

TRANSPORT IN MALDIVES: DEVELOPMENT OF AVIATION INFRASTRUCTURE

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Introduction

Maldives is a country comprising 20 atolls situated in the Indian Ocean. The length of the archipelago from north to south is about 823 kilometers. The widest part of this island chain is about 130 kilometers. The total number of islands is 1,192. The number of inhabited islands is 187. The population of the country is 420,000 (2012). The nominal GDP of the country is USD 10,385 (2018) and per capita income in PPP is USD 18,300.

Trade and transport between the atolls and inter islands used to be carried out with sailing vessels, more commonly referred to as Baththeli, sailing generally between the atolls and Malé carrying products such as dried fish, coconuts and coir rope

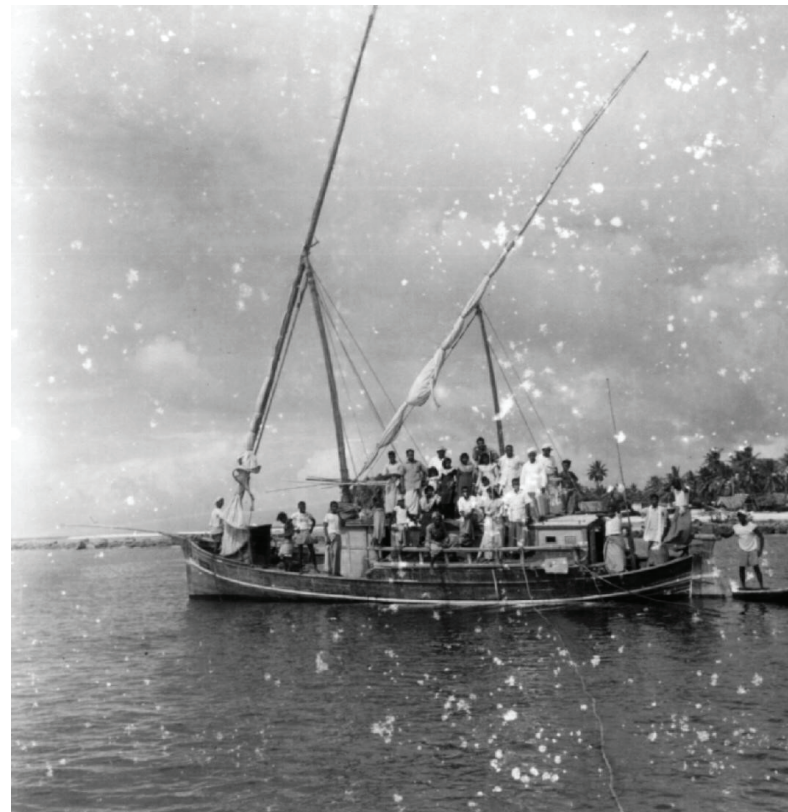


Figure 1: Baththeli ready for sailing. Source: Unknown

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On average it took about three days to travel in good weather from, say Hoarafushi in Haa Alifu Atoll, the northern most atoll to Malé (318 km) stopping for the night at selected islands. They returned after selling the products they brought to Malé and laden with rice, wheat flour, sugar, and kerosene oil bought from the capital.

Travel time between Raa, Baa and Lhaviyani atolls and Malé was less; it took about two days in a sailing Baththeli-dhoni (a sailing vessel smaller in tonnage and larger than a normal fishing vessel).

From the southernmost atolls sailing vessels which were larger called Odi, from, Hithadhoo, in Seenu atoll (533 km), Fuvahmulah (496 km), Thinadhoo in Gaafu Dhaalu (409 km), and from Villingili in Gaafu Alifu Atoll (383), took as long as a week to travel to Malé, depending on wind and sea conditions. Cargo from these atolls were mainly as above. Additionally, they transported banana, breadfruit, taro and often mango. The return cargo was the same as for northern atolls.

The central atolls i.e. Laamu, Thaa, Meemu, Dhaalu and Faafu atoll are much closer to Malé with the sailing time gradually decreasing as they lie closer to Malé.

These vessels were commanded by very experienced mariners who dead reckon their way to navigate with compasses and visual identification of various islands during their journeys. Wind direction and sea current in the channels were always important as they sailed. When the winds dropped, they would use oars to position the vessels to prevent them from drifting.

This simple status quo prevailed until the mechanization of fishing vessels (mas dhoni) began

in the 1970s and by 1990 all the boats were mechanized.

One might ask why all the travel between Malé and the islands. Malé is the capital of the country as well as the center of commerce. People from atolls visit Malé for public administration needs, health services and for education, and commerce. All foreign trade was mainly conducted via Malé to Colombo or southern Indian ports. Passengers travelled to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) mostly in steam cargo ships that used to ply between Colombo and Malé, on an ad-hoc and very infrequent basis.

British presence

Before I embark on to write on airports, it will be helpful to highlight the role of British Government in Maldives, which led to the development of Gan Island in Addu atoll as an airbase for the RAF.

Following talks between the British and Maldivian Governments in December 1956 agreement was reached to lease Gan Island and a demarcated land area of 110 acres in Hithadhoo in Addu atoll for the exclusive use of HM forces, and entrance to the atolls and lagoon for the mooring of HM ships as well as use of the encompassing air space. The terms of the above agreement were for 100 years of lease, with the option to purchase the said lands, if required and the British government would pay a sum of £2,000 per year to the Maldivian government. The agreement was initialed by Prime Minister Ibrahim Ali Didi and British officials, (b) dated 15 December 1957, (referred to as Final Draft agreement).

The Prime Minister, on his return to Malé in December 1957 referred the final draft agreement to the Majlis

(parliament) for possible approval. The Majlis debated on this draft agreement and rejected it.

Following this rejection Prime Minister Ibrahim Ali Didi submitted his letter of resignation to Sultan Mohamed Farid Didi on 11 December 1957, stating his deteriorating health conditions.

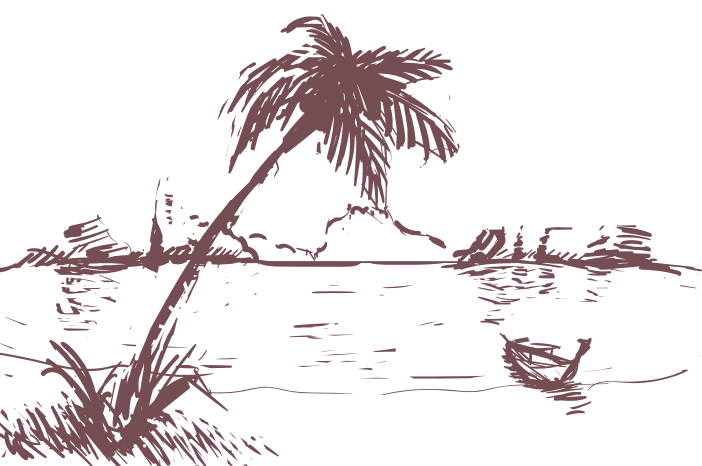
On the same day, Sultan Mohamed Farid Didi ordered a meeting of the Majlis, and the Secretary of the House read out two letters from Sultan Mohamed Farid Didi: one was the resignation letter of Prime Minister Ibrahim Ali Didi and the other to seek advice from the Majlis on the way forward. The Majlis recommended by acclamation the service of the Prime Minister to the nation and the resignation of Prime Minister be accepted by the Sultan. The sultan recommended that Mr. Ibrahim Ali Didi be designated as Advisor Emeritus of the government with all the relevant titles and benefits that was accorded to the prime minister.

Sultan also asked for legal advice and guidance of the House, and to recommend an appropriate candidate

for the post of Prime Minister. The House debated on this and nominated and recommended to the Sultan the name of Malé Member of Parliament Ibrahim Nasir to the post of Prime Minister, accordingly this was communicated to the Sultan.

Meanwhile, based on the terms of the agreement initialed by the representatives of both governments, the British government had mobilized workers to develop an airport and other facilities at Gan that got completed in 1958. After the confirmation of Ibrahim Nasir as Prime Minister by the Sultan, he faced lots of difficulties in foreign relations. The political barometer between Maldives and Britain kept on rising with a lot of friction getting created. The Maldivian Prime Minister wanted a new agreement to be negotiated and finalized, replacing the terms of the previous Agreement. This was not an easy task.

Finally, a new agreement between both the governments was negotiated and concluded on 14 February 1960 in Malé, signed by the HM government represented by Hon C. J. M. Alport, Minister of State, and Prime Minister Ibrahim Nasir for Maldives.



Under this agreement land was to be leased to Britain for 30 years, to develop Gan airport, and other facilities in Hithadhoo. Agreement was also reached to receive a representative of Britain to be stationed in Malé. The British Government agreed to immediately grant £100,000 for the development of Maldives, as desired by the Maldivian Government. Further, spread over five years, development aid of £750,000 to Maldivian government was agreed for specific economic development projects.

The British Government Representative, Mr. Arthington Davy arrived in Malé on 14 July 1960 and the government arranged his place of residence at Mulee'aage and was later transferred to Dhoonidhoo island near Malé, where accommodation and other facilities were built.

During the cordial discussions that took place between both governments, representatives of British government proposed to develop and construct an airstrip, on the vacant land on the eastern side of Henveiru football grounds in Malé.

However, the Maldivian delegation proposed to change the location of the proposed airstrip to Hulhulé Island, on which consensus was reached.

Following this, RAF surveyors arrived in Malé in April 1960, and work began. Land clearing with the cutting of coconut trees, clearing and removal of other vegetation and all residual material was

completed. All these works were done by Maldivian Public works Department under the supervision of RAF engineers. The project was completed at a very fast pace. The runway was constructed with Marston Mat perforated steel sheets, within six months. The length of the airfield was 3,000 ft by 75 feet.

The first aircraft, belonging to Royal New Zealand Airforce landed on 19 October 1960. Military aircraft began unscheduled flights between Gan and Malé, or

Colombo, led by a government minister, and requested the British Representative to arrange a flight to Colombo. The British Representative confirmed that the aircraft would be arranged, and the dates were communicated. The Maldivian delegation was later informed that the flight was getting delayed, and the estimated arrival date was changed frequently. This excuse became very prolonged, and finally the British informed no aircraft was available.

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The operation of the airport at Hulhulé was under the control of the British Representative, Mr. Davy. No civilian aircrafts were operating. Ad hoc requests were made from the Maldivian authorities to facilitate flights between Colombo and Malé for the transfer of essential Maldivian staff of Sri Lankan nationality, like teachers, doctors, and government officials. It was accommodated by the British.

One noteworthy incident took place when the Maldivian government wanted to send a delegation to

The frustration of the Maldivian officials became very obvious as they were not able attend the meeting in Colombo. It was concluded that Mr. Davy did not want such a flight to take place. The Maldivian authorities sought the assistance of Air Ceylon, the national airline of Ceylon to operate a charter flight between Malé and Colombo. Air Ceylon informed they needed to inspect the runway before confirmation and sent a representative to Malé to evaluate the runway and facilities, which eventually was approved. It was agreed that Air Ceylon DC3, Dakota aircraft can operate on the runway at Hulhulé island.

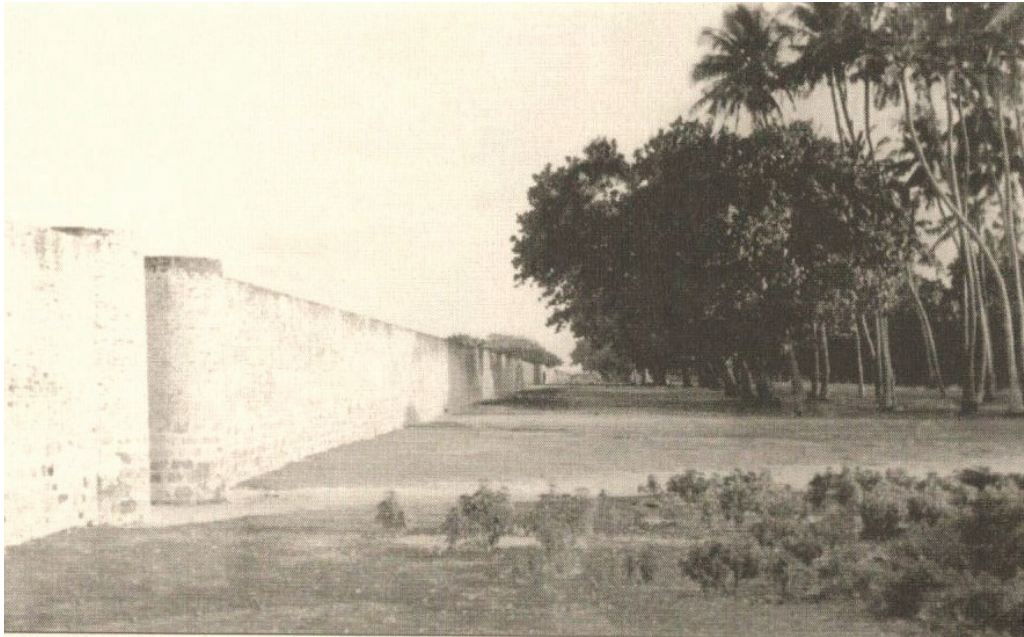


Figure 2: Malé in 1960 – The empty space on the eastern side of Henveiru football field where the English proposed to develop an airstrip. (Photo Source: Iye Magazine 10th August 1997)

When the news broke of the first charter flight from Colombo to Malé being arranged, the British Representative informed Maldivian authorities that the airport was for the exclusive use of RAF. However, Maldivian government informed there is no exclusive right for RAF and other airlines too can operate. Accordingly, the first Air Ceylon charter flight (a DC3 (4RACJ) with passengers landed at Hulhulé

airfield on 10 April 1962. It returned to Colombo with passengers from Malé. One more flight was operated from Colombo to Malé by Air Ceylon.

Meanwhile, some civil disturbances against the British representative were taking place. A Women contingent in 6 dhonis went to Dhoonidhoo island, demanding the British representative to leave the



Figure 3: Marston Mat, more properly called pierced (or perforated) steel plating (PSP), is standardized, perforated steel matting material developed by the United States at the Waterways Experiment Station shortly before World War II, primarily for the rapid construction of temporary runways and landing strips (also misspelled as Marsden matting). The nickname came from Marston, North Carolina, adjacent to Camp Mackall airfield where the material was first used. (Source Wikipedia)

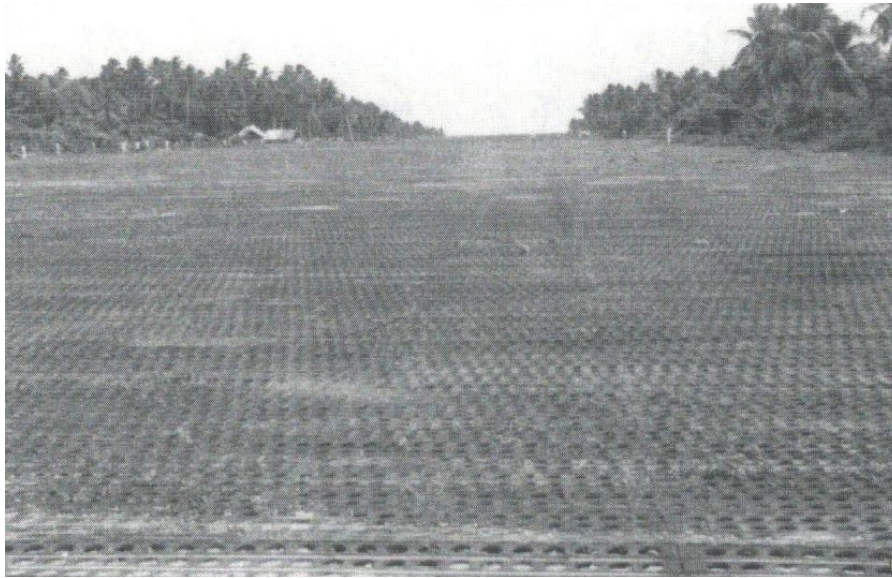


Figure 4: RAF built Hulhulé Airstrip with Marston Mat (Photo Source: Iye Magazine 10th August 1997)

island. However, before they were able to land on the island Maldivian Police barred them, and made them to return to Malé.

The anti-British protests increased, and protests were made whenever Mr. Davy visited Malé. This finally reached a stage where the British built airfield was attacked and some of the vehicles were damaged. Marston steel sheets were removed and, coconut tree trunks were planted in some areas and in the center of the airfield. This sabotage was done during the night.

When Mr. Davy visited Malé to meet Foreign Ministry officials, protests were held on the roadside with anti-Davy expressions shouted at him. His boat motor was even sprayed with shark liver oil.



Figure 5: Volunteers dismantling Martson Mat at Hulhulé Airport

Development of Hulhulé airport by government

Ministry of Home Affairs announced on 27 April 1960 that Maldivian Government had decided to dismantle the existing temporarily runway built with British assistance at Hulhulé, to develop our own permanent airport. This notice appeared in the two daily newspapers. Prime Minister's Office announced any assistance for this project, either monetary or in kind will be received by the Airport Office. Many people, clubs, organisations and companies came and registered themselves as volunteers to work on this project.

Many work groups were formed and tasks given to them. The physical work of dismantling the steel plates began on 1 May 1964. The work included removing steel plates, clearing shrubs and trees, excavating and removing vegetation residue, refilling with sand and levelling. All these works were carried manually. Voluntary labour groups were growing fast, such as the four districts of Malé, and each atoll also participated in these works. Group sizes varied from 40 to 120 people, and as many as 200 atoll participants arrived.

The technical specifications of the airfield and buildings were designed with technical cooperation of the Public Works Department of Sri Lanka, under a technical service agreement between the two Governments. Further, the Sri Lankan government sent on loan, some jaw crushers, compact rollers and

bitumen heaters, and other machinery. For project supervision, a team of civil engineers including a resident engineer were also sent to Malé for the project.

The works of voluntary groups progressed very fast, and coral crushing and preparing the subgrade began. Bitumen supply was concluded. The first sale cargo of bitumen was on ship "City of Victoria", which unfortunately ran aground on Dhiffushi Maadhoo reef in Lhaviyani Atoll. The master and crew abandoned the ship and left Maldives. Under the Maldivian law the ship became property of the crown or Sultan. Most of the bitumen cargo was salvaged and brought to the airport site. When this cargo was unloaded, the ship was re-floated by Maldivian Government, and sailed to Mazgon Dock Yard, Bombay, for repairs. After repairs the ship was renamed "Dhiffushi Maadhoo" This was the first ship to be owned by the Maldives Investment London, that was operated by Maldives Shipping Ltd.

Volunteers and public companies' labour forces worked with commitment doing their daily allocated works. Daily work progressed with the works allocated to each group. The groups completed their daily work allotments ahead of schedule. After levelling and compacting with coral aggregates as designed, the asphalt work began. These works were completed by the end of March 1966.

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Meanwhile the other related works such as terminal building, firefighting equipment and basic communication too were completed, or on site. in tandem. All these works got done within a record time of two years, given the manual labour involved. The first flight to land on the newly constructed runway was an Air Ceylon HS 748 type aircraft. The flight landed on 12 April 1966. Amongst the VIPs onboard were Prime Minister Ibrahim Nasir, Hon. Abdul Sattar Moosa Didi, (Maldivian Ambassador to Colombo, Ali Umar Maniku, the Maldivian Government Trade Representative in Colombo. This was the beginning of our international gateway. At the early days there was a charter flight every 14 days between Colombo and Malé, the beginning of the first commercial air service between Malé' and anywhere.



Figure 6: Prime Minister Ibrahim Nasir, disembarking from the first flight



Joining Gaadhoo Island with Hulhulé

On the southern lagoon of Hulhulé there was a small island named Ghaadhoo. This island was enjoined with Hulhulé with coral breakwaters on eastern and western sides and filled with sand dredged from the lagoon and sea as more land was required for future expansion of Hulhulé. It was completed with the required land reclamation in May 1968. Thus, an additional length of 3000 x 500 feet was added to Hulhulé island. A further extension plan was carried out on the southern lagoon of the Hulhulé island. This lagoon area which was to be reclaimed had an average depth of 20 -24 feet. This was done under supervision of the Public Works Department, by using cutter suction dredgers. The area added was 2000 feet x 500 feet, with shore protection on both sides and the northern end. With the addition of this land on both northern and southern ends, Hulhulé was estimated to be approximately 7,000 feet in length.

The airport development did not stop but planning process continued as the economy and markets responded. Malé airport was no exception to this. Planning exercises began with stake holders that reached a conclusion. The airport facilities should be upgraded to meet the demands of tourism, to accommodate long haul flights from Europe, Middle East, and from Far East. These discussions concluded in 1993, with the following points agreed: a) To build runway length of 2840 x 75 meters with apron; b) To

construct a terminal building to handle 350 passengers per hour; c) To build new air traffic control tower with navigational aids; d) To build aviation fuel storage, and delivery to aircraft via bowsers; e) To procure ground handling equipment; f) To train and develop manpower; g) to procure firefighting equipment. Accordingly, government sought funding for the projects and with the expansion of tourism markets, international development agencies responded favourably. Agencies who contributed to this project were Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development,



Figure 7: Prime Minister Ibrahim Nasir, Ibrahim Rasheed, Ali Umar Manik, Abdulla Hameed inspecting Joining Gaadhoo Island with Hulhulé.

Saudi Fund for Development, Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, and OPEC Fund for Development. Consultants were engaged for designing and project formulation, to which the agencies responded very favourably. The total investments in this project was MVR 123 million.

Meanwhile technical training programs were going on with assistance from UNDP, ICAO, UK aid, and German government assistance. The works were completed and the new facility was opened for operations on 6 November 1981. First airline direct from Europe landed on that day and was a DC-10 aircraft of Condor (charter airline of Germany) with 250 passengers. This was the beginning of a new chapter in our economy and the beginning of Malé International airport.

The airport was the maintenance base for Air Maldives from inception since 1981. In 1993 Malé Airport was established as the home base for a Seaplane operation named Maldivian Air Taxi, a foreign private venture, to transfer arrival tourists from Malé Airport to their respective resorts. By 1997 a second sea plane operator began their operations.

Malé International Airport is unique. It can be said it

is a city by itself on a single island. It served as a main hub for airport helicopter services by transferring tourists to resort islands. Unfortunately, the helicopter services were short-lived. On the eastern lagoon of the airport, the sea plane docks and terminal are developed. The arriving international passengers are transferred by land to the seaplane terminals. It is from here the passengers are flown to their resort islands. Some of the maintenance facilities for sea planes (DHC 3) are provided. When the passengers returned from their holidays, they are transferred to the international terminal for checking in to their respective airlines that fly them home.

As I write, Malé International Airport has become the world's largest sea plane operational base in the world, where more than 80 sea planes ply between the airport and resort islands. Another expansion project of Malé International (Velaanaa international Airport)



Figure 8: First direct flight (DC-10 Aircraft) from Frankfurt to Malé on the newly opened Airport. 6th November 1981

is ongoing that includes a Code F runway, additional aprons, new terminal building, a VIP handling terminal and new sea plan terminal. Airport being on a single island, the company generates its own power, produces and distributes fresh water, and manages sewerage and waste management services. On the western side harbour, docks are provided for the incoming and departure of speed boats, and ferry services.

Velana International Airport is now connected to Malé and Hulhumalé, by a bridge and motorway respectively which allows vehicles to drop and pick up passengers at the airport.

operation since 2010. The main air service to Gan is by Island Aviation services, between Malé and Gan, using DHC 8 aircrafts operating about 4 – 5 flights a day depending on traffic demand.



Figure 9: Air Maldives Aircraft Shorts-330 at Kahdhoo Airport

Gan Airport

On Gan Island in Addu Atoll, the southern-most atoll of Maldives, the British Government developed an airfield with auxiliary facilities for use by the RAF. This was used by the RAF until they vacated Gan in 1976. In 2007 this airport, where the main shareholders were Ministry of Finance, Maldives Airports Company and State Trading organization. The government decided to run a public private partnership project and 30% of the share was sold to Casa Holdings Pvt Ltd, a Maldivian company. The Gan Airport is visited occasionally by foreign airlines, between Colombo and Gan, and from Johannesburg in the winter season. There is a flying school in

Airport development in atolls have become a public policy with investment by the government. In 2015, the government announced plans to establish airports to be located so that travel to each airport is within a reach of 20 minutes by speed boat in each atoll.

Development of regional airports

In the annual presidential address to the Majlis in 1981, the then President Gayoom announced that the government had decided to have more airports

in the atolls so that transport can be improved. This was followed by the clearing of land for airports in Hanimaadhoo, in Haa Alifu Atoll, and Kadhdhoo in Laamu Atoll with the hope that very shortly Malé, Gan, Kadhdhoo and Hanimaadhoo would be connected by air.

Development of regional airports continued.

Crossing one and a half degree channel between Laamu and Gaafu Alifu is always risky especially in the south west monsoon. To address this risky travel by sea, the government announced the plan to develop an airport at Kaadedhoo island. Works began in 1982 and the airport was opened for traffic in 1986.

The development of airports opened new opportunities to the private sector. In 2007 the government approved the private investment of an airport on Maamigili in south Ari Atoll. This airport was developed and opened in 2011. This is the base airport of Villa Air, with approved maintenance repair organization. Since then, two more regional airports were developed by private entrepreneurs, one in Dhararvandhoo in Baa atoll, and the other, the Ifuru Airport, on Ifuru Island in Raa atoll.

Although these are private investments, these developers do not have exclusivity and they are

licensed as public airports.

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Figure 10: Dash 8 Aircraft

In noon Atoll, Maafaru Airport on the island of Maafaru was opened in 2019. This airport serves, both domestic and international flights. As tourism expands further into the atolls, new airports are constructed and are being made operational. In order to meet the demand of passengers, Hanimadhoo airport started catering to direct flights to Trivandrum in February 2012. This opened a new avenue for passengers and cargo and led to all the benefits of

a direct flight with success. Before, passengers in northern atolls had to come to Malé for which they incurred additional costs for travel to Trivandrum.

The government's policy of expanding transport by air was announced in 2012. Since then airports at Fuvahmulah, Kooddoo in Gaafu Alifu Atoll, Thimarafushi in Thaa atoll were completed and commissioned. In northern atolls, Funadhoo in Shaviyani Atoll, Kulhudhuffushi in Haa Dhaalu Atoll and Hoarafushi in Haa Alifu Atoll were constructed and completed.

Table 1. Investment by Government in atoll airports: 1982 - 2006

Airport	1982 - 1986	1994 - 2006	1989 - 2006	Total	ICAO
Kahdhoo	15.05	0	46.95	62.00	VRMK
Hanimaadhoo	-	32.31	25.00	57.31	VRMH
Kaadedhoo	-	41.51	34.14	75.65	VRMT
	15.05	73.82	106.09	194.96	
Source: Government data					

Currently, Muli Airport, in Meemu Atoll and Fares-Maathodaa (Gaafu Dhaalu Atoll) Airport are under construction and will open in 2022. Another airport by a private investor in Madivaru Island in Lhaviyani atoll will be opened in early 2022.

Managing airports

These airports are out-sourced to be managed by Island Aviation Services under a contract, except Maamigili Airport which is operated by its owning company Villa Air. The rest of the atoll airports are managed by a newly created state-owned company, the Regional Airports Co. Ltd. established in April 2021, with a mandate to operate and maintain these facilities.

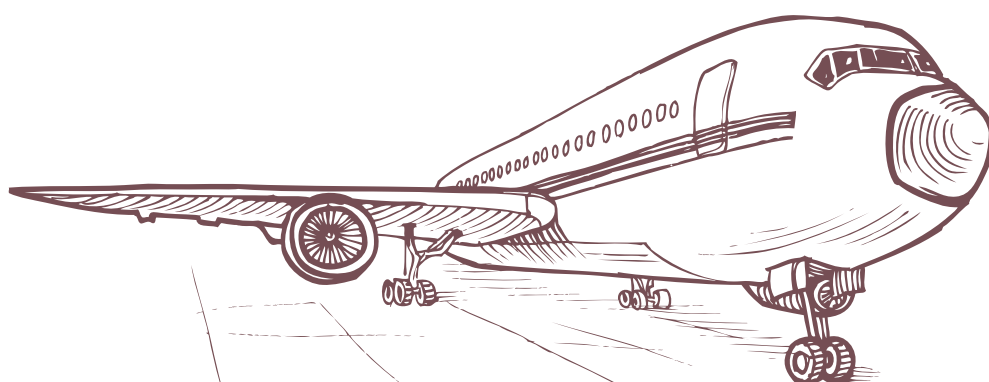


Table 2. Private investments in airports. 2001-2021

Airport	2001-2010	2011-2021	Total	ICAO
Maamigili	377.00	-	377.00	VRMV
Dharavandhoo	242.00	-	242.00	VRMD
Ifuru	-	223.00	223.00	VREI
Koodoo	-	277.00	277.00	VRMO
Kudahuvadhoo	-	339.30	339.30	VRMU
Madivaru	-	256.20	256.20	N/A
Maafaru	-	840.00	840.00	VRDA
Total	619.00	1935.50	2554.50	

Source: Government data

It is noted that it started with basic requirements and in the second phase facilities were improved, such as airfield lighting, runway over lay, air traffic control, terminal building, rest houses for passengers, and crew. It can be concluded that the government has been prudent in these investments. These airports were developed on islands which do not require land reclamation. In 1989, the government announced plans for private investment in regional airports. Since then, the private sector has invested in airports coupled with expansion of tourism into the atolls. Concessions were given to investors to develop a tourist resort in the location of the atolls. Both foreign and local investors developed the airports under this

scheme. These investors opted for islands requiring part land reclamation and part natural Islands. Some of them are an in habited islands, e.g. Maamigili, Dharvandhoo and Kudahuvadhoo.

During the period under review, private investor has invested a total of MVR 2,2540.0 million in these airports facilitates. Typically, these investments consist of runway, taxi way apron and passenger terminal and handling equipment. Harbor and jetties Maamigili (VRMV) Kuda Huvadhoo (VRMU) are base airports for Villa Air and Manta Air respectively which have base maintenance facilities.

Table 3. Government investments in Airports – 2008 -2021

Name	2008-2010	2011-2021	Total	ICAO
Thimarafushi	339.00	-	339.00	VR NT
Fuamulaku	131.00	-	131.00	VR MR
Kulhudufushi	-	453.00	453.00	VR BK
SH. Fonadhoo	-	406.00	406.00	VR CF
Maavarulu	-	756.00	756.00	UR MR
Hoar fushi	-	238.00	238.00	UR AH
Total	470	1853.00	2323.00	

Source: Government data

The government has invested MVR 2.3 billion in these airports for the period 2008-21. Fuvahmulaku airport was developed on land available hence cost is low, whereas for other airports land reclamation and shore protection was done. The government has transferred the management of regional airports to the newly created enterprise indicated. This company take over the function to manage the regional airports. This company have budgetary allocation of MVR 100,00.00 for maintenance and upgrade where necessary and staff wages.

Regional Airport Development (1986 – 2021)

No	Name	Date of Construction	Date of opening	ICAO	Runway Dimension (L x B) (Meters)	Investments (MVR) Million	Ownership
1	Kadhoo Airport	1982-1986	10.12.1986	VRMK	1,220 x 30 metres	62.0	Govt.
2	Kadhoo Airport (Phase 2)	10.12.1986		VRMK	1,220 x 30 metres	46.6	Govt.
3	Hanimadhoo Airport	1982-2003	28.03.2003	VRMH	1,220 x 30 metres	57.1	Govt.
4	Hanimadhoo Airport (Phase 2)	1994 – 1998		VRMH	1,220 x 30 metres	57.6	Govt.
5	Kaadehdhoo Airport	1991-1993	11.12.1993	VROS	1,220 x 30 metres	75	Govt.
6	Kaadehdhoo Airport (Phase 2)	1994 – 2006		VROS	1,220 x 30 metres	75.0	Govt.
7	GAN Airport	1989 – 2006	3.11.2005	VRMG	3,400 x 60 metres	377.0	Govt.
8	Maamigili Airport	2001 – 2011	1.8.2011	VRMV	1,800 x 30 metres	308.0	Private
9	Koodoo Airport	2011 – 2017	10.10.2012	VRMO	1,800 x 30 metres	277.0	Private
10	Dharavandhoo Airport	2007 – 2012	19.10.2012	VRMD	1,189 x 30 metres	242.0	Private
11	Thimarafushi Airport	2010 – 2018	19.10.2012	VRNT	1,200 x 30 metres	337.9	Govt.
12	Dhaalu Airport	2013 – 2012	1.11.2017	VRMU	1,800 x 30 metres	339.2	Private
13	Ifuru Airport	2011 – 2015	28.05.2015	VREI	1,200 x 30 metres	223.0	Private
14	Fuvamulah Airport	2008 – 2010	11.11.2011	VRMR	1,100 x 42 metres	131.0	Govt.
15	Kulhudhufushi Airport	2017 – 2020	September 2020	VRBK	1,220 x 30 metres	453.0	Govt.
16	Sh. Funadhoo Airport	2017 – 2020	20.02.2020	VRCF	1,200 x 30 metres	406.0	Govt.
17	Maavaralhu Airport	2018 – 2020	July 2020	VRMR	1,200 x 30 metres	756.0	Govt.
18	Hoarafushi Airport	2019 – 2020	03.03.21	VRAH	1,200 x 30 metres	238.3	Govt.
19	Madivaru Airport	2017 – 2021	2022		1,200 x 30 metres	256.0	Private
20	Velaanaa International Airport	1966 - ongoing	12.04.1966	VRMH	3,400 x 60 meters	1350.0	Govt.
21	Maafaru Airport	2017-2020	28.02.2020	VRDA	2,220 x 45 meters	840.0	Govt.

Source: Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation, Regional Airports, Male

Tourism Facilities in Atolls and Airports

No	Name of Atoll	Resorts		Hotels		Guesthouse		Total beds	Airport
		No	Beds	No	Beds	No	Beds		
1	Haa Alifu	2	394	0	0	8	96	490	Hoarafushi
2	Haa Dhaalu	1	118	1	104	3	50	272	Hanimaadhoo
3	Shaviyani	2	457	0	0	1	8	465	Fonadhoo
4	Noonu	7	1398	0	0	3	44	1442	Maafaru
5	Raa	12	3088	0	0	0	0	3088	Ifuru
6	Baa	16	2953	1	150	24	462	3565	Dharavandhoo
7	Lhaviyani	9	2250	0	0	2	28	2278	Madivaru
8	Kaafu	52	12582	5	758	179	4178	17518	Velanaa Int.
9	Alifu North	10	2072	0	0	92	1214	3286	Nil
10	Alifu South	16	4200	1	56	46	702	4958	Maamigili
11	Vaavu	3	614	0	0	35	418	1032	Nil
12	Meemu	2	400	0	0	1	12	412	Under Construction
13	Faafu	1	250	0	0	1	14	264	Nil
14	Dhaalu	8	2782	0	0	0	0	2872	Kuda Huvadhoo
15	Thaa	1	152			1	2	164	Thimarafushi
16	Laamu	2	242	0	0	2	78	320	Kahdhoo
17	Gaafu Alifu	6	1036	1	136	1	12	1184	Koodoo
18	Gaafu Dhaal	3	550	0	0	3	48	609	Maavaralhu
19	Fuamulaku	0	0	0	0	15	186	186	Fuamulaku
20	Seenu	3	526	1	156	8	164	846	GAN
Total		156	36064	10	1360	425	7716	45251	

Source: Ministry of Tourism, Male, June 2021

Do not include liveaboard cruises

