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The Vice President announces Government plans to enhance the prestige of National Quran Competition

Vice President Hussain Mohamed Latheef stated that the prestige of the National Quran Competition will be greatly enhanced under the leadership of President Dr Mohamed Muizzu. He made these remarks during the inaugural ceremony of the 36th National Quran Competition.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Vice President stated that the National Quran Competition is the most prestigious competition related to the Holy Quran in the Maldives, and the Government aims to improve the competition year by year.

The Vice President mentioned that one of the President's main goals is to build a nation that embraces Islamic values. He also pointed out that there has been an increasing focus on Islamic affairs in the Maldives over the past seven months. The Vice President highlighted that the Government has provided opportunities for young children and Quran students to improve their Quran recitation skills and perform prayers in mosques. Additionally, the Government aims to expand Quran teaching classes and provide further support and incentives to children who memorise the Quran.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Vice President urged people not to view the recitation of the Quran as just preparation for a competition, but as an act of worship. He also encouraged everyone to make time to recite a portion of the Quran every day. He emphasised the importance of reciting the Quran properly and understanding its meaning.

Source : President's Office

Foreign Minister Moosa Zameer Meets UN Secretary-General António Guterres



Minister of Foreign Affairs Moosa Zameer held a meeting with the Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN) António Guterres at the UN Headquarters today.

During the meeting Minister Zameer highlighted the ambitious multilateral agenda of the Government of President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu and noted the importance of building on the momentum from the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4). Minister Zameer further highlighted the important role of the UN System in ensuring the achievement of sustainable development peace and security and applauded the Secretary-General for his continuing efforts to uphold the Charter of the UN.

The Secretary-General noted the leadership role of the Maldives at the SIDS4 Conference and at other multilateral fora especially on climate change and financing for development. The Secretary-General reiterated his commitment to supporting the achievement of the sustainable development goals and to ensuring that peace and security are upheld across the world.

Minister Zameer was accompanied by the Permanent Representative of the Maldives to the UN Ambassador Dr. Ali Naseer Mohamed Secretary Bilateral Dr Hala Hameed Senior Undersecretary Hassan Hussain Shihab and Second Secretary at the Permanent Mission of the Maldives to the UN Naufa Rushdi.

Source : Ministry of Foreign Affairs





Foreign Minister Moosa Zameer Concludes Official Visit to the United States



Minister of Foreign Affairs Moosa Zameer has departed New York today following a successful official visit to the United States of America.

During his visit to Washington D.C Minister Zameer met with the Secretary of State of the United States Antony Blinken and reaffirmed commitment towards deepening the Maldives – US partnership in areas of mutual interest.

During the visit Minister Zameer also met with the Administrator of the US Agency for International Development Samantha Power Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Relations Congressman Michael McCaul Chairwoman of House Subcommittee on Indo-Pacific Congresswoman Young Kim and Ranking Member of House Subcommittee on Indo-Pacific Congressman Ami Bera.

Minister Zameer had an interactive discussion about President Dr Mohamed Muizzu's government's priorities and foreign policy at the renowned US think tank Council of Foreign Relations. Prior to his departure to New York Minister Zameer spent an afternoon with the Maldivian community in the area.

During his visit to New York Minister Zameer held meetings with the Secretary-General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres the Under-Secretary-General of the Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Li Jinhua and the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations Dr. Riyad Mansour. Minister Zameer also engaged with tour operators and travel advisors and a select group of Permanent Representatives based in New York. During the visit Minister Zameer also met with the Maldivian community residing in New York and New Jersey.

During the meeting with the Secretary-General Minister Zameer highlighted the ambitious multilateral agenda of the Government of President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu and noted the importance of building on the momentum from the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4).

During the meeting with the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Minister Zameer emphasised the importance given by the Government of President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu to addressing the development challenges faced by the Maldives and discussed areas for collaboration between the Maldives and the United Nations to enhance access to affordable and adequate finance for development and for climate adaptation.

During his engagement with the Maldivian community Minister Zameer interacted with the attendees and took note of their pressing concerns and assured the Government's commitment to addressing the concerns raised.

Minister Zameer was seen off at the John F. Kennedy International Airport by Permanent Representative of the Republic of Maldives to the United Nations Ambassador Dr. Ali Naseer Mohamed. Minister Zameer was accompanied by Secretary Bilateral Dr. Hala Hameed and Senior Undersecretary Hassan Hussain Shihab

Source : Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Maldives Co-Chairs 36th Joint Commission Meeting of UNWTO's CAP-CSA



The Maldives co-chaired the 36th Joint Commission Meeting of the United Nation's World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Commission for East Asia and Pacific and the Commission for South Asia (CAP-CSA) in Cebu, Philippines. The meeting saw the attendance of tourism member countries, affiliate members, and representatives from international and regional institutions.

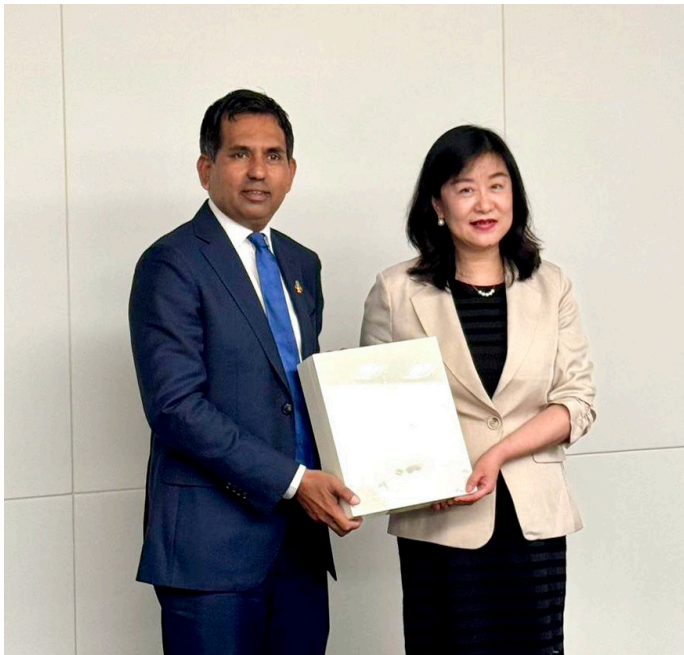
Representing the Maldives, Minister of State for Tourism Dr. Abdulla Niyaz emphasized the critical importance of sustainable tourism policies. He highlighted that while the Maldives is renowned for its luxury tourism market, sustainable tourism principles form the foundation of the country's tourism development strategy.

Key discussions focused on implementing eco-friendly tourism practices, integrating eco-friendly methods into the sustainable tourism industry, and promoting innovation and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through green initiatives. The participants also reviewed policies related to skill development and training within the tourism industry, emphasizing the importance of developing and training employees to adapt to new sustainable practices. The tourism ministry expressed confidence in the meeting's potential to further promote sustainable tourism practices and strengthen relations with various countries in the Asia and Pacific region within the tourism sector.

Source : PSM



Maldives-China Currency Settlement Discussions Ongoing



Minister of Economic Development and Trade Mohamed Saeed has held discussions with the People's Bank of China to explore ways to facilitate trade using the currencies of both countries. These discussions were held during Minister Saeed's official visit to China, reflecting the Maldives' strategic focus on enhancing bilateral trade relationships.

Minister Saeed highlighted that President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu and the Maldivian government are prioritizing currency settlement arrangements with major trading partners. The aim is to simplify and boost trade by using local currencies. As part of this effort, Minister Saeed engaged in discussions with the People's Bank of China to explore the feasibility of conducting business transactions using the Maldivian rufiyaa and the Chinese yuan.

On June 25, Minister Saeed met with Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao to establish a currency settlement system between China and the Maldives. He expressed confidence that using local currency for transactions would enhance the value of the Maldivian rufiyaa.

During President Dr. Muizzu's official visit to China last January, several key trade and development agreements were signed, including the Blue Economy Corporation Agreement, the Digital Sector Development Agreement, and the Belt and Road Corporation Agreement. In 2017, the Maldives signed a free trade agreement with China, which the previous administration postponed implementing. However, the current administration has committed to enforcing the free trade agreement with China this year. The Maldives imports approximately USD 700 million worth of goods from China annually, underscoring the importance of effective currency settlement systems for facilitating and optimizing trade relations between the two countries.

Source : PSM



Dubai's RTA to Assist Maldives in Solving Traffic Congestion in Malé

The Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation has initiated discussions with Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) to address the persistent traffic congestion in Malé. Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation Mohamed Ameen announced that the meeting with Dubai's RTA focused on significant discussions about reducing vehicular congestion in Malé. Minister Ameen revealed that the RTA will provide technological assistance under an agreed framework to implement this initiative in the Maldives.

According to the transport ministry, 69,780 new vehicles have been registered in the past five years, with more than 42,000 vehicles registered in Malé alone. The problem of traffic congestion and inadequate parking space has been a long-standing concern for many residents. Despite various attempts by previous governments, a viable solution has yet to be found. This collaboration with Dubai's RTA marks a significant step towards finding a sustainable solution to Malé's traffic woes. Previously, Minister Ameen revealed efforts to bring in experts from advanced countries like the United Arab Emirates and Singapore to comprehensively address the issue within the bilateral relations. This collaboration with Dubai's RTA marks a significant step towards finding a sustainable solution to Malé's traffic woes.

Source : PSM

BCC Participates in the Youth Co-Lab Summit in the Philippines

The Business Centre Corporation (BCC) participated in the Youth Co-Lab Summit 2024 held in the Philippines from June 26-28. The summit, organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in collaboration with Citi Foundation, focused on advancing youth engagement in commercial activities and other fields. BCC's Director of Commercial, Mohamed Jaushan, represented the corporation at the event.

During the summit, significant discussions were held on the opportunities and challenges faced by the youth in advancing their roles in the economy. The summit served as a platform for networking and forming ties with young entrepreneurs and discussing policies with government officials to address the challenges faced by young entrepreneurs. The event included workshops and panel discussions aimed at empowering youth to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through leadership, social innovation, and entrepreneurship. BCC stated that the summit would further enhance the collaborative efforts of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade and BCC to increase the role of youth in the economy.

Source : PSM





Visit Maldives and Manta Air Successfully Conclude the Explore Maldives Roadshow in Bengaluru, India



Visit Maldives and Manta Air, along with key resort and guest house partners, successfully concluded the “Explore Maldives” roadshow at the Shangri-La Bengaluru on June 26, 2024. The roadshow aimed to reignite interest among Indian travelers and attract more Indian tourists to the Maldives.

The very successful event attended by 130+ agents and media personnel saw participation from major hospitality chains of Maldives that included all segments including resorts and guest houses of Maldives along with DMCs Travel Agents and Tour Operators as well as MICE travel organisers from India. Participation by travel industry leaders of India including Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) Karnataka Chapter and Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) – Karnataka Chapter provided much-needed fuel to reignite interest amongst Indian travellers to seek Maldives as a preferred holiday destination.

The full-day event opened by the Deputy Managing Director of Maldives Marketing and PR Corporation (MMPRC) Mr. Zihuny Rasheed was followed by presentations by key resort partners and multiple networking sessions that provided invaluable opportunities for the partner resorts/guest houses to engage with the attending travel agents and tour operators. The grand event hosted with tremendous support from the partners also saw numerous raffles and giveaways provided by the esteemed resorts partners exclusively for the event.

“Manta Air’s regular direct flights between the Garden City of India (Bengaluru) and the Sunny Side of Life (Maldives) is a significant step forward in not only improving connectivity but also accessibility making it easier than ever for Indian tourists to reach our shores and vice versa.”

Said Zihuny Rasheed the Deputy Managing Director of MMPRC. “Building bridges between our cultures is vital as India and the Maldives remain close neighbours and good friends.”

The roadshow participated by major resort chains such as Universal Resorts Minor Hotels with NH Collection & AVANI+ Atmosphere Hotels & Resorts along with Colors of OBLU Sun Siyam Resorts Villa Hotels & Resorts PULSE Hotels & Resorts AAA Hotels & Resorts Angsana Velavaru COMO RIU Hotels & Resorts South Palm and many more resorts and guest houses and local travel agents showcased the



appeal of the Maldives through captivating presentations and dynamic networking sessions.

“Our flights providing direct connectivity between Bengaluru and the resorts/guesthouses in Dhaalu Atoll have paved the way for Indian travellers to enjoy more time holidaying at some of the finest resorts and guesthouses in Maldives located in the region” said Ahmed Maumoon Deputy CEO of Manta Air. “The roadshow gave us an unprecedented opportunity to showcase how holidaymakers from India can take advantage of this direct route that not only reduce the time required to reach their holiday destination but also provide immense cost savings on their holiday by eliminating the need for additional domestic transfers when flying through the busy hub of Velana International Airport. We have scheduled our Bengaluru flights in such a way that holidaymakers can take full advantage of the arrival and departure dates that allow them to spend more time holidaying at the resort or guesthouse of their choice when they fly with Manta Air.” Maumoon further added “Given that Maldives offers free visa on arrival for Indian tourists added with the ease of connectivity provided by our direct flights travellers now have the option to just hop into the tropical paradise of Maldives for the weekend taking advantage of our morning flights on Fridays and Sundays.”

The roadshow represents a significant step in strengthening the tourism bond between India and the Maldives. As the travel industry continues to recover and evolve such initiatives are crucial in driving sustained growth and enriching the travel experiences of tourists from both countries. The roadshow has undoubtedly helped our partner resorts and guesthouses to promote the Maldives as a top destination to the Indian market

The Indian travel market was ranked as the best performing market in 2023. The “Explore Maldives” roadshow has created the much-needed buzz in the Indian travel market that will surely reignite the interest of Indian travellers towards vacationing in Maldives during the upcoming Dhivali and Darsauru holidays.

Source : Visit Maldives





Maldives Welcomes Sutapa Amornvivat, the One Millionth Tourist of 2024



Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC/Visit Maldives) welcomed the one millionth tourist of 2024, Sutapa Amornvivat, a Thai national. She arrived in the Maldives on AirAsia flight FD 175 at 11:15 am and is visiting for a holiday vacation with her family at Niyama Maldives. This is her third trip to the Maldives, following her honeymoon.

A special event was held at Velana International Airport to celebrate this milestone, attended by representatives from the Ministry of Tourism, Maldives Airports Company Limited (MACL), Maldives Immigration, and Maldives Customs Service, along with various industry stakeholders. A special holiday was offered to the one millionth tourist by Sun Siyam Resorts.

“Reaching the milestone of 1 million tourist arrivals is a testament to the enduring allure of the Maldives and the unwavering dedication of our tourism industry stakeholders. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all our partners, from travel agencies to hospitality providers, whose commitment and hard work have made this achievement possible. Together, we continue to set new standards of excellence and create unforgettable experiences for our visitors,” stated Tourism Minister Ibrahim Faisal.

February 2024 was a record-breaking month as Maldives experienced the highest number of arrivals, with more than 217,394 tourists throughout the month. This celebration emphasized the strategic efforts of MMPRC and the government to further enhance tourism plans. It is a tribute to the combined efforts of the Maldives’ tourism industry to have welcomed one million tourists earlier than the previous year. This achievement is on course to President Dr Muizzu’s 2 million national tourist arrival target. We are thrilled to celebrate this milestone with all of our stakeholders. Our dedication doesn’t end here; we’re always working to enhance the Maldives’ travel industry and make sure Sunny Side of Life continues to be a dream destination for everyone.” said CEO & MD of MMPRC Mr Ibrahim Shiuree. MMPRC has been actively involved in marketing and promoting Maldives throughout this year. Working towards the national target arrival for 2024 as set by the President of Maldives aiming for 2 million tourists the Visit Maldives team has carried out significant activities to promote Maldives. MMPRC participated in key marketing fairs and campaigns that were carried out this year particularly within the top five markets: China Russia the U.K. Italy and Germany as we have received the highest arrival numbers from these countries. Additionally Visit Maldives took part in ATM ITB Berlin and ITB China which are some of the key significant fairs of the year.

Source : Visit Maldives



Tourism Minister Projects 2.5 Million Tourists for Maldives in 2025

Minister of Tourism Ibrahim Faisal has announced ambitious projections for the Maldivian tourism sector, expecting at least 2.5 million tourist arrivals in 2025. This statement was made during a ceremony at Velana International Airport (VIA) where the minister welcomed the one millionth tourist of the current year.

The government aims to attract 2 million tourists in 2024. With the Maldives already hosting 1 million tourists this year, efforts are intensifying to boost tourist numbers further. Minister Faisal highlighted that the marketing plan for next year is currently in preparation and the final figures will be determined upon its completion. However, he is confident in setting a target of at least 2.5 million tourist arrivals for 2025. He emphasized the significant increase in arrivals from China and the potential growth in the Indian and Bangladeshi markets.

To support this goal, Minister Faisal plans to collaborate closely with the Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC) to increase tourist inflows from India. He noted that the number of Indian tourists is expected to rise by the end of this year. Furthermore, the new terminal at Velana International Airport is scheduled to open in November this year, with all works expected to be completed within the first quarter of next year. This development is anticipated to enhance the capacity and efficiency of the airport, supporting the projected increase in tourist arrivals.

Source : PSM

