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# MOT

Annual Publication 2019  
V.01



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM**  
REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

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“The most people freediving simultaneously is 521 and was achieved by Ministry of Tourism (Maldives), in The Republic of Maldives, on 1 October 2019.

The attempt happened in the middle of the sea off Baros island near Male’.

The President of Maldives, Ibrahim Mohamed Solih was also a participant and dived with everyone.”

**Extract from “The Guinness Book of World Records”.**



# CONTENTS



|                                                                                                 |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| - FOREWORD BY MINISTER H. E. Ali Waheed.....                                                    | 01 |
| - TRANSPARENCY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE.....                                                         | 03 |
| - GUESTHOUSE SYMPOSIUM.....                                                                     | 04 |
| - WATER SAFETY PROGRAMME.....                                                                   | 06 |
| - INTRODUCING BEACH SCOUTS.....                                                                 | 09 |
| - TOURIST VISITOR CENTER AT R.ATOLL ANGOLHITHEEMU.....                                          | 10 |
| - MINISTER'S VISIT TO DUBAI TO ATTEND THE UNDER 13 INTERCONTINENTAL<br>FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT..... | 11 |
| - PARAMOTOR EVENT 2019.....                                                                     | 12 |
| - BAA BR CRAWL 2019.....                                                                        | 13 |
| - SAFETY & SECURITY AUDIT.....                                                                  | 15 |
| - ATOLL CONFERENCE.....                                                                         | 17 |
| - COUNCIL TRAINING.....                                                                         | 17 |
| - EXPOSURE TRIPS.....                                                                           | 18 |
| - LEASING OF LANDS IN INHABITED ISLANDS FOR TOURISM.....                                        | 19 |
| - WORLD TOURISM DAY CELEBRATIONS.....                                                           | 20 |
| - OFFICE AUTOMATION PROJECT.....                                                                | 25 |
| - MoT STAFF OFFICIAL ID .....                                                                   | 25 |
| - LEASING OF NEW ISLANDS.....                                                                   | 26 |
| - TOURISM EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION.....                                                           | 27 |
| - FACILITATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRESSED ISLANDS.....                                    | 28 |
| - PUBLIC CONSULTATION FOR TOURISM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT.....                                 | 29 |
| - FIFTH TOURISM MASTER PLAN.....                                                                | 31 |
| - SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT SIGNED WITH RC CELTA TO PROMOTE MALDIVES TOURISM.....                   | 32 |
| - REVISION OF LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR GOVERNING TOURISM SECTOR.....                           | 33 |
| - FORMULATION OF SOPs FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY.....                     | 34 |
| - MINISTER'S VISITS ABROAD.....                                                                 | 37 |
| - MINISTER'S VISITS TO LOCAL ISLANDS.....                                                       | 38 |
| - TRUST FUND & BUDGET 2019.....                                                                 | 40 |
| - MALDIVES TOURISM PERFORMANCE 2019.....                                                        | 41 |
| - SAP 2020 FOR MINISTRY OF TOURISM.....                                                         | 43 |
| - EVENT CALENDER 2020.....                                                                      | 44 |
| - CREDITS.....                                                                                  | 45 |



# FOREWORD

## BY MINISTER H. E. Ali Waheed

Tourism in Maldives since its inception had banked on our natural blessings, sun, sand and sea, and it had been extremely gratifying. Nonetheless, I believe we have endless opportunities to diversify our tourism product through innovative ideas and strategic policies.

This past year, in line with the vision of the new administration of His Excellency President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, we at the Ministry of Tourism worked towards diversifying the current concept. We embarked on a diversification strategy to explore ways of enhancing the richness of our tourism product by incorporating culture, sports and business while, without compromising on the environment and sustainability. Our focus is to promote this enhanced concept of tourism in six major zones within the country as regional destinations with their distinct individual tourism products. This approach intends to explore the traits and attractions that are unique to each zone and foster a varied tourism product for the country. It will also ensure that the benefits of tourism reach each and every family irrespective of the island or atoll they live in.

Transparency, good governance and strengthening public confidence, are the most important targets set by the Ministry of Tourism, this 2019. I trust we have achieved this through the hard work and commitment of our team. Our target to strengthen the regulatory framework in the coming years resulted in our team working towards amending and consolidating the existing regulations and drafting new regulations that will

come in to force early next year.

I strongly believe that safety and security within the industry must not be compromised. This has been a prime focus of the Ministry this year and we are proud to have successfully completed the Safety and Security Audit of all tourist establishments throughout the country in collaboration with Maldives National Defence Force Fire and Rescue Services and Maldives Police Service. A total of 1059 tourist establishments were inspected. Our goal is to make the Maldives not only the most beautiful, but also the safest tourist destination in the coming years.

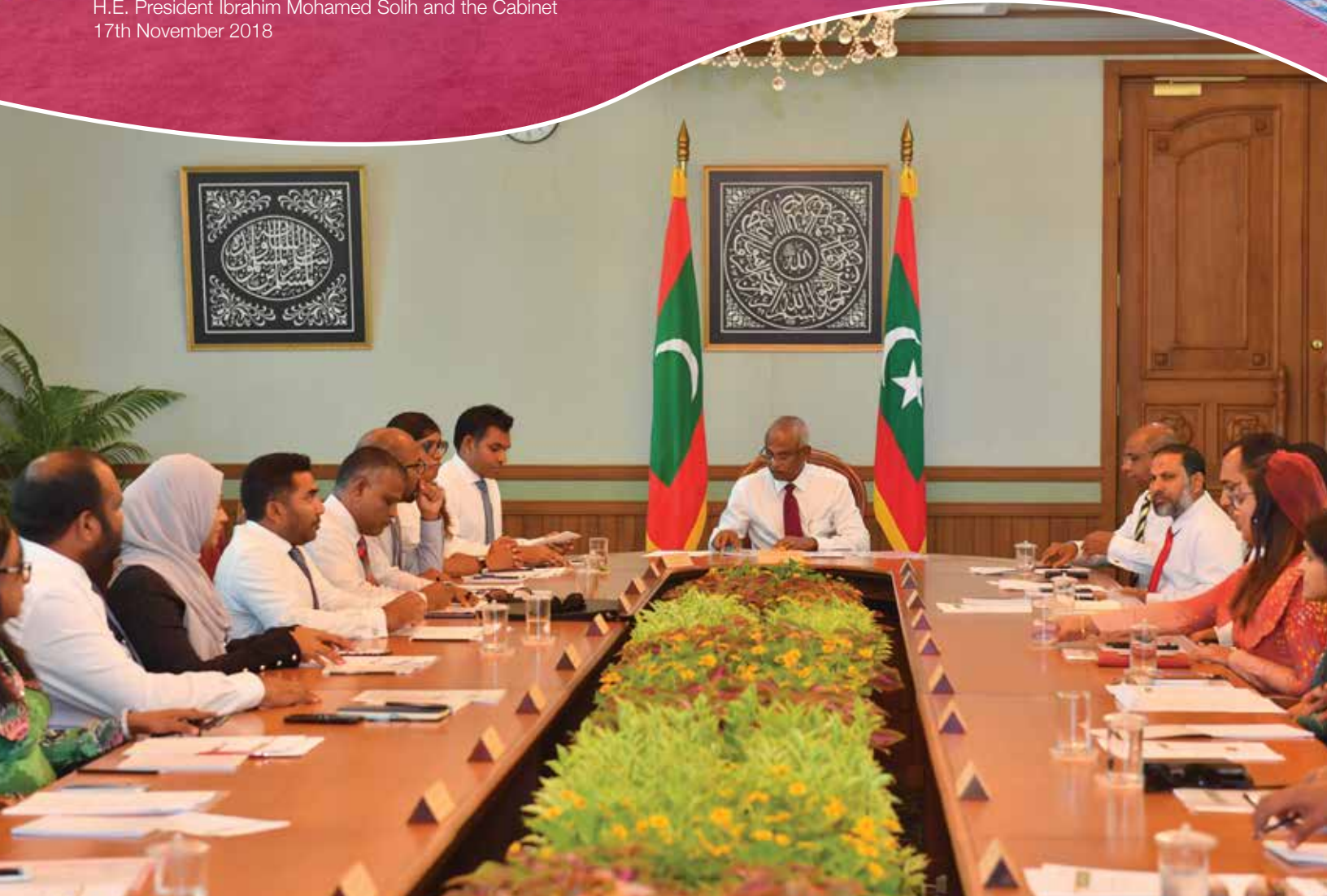
Investor confidence is an essential element for our booming tourism industry. To ensure sustainable continuance of this confidence, we have set our targets for the coming year to speed up our work to attain what has been promised to the public in this Government's Manifesto.

This year marks a milestone for our tourism sector, we achieved a target this year with the arrival of the 1.5 millionth tourist visiting Maldives. With the implementation of new policies and programs to diversify Maldives tourism in 2020, my earnest hope is to see a steady increase in the number of tourists visiting our beautiful 'Jazeera Raajje'. We have the blessings of nature for a robust tourism industry. Let us all make our world of tourism more inclusive, diversified and unique!





H.E. President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih and the Cabinet  
17th November 2018







# TRANSPARENCY & GOOD GOVERNANCE

Transparency is an important pillar of democratic good governance in modern society. It ensures accountability by facilitating the provision of information to measure the performance and progress. The Ministry of Tourism held monthly press conferences to update the media with the work of the Ministry.







# GUESTHOUSE SYMPOSIUM

A symposium was organized by Ministry of Tourism for guesthouses as part of the first 100 working days of the government. The symposium was held on 29th December 2018 with 239 participants representing guesthouses and local island councils. With the theme “Towards Sustainable Tourism”, a number of pressing issues were raised and discussed at the symposium. Panel discussions were held with government stakeholders including:

1. Ministry of Economic Development
2. Ministry of National Planning and Infrastructure
3. Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation
4. Ministry of Arts, Culture and Heritage
5. Maldives Inland Revenue Authority
6. Ministry of Health
7. Ministry of Environment
8. Maldives Police Service
9. Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation
10. Waste Management Corporation

Presentations were given on the following topics:

1. Guesthouse regulations
2. Issues concerning local island tourism
3. Marketing the guesthouse product



Three case studies were presented by Maafushi Council, Ukulhas Council and the Guesthouse Association of Maldives (GAM). Based on the discussions held at the symposium, a report was compiled with 30 recommendations from various stakeholders and guesthouse operators, which was also shared with the Presidents' Office. Most of the recommendations have been addressed during 2018 including key issues such as:

- (a) identification of non-registered guesthouses in local islands
- (b) strengthening and revising regulations relating to local island tourism
- (c) remedies for increasing employment opportunities for locals in tourist resorts
- (d) diversifying tourism product for inclusion of culture and heritage in local islands
- (e) introduction of tourist police
- (f) strengthening safety and security of tourists in both local islands and resorts
- (g) sustainable mechanisms for waste management.



Affan and Zara performing at GH symposium



# WATER SAFETY PROGRAMME

The Ministry of Tourism launched a water safety program to address growing number of unfortunate incidents involving tourists in the Maldives. As an initial step, a team was assembled to study such incidents along with Maldives Police Service and Maldives Coast Guard. This water safety team visited incident sites including K. Thulusdhoo and K. Dhiffushi. Meetings were held with the island councils, Maldives Police Service regional staff, guesthouse operators and water sports centres in these islands. In light of these discussions, it was apparent that, similar to Australia and other beach destinations, Maldives required a water safety program, where continuous assessments can be compiled and practical solutions can be implemented to reduce such unfortunate incidents.



Sample water safety board placed at islands



This year, the water safety program was launched in the following 19 islands:

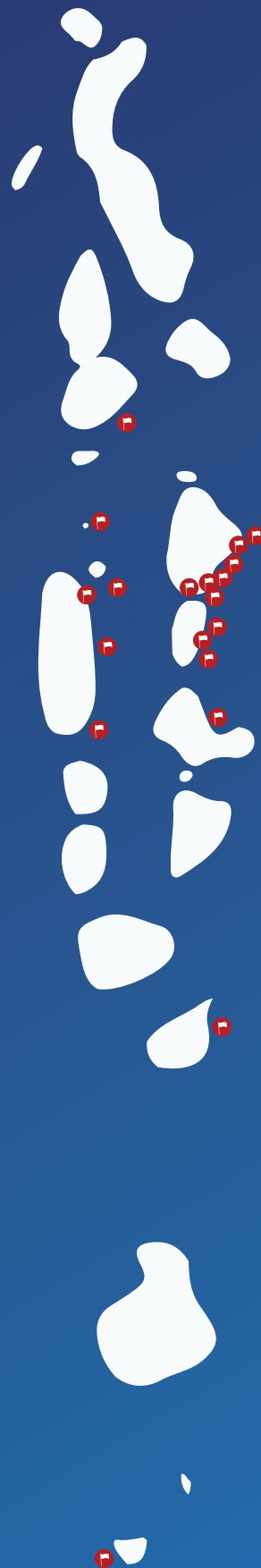
- |                         |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. B. Dharavandhoo      | 11. K. Huraa      |
| 2. AA. Rasdhoo          | 12. Hulhumale'    |
| 3. AA. Thoddoo          | 13. Male'         |
| 4. AA. Ukulhas          | 14. Villimale'    |
| 5. ADh. Dhigurah        | 15. K. Thulusdhoo |
| 6. ADh. Hangnaameedhoo, | 16. K. Maafushi   |
| 7. K. Dhiffushi         | 17. V. Thinadhoo  |
| 8. K. Gulhi             | 18. L. Gan        |
| 9. K. Guraidhoo         | 19. S. Hithadhoo  |
| 10. K. Himmafushi       |                   |

In the first stage a map has been drafted by each local island council which marks three separate areas for swimming, water sports and vessels. Following this, Maldives Coast Guard is currently assessing the safety of swimming and snorkelling areas as well as water sports areas based on the maps proposed by the local councils. Technical assessments are conducted on safety of beach areas including identification of rip currents and tides. Forty-three water safety boards have been installed in beach areas in accordance with beach safety signs, flags and symbols used in Europe. The final stage involves appointment of beach scouts with lifeguard training from Maldives Coast Guard. The training has been scheduled to be conducted in December 2019 by Coast Guard in Girifushi.

With the launching of water safety programs, safety awareness programs were also conducted by Maldives Police Service in local islands. Since the launching of the program in June 2019, the number of unfortunate incidents involving tourists has been reduced significantly compared to previous months.



**Minister Ali Waheed and Male' City Mayor, Ms. Sifa Mohamed at the event held to place the water safety boards at Hulhumale**





# INTRODUCING BEACH SCOUTS

The Ministry of Tourism is planning to place beach scouts in local islands from 2019, as part of the Water Safety Program.

Although the Ministry plans to recruit beach scouts in all local islands hosting tourists, initially two beach scouts will be assigned in 19 islands. These are islands which have more than 100 tourist beds. Lifeguard training arrangements for these scouts have been made with Maldives Coast Guard which will take place in the island of Girifushi.

Training program will cover topics such as:

1. emergency first response
2. accident management
3. observation techniques
4. using rescue equipment and assisting victims
5. understanding open water environment
6. hazardous marine life
7. swimming skills
8. handling lifeguard equipment

Beach scouts will be equipped with recommended lifeguard equipment included in first responder pack such as defibrillators, rescue ring, etc. There are further plans for the provision of Jet Skis for rescuing victims who may get caught in rip currents. Furthermore, beach scouts will receive training on maintaining safety and security of tourists in beach destinations.





# TOURIST VISITOR CENTER AT R.ATOLL ANGOLHITHEEMU



To promote and diversify tourism, Ministry of Tourism plans to build Tourist Visitor Centres in different Atolls of the Maldives. The first Tourist Visitor Centre is to be opened up in Raa Atoll Angolhitheemu. The ground-breaking ceremony was held on the 30th September 2019 which was attended by the Minister of Tourism, Minister of Arts, Culture & Heritage, Member of Parliament for Angolhitheemu constituency, Managing Director of MITDC, local councillors and other senior officials from the government.

The main theme of the Angolhitheemu visitor centre will be the Maldives' journey to democracy. The centre will consist of a museum (that will portray the story line of the fight for democracy, artefacts, etc.), souvenir shop, and common facilities. The visitor center as envisaged will create job opportunities for the local communities and will empower locals to sell their products to tourists.

# MALDIVES SPONSORSHIP TO U13-INTERCONTINENTAL FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

As part of the discussions held with the Minister of Tourism and the former star player of Real Madrid and Spain's National Team, Michel Salgado, Ministry of Tourism was offered the opportunity to become a platinum sponsor for the annual Under 13 Intercontinental Football Tournament 2019 held in Dubai from 14th February 2019 to 16th February 2019. This was a tournament where the major clubs from Europe such as Barcelona, Chelsea, Juventus, Real Madrid and Celta Vigo were a part of. The tournament was won by Celta Vigo at the expense of Juventus in the final match with a score of 1-0.

For a sponsorship of USD 25,000 (Twenty-Five Thousand US Dollars) our destination branding "Maldives - The Sunny Side of Life" was illustrated on the football jersey of the team representing the Spanish Soccer School. In addition to our branding being exhibited on the LED display screen's surrounding the football pitch; an area on the football pitch was assigned for the distribution of promotional material.

This sponsorship proved to be a tremendous opportunity for marketing Maldives as this event had considerable media coverage on Spanish media as well as on social media as the tournament was broadcasted live. H.E. Minister Ali Waheed honoured the event with his presence. Furthermore, deliberations were made for the introduction of sports tourism in the Maldives and for Maldivian teams taking part in future Intercontinental U13 tournaments.







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# PARAMOTOR EVENT 2019



Paramotor Maldives by Sky Guys Pvt Ltd was an event organised by Mr. David Hardingham, a British-based aid organiser, entrepreneur and the former Honorary Consul of the Maldives. With his passion for adventure sports and environmental awareness a grand expedition in the Indian Ocean was formed.

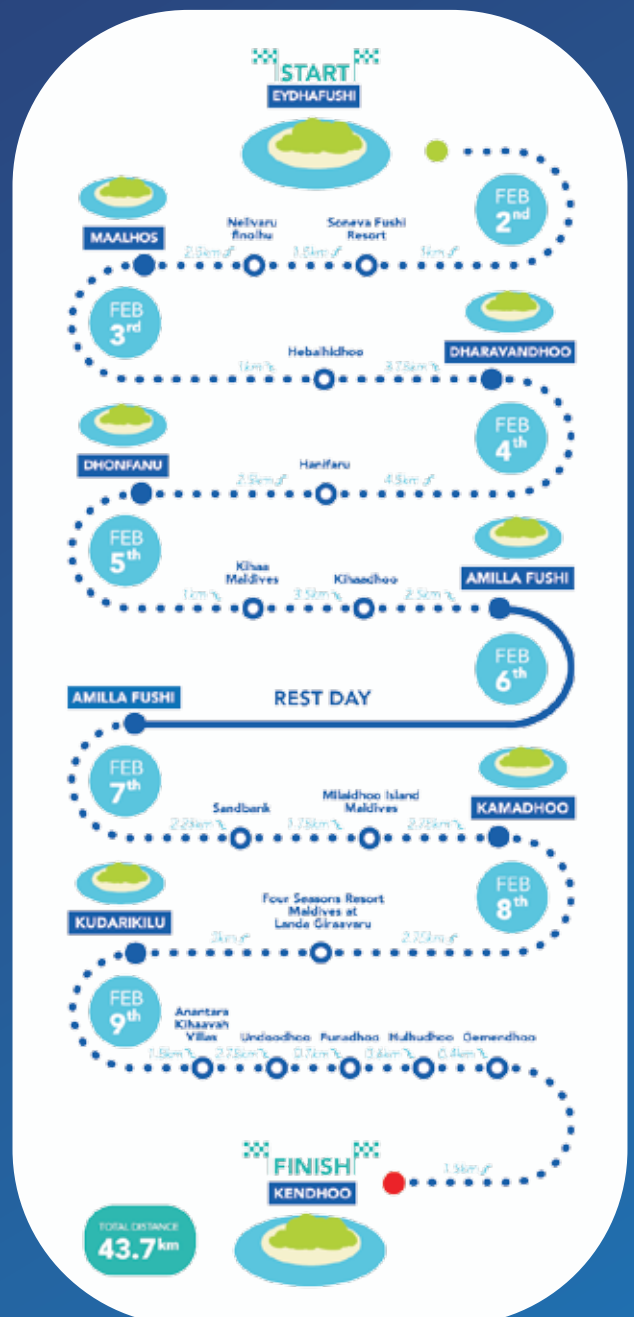
On 22nd February 2019, a team of 13 paramotor pilots started a 2 week 1000km aerial journey from the northernmost Thuraakunu Island in the Maldives. The event conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism showcased the beauty of the Maldives from Haa Alifu Thuraakunu to Thaa Atoll while promoting adventure tourism. It also facilitated in raising awareness on climate change and rising sea levels.

# BAA BR CRAWL 2019

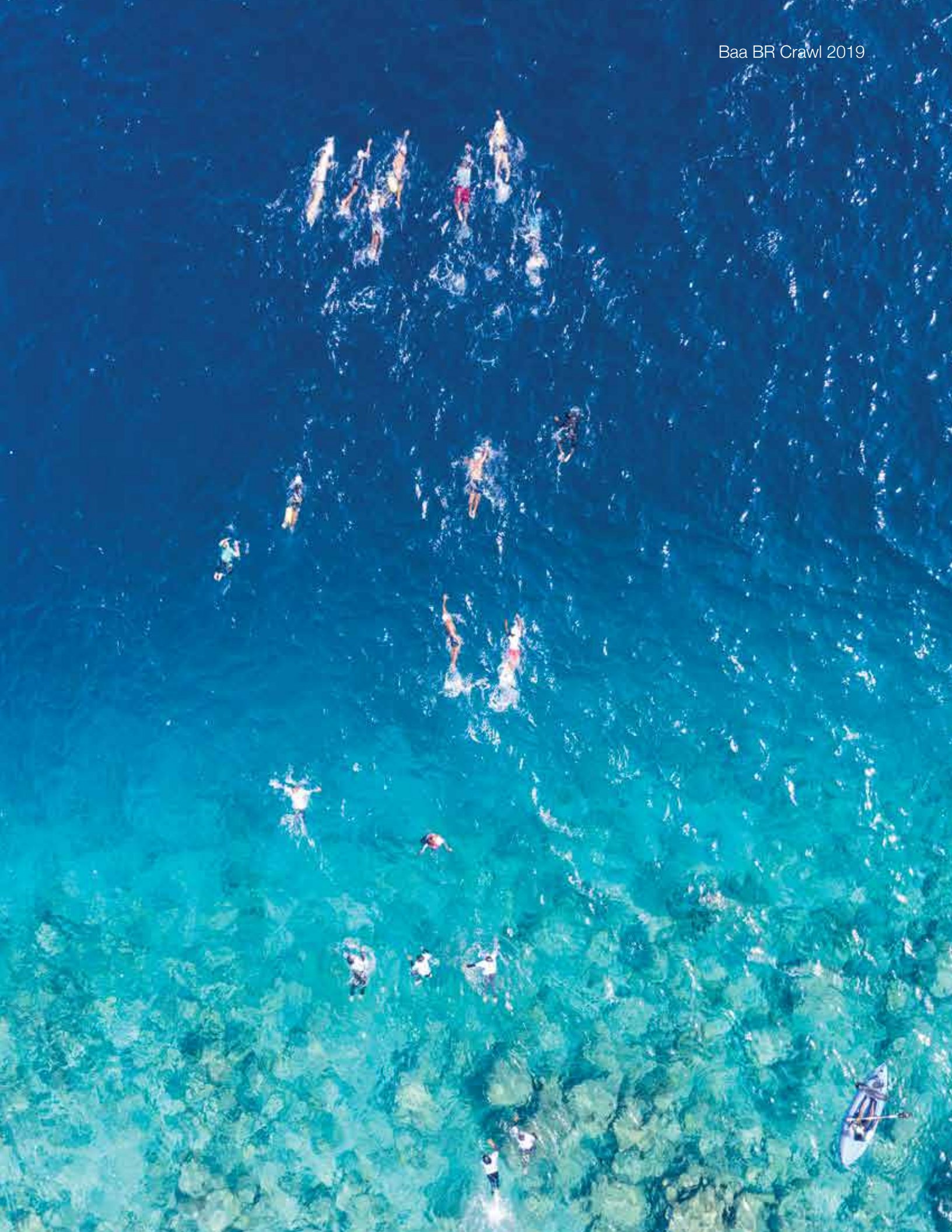
"Baa BR Crawl" was an initiative to introduce and promote Open Water Swimming (OWS) in the Maldives as an activity for leisure, fitness, sports as well as marine conservation awareness. It is the longest organised swimming event in the Maldives so far. Swimmers swam from island to island to raise awareness on conservation of environment and to promote healthy lifestyle choices.

The swim event was held in Baa Atoll, from Eydhafushi Island to Kendhoo Island passing through BAA Atoll UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Maldives. This epic swim covered 43.7 km and the swimmers landed at 21 different inhabited, uninhabited and resort islands.

The event which took place from 2nd to 9th February 2019 was attended by Minister Ali Waheed. As an effort to diversify and venture into sports tourism, the event was conducted by 'Swim Maldives' in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment and the Ministry of Environment.











# SAFETY & SECURITY AUDIT

This year the Ministry of Tourism successfully completed the Safety and Security Audit of all tourist establishments throughout the country in collaboration with Fire and Rescue Service of Maldives National Defence Force and Maldives Police Service. The purpose of this inspection was to ensure that all the tourist facilities have all the necessary safety measures in place. As part of this audit,

a total of **1060** tourist establishments were inspected.



According to the data collected from the audit a total of 17,609 Maldivians are employed in resorts. During these inspections, guest facilities, public areas, food outlets, safety and fire prevention measures, and staff accommodation facilities were inspected.





# ATOLL CONFERENCE

The current administration is committed to pursue a collaborative development strategy with balanced social and economic aspect of development. With respect to this strategy, it is imperative that resorts, which are the backbone of the tourism sector, are aligned with the interests of the local residents in their vicinity and vice-versa.



To this extent, Ministry of Tourism is undertaking conferences in each atoll to provide a common and productive platform for resort managements, local members of parliament and councils to have their concerns heard by each other and reach a suitable solution in the best interests of everyone. This has been successfully carried out in Gaafu Alif and Gaafu Dhaalu Atoll in July, while more recently they have been carried out in Raa, Noonu and Lhaviyani atolls.

# COUNCIL TRAINING

This year Ministry of Tourism conducted trainings on tourist guest houses and travel agency inspection for council officials. So far, our teams have covered Addu City, Fuvahmulah City, Haa Alifu and Haa Dhaalu Atolls under this programme. The trainings were organized by the Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with the atoll/island councils and city councils. The purpose of the training is to carry out the monitoring and regulatory functions of the ministry to facilitate decentralization. A total of 45 officials from the 4 councils have successfully completed the training programme that covered theoretical and practical aspects of inspections including registration procedures, regulations governing guest houses and travel agencies.



More recently, as part of the government's decentralization agenda Ministry of Tourism has conducted a training program for all the local councils on 7th December 2019 and empowered them to conduct inspections of guesthouses locally.



# EXPOSURE TRIPS

Tourism Exposure trips create a platform for students, parents and teachers to gain a better insight into resort operations as well as the work of the Ministry of Tourism and the Maldives hospitality industry as a whole. This year, information was shared through tours and interactive sessions that covered the responsibilities of various departments in a resort, the available job opportunities, and the work towards Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and their efforts to protect and preserve the environment.



Resort: JA Manafaru  
Date: 13 July 2019  
School: Hdh. Atoll Education Center



Resort: Holiday Inn Kandooma Maldives  
Date: 13 July 2019  
School: Jamaludheen School



Resort: Centara Ras Fushi Resort & Spa Maldives  
Date: 14 September 2019  
School: Ahmadhiyya International School



Resort: Huvafenfushi Resort and Spa  
Date: 14 September 2019  
School: Ahmadhiyya International School



# LEASING OF LAND ON INHABITED ISLANDS FOR TOURISM



Local tourism in the form of guesthouses and city hotels is a major economic activity highlighted in the joint manifesto of the ruling coalition. With prohibitive entry costs, development of resorts is beyond the scope of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the country. Therefore, local tourism is a way of redistributing the benefits to SMEs and provides an avenue for locals to make a living while based in their home islands instead of having to migrate to the capital and other islands for better economic opportunities. Plots of land have been opened up in numerous inhabited islands for development of city hotels and guesthouses to cater to the growing demand for such economic activities.

This is a decentralized process where the council, in consultation with the general public, determines the pockets of land which will be utilized for development of tourist facilities. The process will take place with further collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and the President's Office as zoning powers are conferred to the President and ownership rights of these dedicated zones rest with Ministry of Tourism under the Maldives Tourism Act (No 2/99). Once the land use plan of an island has been drawn up and approved by the Ministry of National Planning and Infrastructure, it is sent by the council to Ministry of Tourism and then forwarded to the President's Office for zoning by the President. Once this procedure is completed, Ministry of Tourism confers upon the respective council, the authority to open up the lands for open bid under a memorandum of understanding between the Ministry and the Council or if the council wishes the Ministry will open up larger plots of land for an open bidding process. This year, plots of land from numerous islands ranging from the northernmost Haa Alif Atoll to the southernmost Addu City have been opened up for development. Notably, the plots of land opened up for development in Addu City will be key in delivering the government's pledge of developing 8000 beds in Addu City within this term of presidency.





# WORLD TOURISM DAY CELEBRATIONS



Needless to state, every success story should pave the way for more progress and spearhead specific areas for development. We believe our tourism industry has reached this prime time. This year, we proposed targeted projects that would initially expand the outreach of tourism through the promotion of our culture; and hence, expand the network of tourism beneficiaries through active participation of island communities, and most specifically enabling more women to participate in the tourism sector. With this outlook in mind, we decided to propel this dynamism and diversification of tourism within Maldives through the celebratory events of World Tourism Day this year. Below is a brief highlight of this year's events to mark World Tourism Day.

The world has acclaimed Maldives' tourism concept on more occasions than one. Visitors from all corners of the world have marvelled at the breath taking beauty of our islands, enjoyed the blessings of sun, sand and sea which we have in abundance, and carried the fond memories of Maldives tourism industry back home. While we have received numerous awards, what is more significant is every visitor's cherished memory of holidaying in our beautiful island environment. We are often told by our visitors is that what is retained close to their hearts is the hospitality and the warmth of our people. It is on this note that this year, we envisioned to diversify our tourism industry; develop the niche of "Maldives" through a cultural lens, and make it more interactive for the visitor by facilitating a taste of culture, and a touch of acquaintance with our people, "Dhivehin."

# JAZEERA CANOE RACE



Canoers, both men and women from different atolls of Maldives participated in this event, that took place in Vaavu Atoll on 26th September 2019. The event course ran across V. Keyodhoo, V. Fulidhoo and V. Thinadhoo with a competitive spirit, that enabled engagement and inclusive participation of the island communities of Vaavu atoll, together with the participating atolls.

# FREE DIVE WORLD RECORD ATTEMPT



To promote sports tourism in the Maldives, Ministry of Tourism held a world record event for the most people freediving simultaneously. We were successful in breaking the record by 521 people simultaneously freediving in the lagoon of Baros Maldives, on 1st October 2019.

The President of Maldives, H. E. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, the World Champion and double world record holder for freediving, Mr. William Trubridge from New Zealand, Cabinet Ministers, Senior Officials of the Government, a large number of volunteers and tourists participated in the event.



# KIDS FOOTBALL FIESTA

This was a one-day tournament with participation of kids across schools from Male', Villimale' and Hulhumale' held at the Henveiru Football Ground. The fiesta was undertaken in association with Ministry of Education, Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment and Football Association of Maldives. Through this tournament, the Ministry was able to promote the concept of "Sports Tourism", as well as enable community involvement at a wider scale in the celebration of World Tourism Day this year. Former Real Madrid and Spanish footballer star Michel Salgado, senior officials of RC Celta de Vigo Mr. Carlos Salvador and Mr. Alexandre Otero Lopez attended this event as guests of honour, creating great opportunities for participating kids to develop their skills at an international level. With their assistance skilled players were identified and given the opportunity to undergo training at the Spanish Soccer School in Dubai and the academy of RC Celta de Vigo.



H.E. President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, Minister Ali Waheed and Mr. Thiti Thongbenjamas, Chief Operating Officer-Crossroads

# GALA NIGHT

This function was held at Crossroads Maldives on 3rd October 2019, to celebrate the success of the events conducted to mark world tourism day as well as the success of MoT in achieving its policy goals throughout the year.

# TOURISM JOB FAIR

As part of the Tourism Day celebration events, Ministry of Tourism along with industry partners launched the Tourism Job Fair, which was first of its kind specially tailored for the tourism sector. This was a career open day program where walk-in interviews were conducted and employment contracts were awarded on-site to over 700 applicants within the tourism industry which included jobs, internships, apprenticeships and scholarships.

A total of 69 resorts including all major international and local chains along with 2 associations and 3 colleges took part in the Tourism Job Fair which took place from 27th September to 29th September 2019 at Hulhumale' Farukolhufushi Event Centre.



The public support received for the event was overwhelming with over 3000 visitors. The Fair received visitors from all across the country who flew in with their résumés just to attend the walk-in interviews. 1,200 individual interviews were conducted throughout the fair duration and 53 applicants were awarded with their employment contracts on the spot. An additional 83 applicants were awarded with internships and further 119 applicants were given the confirmation for final screening process in accordance with the policies of the respective employer.

With the success of this first fair, Minister H.E. Ali Waheed decided to host the Tourism Job Fair as an annual event with participation from the entire industry and also ensure the reachability to all parts of the nation by conducting relevant educational and vocational training programs in nearby islands of each newly developing resort with guaranteed employment opportunity for everyone who passes from this program. Furthermore, there are plans to host multiple job fairs in the atolls each year to assist locals in the atolls to find employment in their resident atolls.





# TOURISM CONFERENCE



A one-day conference was held on 3rd October 2019 at Crossroads Maldives. The conference was the beginning of an annual activity by the Ministry of Tourism intended for the tourism industry stakeholders of Maldives. The conference was attended by 200 participants representing government Ministries and authorities, tourist resort and hotel operators, tourism sector associations and major travel agents in the Maldives.

Through this series of conferences, the Ministry aims to focus on key areas related to tourism development in the Maldives. The Conference created a platform for tourism industry stakeholders and government policy makers to meet and discuss on important areas of tourism development in the Maldives paving way for better tourism development policies and strategies. This year's conference was divided into 4 sessions;

- Security in global tourism
- Environment protection and sustainability
- Social inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction through tourism
- Increasing opportunities for local artists

Sessions were moderated by the Minister Ali Waheed and supported by a panel consisting of relevant Ministers and other stakeholders. A presentation was given on each topic with the current scenario and challenges and issues faced by both the Government and the industry.



Panel discussion at the Tourism conference with Minister Ali Waheed

# OFFICE AUTOMATION PROJECT

The office automation project is aimed at enabling Ministry of Tourism and other industry stakeholders to exchange communication electronically and to make government administration more efficient, reduce costs, and improve the delivery of services. Thus, online services are to strengthen the governments' drive towards effective governance and increased transparency, at the same time, enhancing the access to and delivery of government services to benefit citizens and businesses. The system is expected to be completed by 1st May 2020. The main modules of the system are given below:

1. Online Registration
2. Facility Inspection
3. Statistics Module
4. Development Section Module
5. Legal Module
6. Planning Module

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## MOT STAFF OFFICIAL ID



Staff of Ministry of Tourism started wearing an official identification (ID) from 20th August 2019. ID cards have become a crucial part of the everyday work life, making it possible to simultaneously simplify employee and visitor identification and enhance the ministry's integrity and security. The ID cards includes the employee's name, photo and job title. Main purpose for us to start using the personal identification cards is to build better relationships with the customers along with increased security greater accountability.





# LEASING OF NEW ISLANDS

To achieve the government's pledge of additional 35,000 new beds within the country over this 5 year period in line with the national spatial plan, new islands to be developed as tourist facilities were identified. An independent third party was tasked with conducting a preliminary environmental assessment and socio-economic assessment to ensure that the islands being put up for lease are suitable to be developed for tourism and to ensure that the local populace considered these islands beneficial to their socio-economic development. Pledges made by the President were given priority along with the requests of the local populace via their members of parliament and local councils.

The final assessments were presented to the Economic Council and the list was approved by the President and allocated for tourism as required by legislation. Islands were allocated according to the beds pledged for different zones under the national spatial plan with priority being given to atolls with limited tourism presence. Uninhabited islands were allocated for resort development and to be developed as integrated projects as well. Furthermore, allocations of portions of land were made from some large uninhabited islands with the other portions being allocated for agriculture or reserved for food security. To this extent 25 islands or parcels of land from bigger islands have been allocated for tourism development this year.



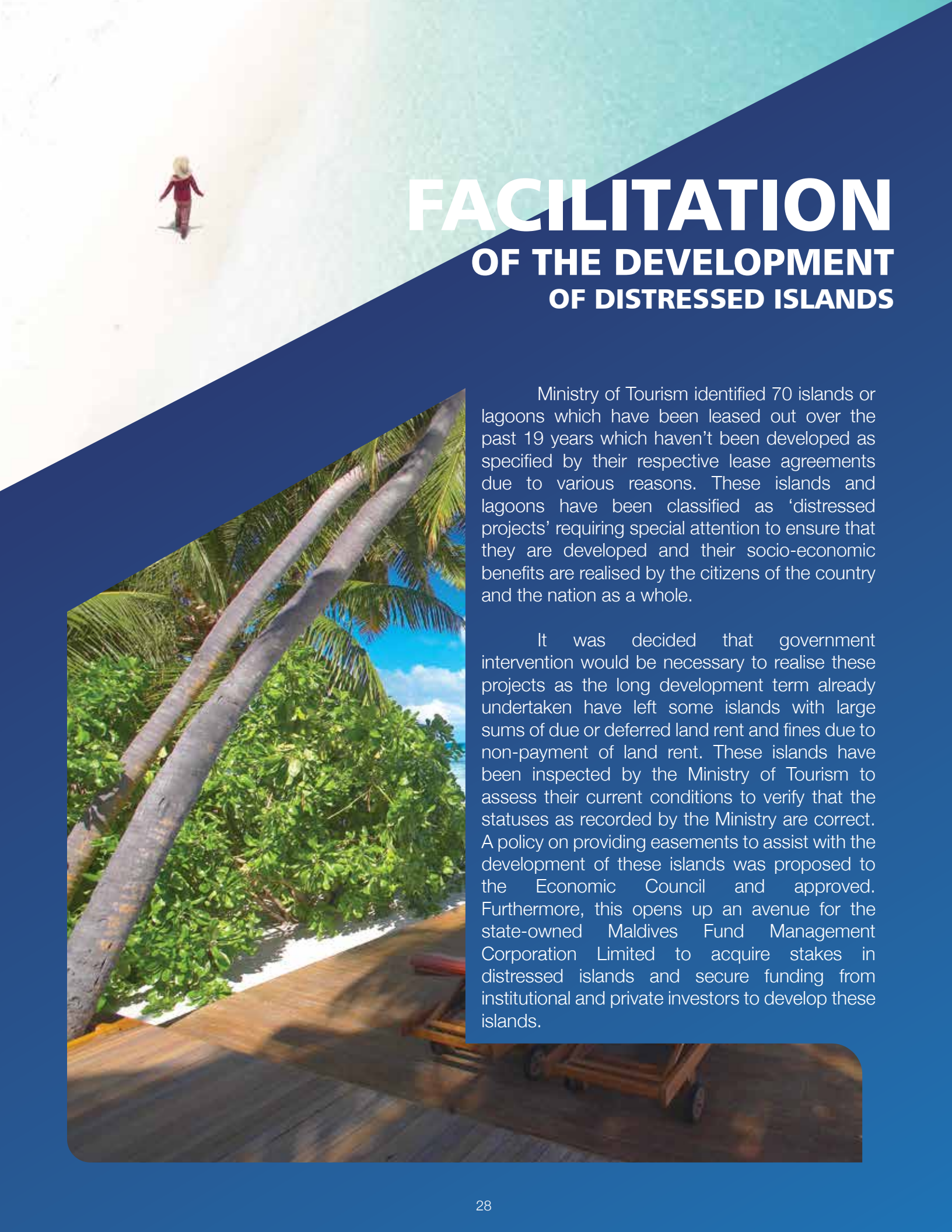
# TOURISM EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION



Ministry of Tourism has been given the mandate to develop and utilize the tourism industry human resource database to track compliance with parity policies. Thus, a situational analysis on tourism employment data collection in the Maldives was conducted and an agreement has been signed with MoT and Intellea Partnership, on 23rd September 2019 for the development of the Tourism Employee Application. This system will collect all the statistics required to formulate and revise the policy on local: foreign parity in the tourism sector, with the objective to increase the percentage of locals at all levels, with a specific focus on senior and technical levels.

Further, this system provides a common platform for employees and employers in finding the best available job and candidate. Furthermore, it provides a communication platform for the employees and other stakeholders to directly communicate with ministry to address certain issues like discrimination in service charge payment, sexual abuse, discrimination by gender or nationality and harassment etc. The application will be officially launched on 1st May 2020; the development phase of the system is expected to be completed by 28th Feb 2020 and will be tested in the real working environment.



A composite image featuring a person walking on a sandy beach in the upper left, and a close-up of palm trees and a wooden walkway in the lower left. The right side of the page is a solid dark blue background containing the title and text.

# FACILITATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRESSED ISLANDS

Ministry of Tourism identified 70 islands or lagoons which have been leased out over the past 19 years which haven't been developed as specified by their respective lease agreements due to various reasons. These islands and lagoons have been classified as 'distressed projects' requiring special attention to ensure that they are developed and their socio-economic benefits are realised by the citizens of the country and the nation as a whole.

It was decided that government intervention would be necessary to realise these projects as the long development term already undertaken have left some islands with large sums of due or deferred land rent and fines due to non-payment of land rent. These islands have been inspected by the Ministry of Tourism to assess their current conditions to verify that the statuses as recorded by the Ministry are correct. A policy on providing easements to assist with the development of these islands was proposed to the Economic Council and approved. Furthermore, this opens up an avenue for the state-owned Maldives Fund Management Corporation Limited to acquire stakes in distressed islands and secure funding from institutional and private investors to develop these islands.





# PUBLIC CONSULTATION

## FOR TOURISM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



Minister of Tourism Hon. Ali Waheed and teams from the ministry have travelled to all the atolls of the country over the past year to consult with the public regarding tourism planning and development. Atoll councils and island councils were consulted as part of the government's initiative to implement a participatory approach in development. Concerns raised by the councils were addressed within the policy formulation process of the ministry especially with regard to the identification of new islands for resort development and for local tourism development.









# FIFTH TOURISM MASTER PLAN



The Maldives Fifth Sustainable Tourism Master Plan (TMP5) is to be formulated by MoT in 2020 to provide a strategic framework and action plan to position the Maldives as an emerging tourist destination in Asia offering uniquely branded “must experience” value for money destinations and products to its domestic and international markets. The Plan is intended to encourage and allow potential investors and current industry stakeholders to identify and take full advantage of the potential benefits from a planned development and promote inclusive growth that support decent and productive work opportunities for Maldivian citizens, particularly women. It will also identify local procurement opportunities and services which can be further developed to promote more inclusive growth from this sector of the economy and ensure value chains are developed to increase value from the sector for development across the Maldives.

The existing Maldives Fourth TMP 2013-2017 ended in 2017 and MoT is required to identify and develop the strategic direction and action plan for the sector for the next 5 years. This will guide both the immediate and long-term growth trajectory of the sector and guide sectoral investments to support the achievement of specified policy objectives. In setting the strategic direction the government hopes to encourage innovation and allow existing tourism operators and potential investors to identify business ventures within the framework of the government’s sectoral policies.

The overall objective of this assignment is to:

- a. Strengthen national and local capacity for tourism sector policy
- b. Destination planning
- c. Human resource development and management through the preparation of a Tourism Master Plan for the entire tourism sector

The Maldives Fifth Sustainable Tourism Master Plan will define strategies and activities and provide directions for further development of Maldives’ tourism sector to promote development based on sustainable tourism principles and practices. The objectives being development of environmentally sensitive business operations, support for the protection of cultural and natural heritage, and tangible economic and social benefits to locals.



# SPONSORSHIP

AGREEMENT SIGNED WITH RC CELTA  
TO PROMOTE MALDIVES TOURISM



Ministry of Tourism on behalf of the Government of Maldives signed an agreement with RC Celta de Vigo to designate it as 'official sponsor' of the Club and the 'official tourist destination' of the Club.

The venture cost 996,000 USD per annum while providing brand presence for 'Visit Maldives' on the team's match and training jerseys, official club travel bus, stadium stands, pitch side LED screens during home games and LED scoreboards.



# REVISION OF LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR GOVERNING TOURISM SECTOR

After the Maldives Tourism Act (Law No: 2/99) came into effect in the year 1999, a total of 9 (Nine) amendments have been made to the Act. Over time it has become clear that with our industry becoming more diverse with new and innovative ideas being brought forth, the Tourism Act at present is insufficient to cater to these changes. With this in mind, the Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Global Environment Facility (GEF) carried out some work on the amendments for the Act as part of the Climate Adaptation in the Tourism Sector (TAP Project). Though the Draft Act compiled through the TAP Project was not continued, Ministry of Tourism in light of the development in the tourism sector has renewed the efforts to amend and update the Act and associated regulations in participation with the stakeholders of this industry. The target set for the completion is 1st May 2020.



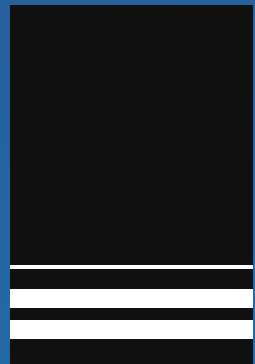




# **FORMULATION OF SOPs FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY**

A procedure in place with the involvement of the government sector and private sector as well as related stakeholders to act in the event of an emergency or a disaster within the tourism industry is significant. Even though, there is no standard of procedure (SOP) in place at present, a lot of related work has been carried out so far at different levels and stages. The key purpose of preparing and keeping such a procedure readily available is to provide guidance and direction to the employees of each related sector through well-defined roles so that they could act in a manner to minimize any damage and take control of the situation efficiently and effectively. At present, it is mandatory for all facilities registered with MoT to have a Disaster Management Plan in place. As part of preparing the procedure, all current plans will be revised accordingly. The Ministry of Tourism is currently in the process of preparing a procedure to act with assistance from related stakeholders of the industry, government and international organizations. The target is to complete the work by the 1st of May, 2020.









# MINISTERS VISITS + ABROAD

Minister H.E. Ali Waheed's trip to Malaysia to attend The World Tourism Conference 2019



Minister H.E. Ali Waheed's trip to Barcelona



Minister H.E. Ali Waheed's trip to London to attend the World Travel Market 2019 and to sign the Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Tourism and Limkokwing University



Minister H.E. Ali Waheed's trip to Spain to sign the RC Celta Vigo Sponsorship





# MINISTERS VISITS TO LOCAL ISLANDS

Stakeholders & Community Engagement Discussion - R Atoll



Stakeholders & Community Engagement Discussion - N Atoll



Stakeholders & Community Engagement Discussion - LH Atoll







# TRUST FUND

Balance Brought Forward from 31.12.2018  
MVR 1,685,501.05

**2018**



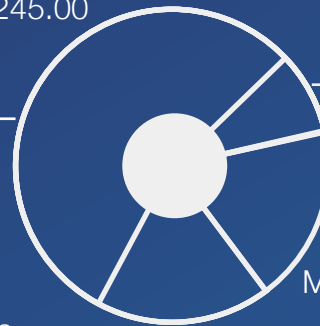
MVR 1,685,501.05

**2019**



MVR 24,609,783.56

Income: CSR Fee  
MVR 22,143,245.00



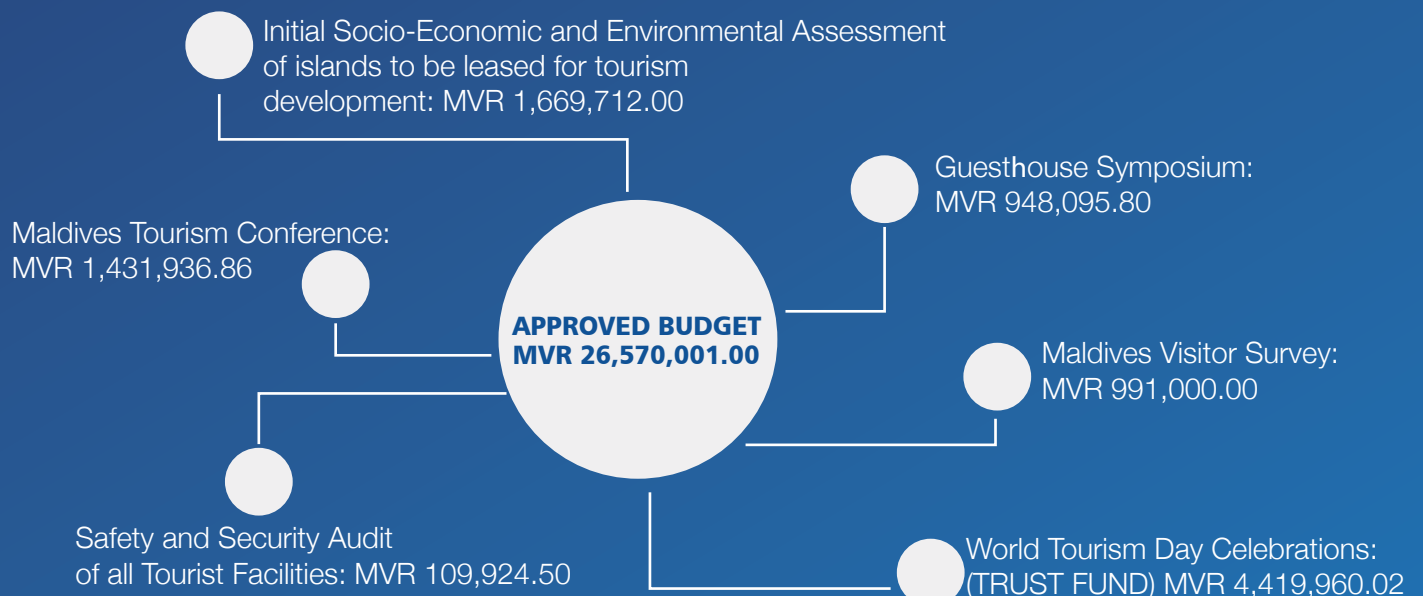
Sponsor  
MVR 6,959,300.00

Expenses  
MVR 6,178,262.49

+

## BUDGET 2019

AMOUNTS SPENT ON PROJECTS



# Maldives Tourism Performance

at end November 2019



## ARRIVALS

# 1,531,531

## VISITORS

at end November 2019

**+14.9%** increase  
over 2018



## MONTHLY ARRIVAL TOTALS



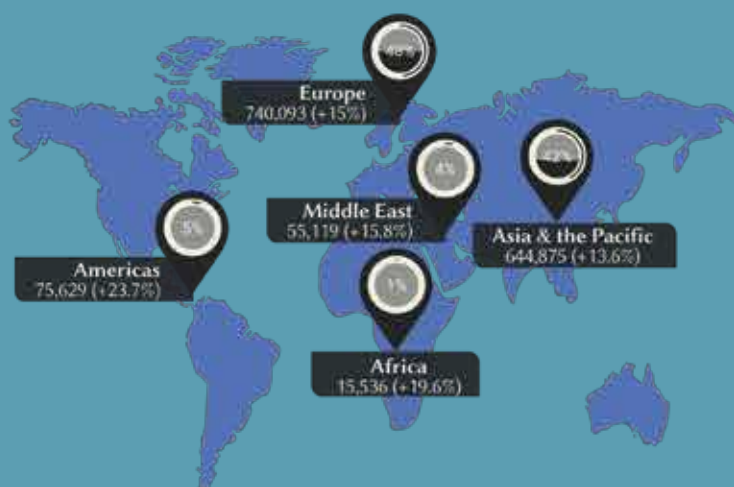
| 2018             | 2019                      |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| (+13.6%) 142,351 | January 151,552 (+6.5%)   |
| (+19.2%) 144,286 | February 168,583 (+16.8%) |
| (+18.5%) 133,466 | March 162,843 (+22%)      |
| (-0.1%) 119,713  | April 163,114 (+36.3%)    |
| (-0.6%) 92,913   | May 103,022 (+10.9%)      |
| (+10%) 93,786    | June 113,457 (+21.0%)     |
| (+8.1%) 122,332  | July 132,144 (+8%)        |
| (+2.2%) 123,992  | August 139,338 (+12.4%)   |
| (+1.5%) 107,620  | September 117,619 (+9.3%) |
| (-0.5%) 127,393  | October 141,929 (+11.4%)  |
| (+4.2%) 125,604  | November 137,913 (+9.8%)  |
| (+5.4%) 150,818  | December                  |



## TOP 10 MARKETS

|                                                                |                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1 CHINA (17.5%)</b><br>Arrivals: 267,875<br>Growth: +0.6%   | <b>6 RUSSIA (4.9%)</b><br>Arrivals: 74,332<br>Growth: +16.5%    |
| <b>2 INDIA (9.5%)</b><br>Arrivals: 145,047<br>Growth: +91.3%   | <b>7 FRANCE (3.5%)</b><br>Arrivals: 52,891<br>Growth: +20.0%    |
| <b>3 GERMANY (7.8%)</b><br>Arrivals: 120,168<br>Growth: +12.7% | <b>8 U.S.A (3.2%)</b><br>Arrivals: 48,267<br>Growth: +27.6%     |
| <b>4 ITALY (7.5%)</b><br>Arrivals: 115,049<br>Growth: +31.5%   | <b>9 JAPAN (2.6%)</b><br>Arrivals: 39,826<br>Growth: +5.6%      |
| <b>5 U.K. (7.5%)</b><br>Arrivals: 114,222<br>Growth: +10.0%    | <b>10 AUSTRALIA (2.4%)</b><br>Arrivals: 37,084<br>Growth: +7.4% |

## ARRIVALS BY REGION







## BED CAPACITY OF TOURIST FACILITIES



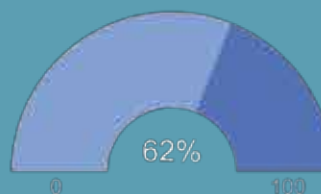
|             | Registered                                         | Operating                                          |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Resorts     | Nos: 164<br>Beds: 36,987<br>Growth in beds: +19.8% | Nos: 152<br>Beds: 35,527<br>Growth in beds: +20.1% |
| Guesthouses | Nos: 580<br>Beds: 9,439<br>Growth in beds: +13.8%  | Nos: 579<br>Beds: 9,429<br>Growth in beds: +13.8%  |
| Safaris     | Nos: 155<br>Beds: 2,930<br>Growth in beds: +5.8%   | Nos: 154<br>Beds: 2,909<br>Growth in beds: +5.1%   |
| Hotels      | Nos: 12<br>Beds: 1,642<br>Growth in beds: -15.5%   | Nos: 10<br>Beds: 1,472<br>Growth in beds: -20.8%   |



## BED NIGHTS

| 2018             | 2019                                                               |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (+17.7%) 941,497 | January 998,457 (+6.0%)                                            |
| (+19.8%) 925,585 | February 1,019,637 (+10.2%)                                        |
| (+16.4%) 873,729 | March 1,006,770 (+15.2%)                                           |
| (+7.3%) 796,840  | April 981,769 (+23.2%)                                             |
| (+6.7%) 641,544  | May 717,992 (+11.9%)                                               |
| (+13.2%) 544,550 | June 714,607 (+31.2%)                                              |
| (+8.1%) 743,514  | July 776,708 (+4.5%)                                               |
| (+10.2%) 822,923 | August 910,643 (+10.7%)                                            |
| (+7.3%) 648,411  | September 708,842 (+9.3%)                                          |
| (+3.3%) 820,687  | October 854,722 (+4.1%)                                            |
| (+7.7%) 908,164  | November                                                           |
| (+5.3%) 909,237  | December                                                           |
|                  | <b>TOTAL TOURIST NIGHTS</b><br><b>8,690,148</b><br>+12.0% increase |

## OCCUPANCY RATE



+0.1% ↑  
over 2018

## AVERAGE STAY



**“ 6.3 Days ”**

+0.1  
days over 2018



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# SAP 2020

## FOR MINISTRY OF TOURISM

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- 1- Conduct research into best practices on promotion and marketing in the tourism sector in collaboration with research institutes and establish guidelines for marketing.
- 2- Award new islands for development to ensure delivery of 35,000 beds according to national spatial plan
- 3- Open up an island for Halal tourism development
- 4- Organize and convene at least one international conference and international entertainment event
- 5- Open up for development of Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) tourism facilities in line with National Spatial Plan
- 6- Attract international sea sports festivals to the Maldives through partnerships with international event companies
- 7- Establish Beach Scouts
- 8- Introduce lifeguard services in all islands where water sports and recreational services are provided
- 9- Establish partnerships with global sporting organizations
- 10- Develop a marina with yachting harbour and bunkering facilities in RUCs in line with the National Spatial Plan
- 11- Develop a cruise terminal in Male' area
- 12- Establish partnerships with international environmental organizations
- 13- Establish a formal mechanism to request for support through CSR initiatives of tourism establishments
- 14- Strengthen relationship between local councils and resort management
- 15- Develop a marketplace at RUCs for the sale of tourism related local products
- 16- Conduct roadshows in 5 different atolls on tourism industry awareness
- 17- Conduct tourism industry job fair to attract locals to senior and technical positions
- 18- Implement a policy whereby the resorts conduct a job fair in the respective atoll during pre-opening period
- 19- Formulate and implement a policy requiring resorts that do not meet the minimum hiring requirement of locals, to make mandatory contributions to the TTF
- 20- Ensure availability of regular and reliable transportation for commute from nearby local islands to resort of employment
- 21- Formulate and enforce a regulation under the Employment Act regarding collection and fair distribution of service charge
- 22- Incorporate compliance monitoring of Sexual Abuse and Harassment Act in tourist establishments, including complaints redressal as part of the Quality Audits of Tourist Resorts
- 23- Develop and utilize the tourism industry human resource database to track compliance with parity policies
- 24- Development of training institutes for which plots have been leased in H.Dh. Nohivaranfaru and L. Gan
- 25- Review and amend the legislative framework for the tourism sector.
- 26- Establish tourist visitor centres to promote Maldivian culture and heritage as part of tourism development.



# EVENT CALENDER

## 2020



### January

- Beach Scout Programme Inauguration; January 2020
- Feria Internacional de Turismo (FITUR); Madrid, Spain; 22nd to 26th January 2020
- Ministry's official visit to Sri Lanka; January 2020



### February

- Outbound Travel Market (OTM); Mumbai, India; 3rd to 5th February 2020
- The U13 Intercontinental Cup; Dubai, United Arab Emirates; February 2020



### March

- Internationale Tourismus-Börse (ITB); Berlin, Germany; 4th to 8th March 2020
- Riyadh Travel Fair; Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; 26th to 28th March 2020



### April

- Arabian Travel Market (ATM); Dubai, United Arab Emirates; 19th to 22nd April 2020
- Shanghai World Travel Fair (SWTF); Shanghai, China; 23rd April to 26th April 2020



### May

- Tourism Industry Employment Application Inauguration; 1st May 2020
- Ratification of Tourism Industry's Revised Legislative Agenda; 1st May 2020



### June

- Korea World Travel Fair (KOTFA); Seoul, South Korea; 6th to 9th June 2020
- Ministry's official visit to Thailand; June 2020



### July

- Ministry's official visit to Singapore; July 2020
- Ministry's official visit to Malaysia; July 2020



### August

- Ministry's official visit to Italy; August 2020
- Ministry's official visit to South Africa; August 2020



### September

- World Tourism Day Celebrations; 27th September 2020
- Ministry's official visit to Russia; September 2020



### October

- Tourism Expo Japan (JATA); Okinawa, Japan; 29th October to 1st November 2020
- Ministry's official visit to Australia; October 2020



### November

- World Travel Market (WTM); London, United Kingdom; 2nd to 4th November 2020
- End of 2nd year in office; 17th November 2020



### December

- International Luxury Travel Market (ILTM); Cannes, France; 2nd to 5th December 2020
- Ministry of Tourism Anniversary; 12th December 2020

## EVENTS IN LINE WITH SAP AND NATIONAL SPATIAL PLAN

- A marina project with yachting harbour and bunkering facilities in Regional Urban Centres
- A cruise terminal project in the Greater Male' Region
- Roadshows in 5 different atolls on tourism industry awareness
- Introduction of reliable transportation for commute from nearby local islands to resort of employment

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## SHAYAAB.MV

In this field of photography, quality of work, meeting deadlines and customer satisfaction is always my priority. My work would consist of suggestions and ideas from my side, improvised with what the client desires.











**MINISTRY OF TOURISM**

REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

2019