his legacy is cherished by all Maldivians. The Vice President concluded by mentioning Baka's vision of establishing an academy to teach sports to children, especially in his native Addu City, a testament to his enduring passion for the game and his commitment to future generations.

Maldives and China Discuss Establishing Currency Settlement System



Maldives and China have held discussions to establish a currency settlement system between both countries. The discussions took place between Maldivian Minister of Economic Development Mohamed Saeed and Chinese Minister of Commerce Wang Wentao during Minister Saeed's ongoing visit to China. Minister Saeed departed for China on June 23 to participate in the opening of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of the New Champions 2024 in Dalian, China. His meeting with the Chinese Commerce Minister was held on the sidelines of the forum.

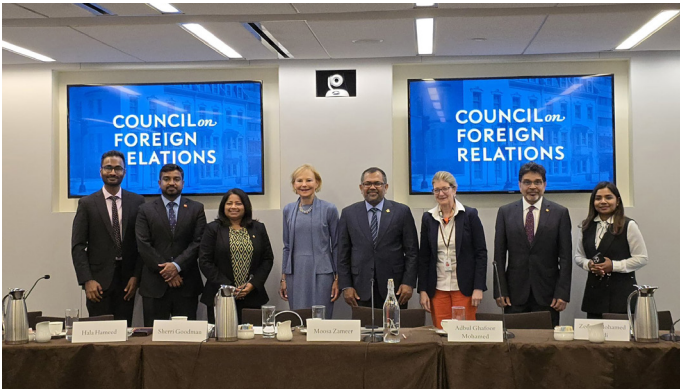
In their meeting, Minister Saeed and Minister Wang furthered the trade and economic talks previously held between President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu and Chinese President Xi Jinping during the President's state visit to China. They discussed expediting the implementation process of the Free Trade Agreement signed between the Maldives and China and establishing a currency settlement system to facilitate trade and communication between the two countries. Chinese Ambassador to the Maldives Wang Lixin expressed that this meeting would help facilitate the implementation of the important consensus reached between President Xi Jinping and President Dr. Muizzu. The Ministry of Economic Development noted that President Dr. Muizzu and his administration prioritize establishing currency settlement arrangements with key markets where the Maldives conducts substantial commercial transactions. Minister Saeed had earlier noted that using the Maldivian rufiyaa for transactions with China would help increase the currency's value.

During his official visit to China last January, President Dr. Muizzu signed several trade and development agreements, including the Blue Economy Cooperation Agreement, the Digital Sector Development Agreement, and the Belt and Road Cooperation Agreement. In 2017, the Maldives signed a free trade deal with China, which the previous administration postponed implementing. However, the current administration has stated that the free trade agreement with China will go into effect this year. The Maldives spends around USD 700 million annually on imports from China.





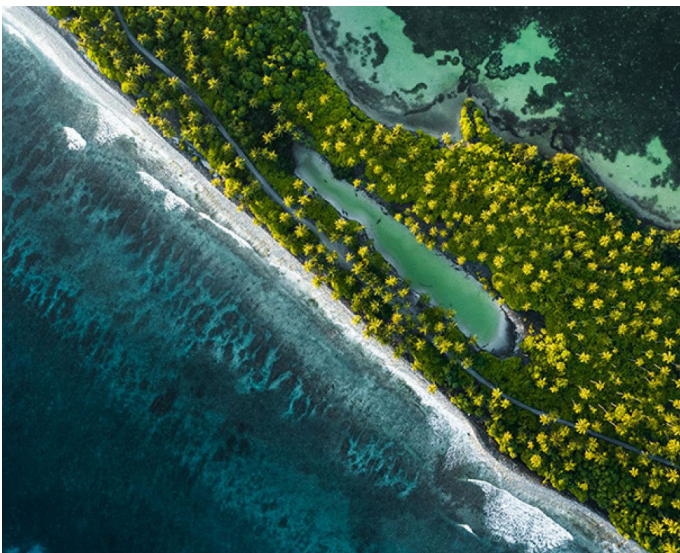
Maldives Shares Climate Change Mitigation Efforts with USA



Maldives has shared its climate change efforts with the US Council on Foreign Relations during Foreign Minister Moosa Zameer's visit to the United States from June 24-27. Minister Zameer presented the Maldivian government's climate change policies and highlighted President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu's strong commitment to addressing climate change.

In addition to his engagement with the Council, Minister Zameer met with several US Congress members, including Congressman Michael McCaul and Congresswoman Young Kim, to further discuss climate change and other bilateral issues. The visit began in Washington, DC, where Minister Zameer held talks with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, focusing on strengthening Maldives' military, democracy, economy, and climate change mitigation efforts. He also met with Samantha Power, Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), expressing gratitude for USAID's assistance and exploring future cooperation avenues.

Minister Zameer also connected with Maldivians living in Washington. Following his engagements in Washington, he arrived in New York to meet with the UN Secretary-General and the UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. In New York, Minister Zameer will engage with Maldivian communities in New York and New Jersey and meet with tour operators and travel advisors to strengthen tourism ties. His visit underscores Maldives' commitment to addressing climate change and enhancing international cooperation in this critical area.



Environment Minister Calls for Reform of SACEP

Minister for Climate Change, Environment, and Energy Thoriq Ibrahim has emphasized the need to update and strengthen the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), the primary organization advocating for environmental issues in South Asia. He made the remarks while delivering the Maldives country statement at the 16th SACEP Governing Council meeting held in Thimphu, Bhutan.

Minister Thoriq Ibrahim highlighted the meeting's significance in enhancing cooperation among South Asian countries to address the challenges posed by climate change. He underscored the urgency for small island nations like the Maldives to prepare and take immediate action against climate threats, including global warming, sea level rise, air and water pollution, and land erosion.



Calling for member countries to engage in collaborative dialogue, Minister Thoriq shared the Maldivian government's initiatives aimed at mitigating these challenges. He specifically mentioned President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu's commitment to planting five million trees across the Maldives.

Additionally, Minister Thoriq urged SACEP member states to reform and strengthen the organization's regulations to better address evolving regional environmental concerns. "SACEP, as a regional environmental organization, must adapt to meet the changing needs of member countries. It is crucial to revise and enhance its framework so that it can effectively advocate and engage on environmental issues at international forums," he stated.

Established in 1987, the SACEP meetings serve as pivotal platforms for environmental discussions involving member countries and other Commonwealth agencies. This year marked the 16th convening of SACEP, highlighting the ongoing role of SACEP in fostering regional cooperation on environmental sustainability.



Maldives to Lift Limit on Recruitment of Bangladeshi Labourers

Minister of Homeland Security and Technology Ali Ihusaan has announced plans to propose amendments to the law to lift the limit on the recruitment of Bangladeshi laborers. The announcement was made during a session of the Parliamentary Committee on National Security Services. Responding to committee inquiries about the current limit, Minister Ihusaan stated that the cap must be removed due to the existing and anticipated demand for labor. Under the current Employment Act, a maximum of 100,000 Bangladeshi laborers can be brought to the Maldives.



Minister Ihusaan emphasized that while the limit should be lifted, additional measures must be implemented to ensure proper management and accountability. Plans include changes to the foreign affairs management system to streamline the permit issuance process and the introduction of special permits for laborers working on islands aimed at addressing the issue of illegal migrants. Reviewing border control and expatriate system statistics, Minister Ihusaan revealed that 90,624 Bangladeshi workers currently reside in the Maldives. Highlighting the opportunity to recruit an additional 9,000 workers to reach the 100,000 limit, he stressed that some companies had previously exploited this quota. As a result, borders were closed to Bangladeshi workers to prevent further misuse.

The minister also confirmed that the Maldives Police Service is investigating companies involved in the improper recruitment and release of migrant workers.

Parliamentarian Ibrahim Didi Praises President’s Economic Strategy



Parliamentarian for the South Feydhoo constituency, Ibrahim Didi, has commended President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu’s economic strategy, emphasizing the importance of maintaining the country’s independence and sovereignty to prevent economic hardship for citizens. Speaking on a program aired on PSM News, Ibrahim Didi highlighted that President Muizzu’s efforts are directed towards preserving the nation’s independence and ensuring that citizens retain full decision-making power in matters concerning the country. This approach, he noted, aims to keep the nation free from foreign influence.

Stressing the significance of paying off foreign debts to maintain autonomy, he pointed out that the administration has paid USD 175 million in foreign debt repayments. He further remarked that the country has accumulated more debt in the past five years than in the previous 60 years without visible accomplishments from these loans. He asserted that those responsible for this financial mismanagement should be held accountable and face consequences.

The parliamentarian also affirmed that President Muizzu is committed to preventing any foreign party from influencing the internal affairs of the Maldives. He praised the administration’s efforts in maintaining mutually beneficial foreign relations. Concluding his remarks, he urged the public to remain patient and trust President Muizzu to steer the country in the right direction, assuring that the current administration is dedicated to improving the nation’s affairs.

