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Maldives News Update

RW Robert Wexler

Fri 7/13/2018 2:11 PM

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Sent Items

I thought you might be interested in the latest developments regarding the Maldives.

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The Maldives Government Assures Free & Fair Elections

- The US representative to the Maldives Atul Keshap stated that the US is "committed to working with the Maldivians to strengthen our connections, promote greater mutual understanding, and build a future in which our young people can take full advantage of every opportunity available to them", and stating that the Maldives is a beacon of decency, transparency and genuine democracy.
- The Government of the Maldives is committed to hold free, fair and credible elections. It issued a communique stating that a legitimate and genuine opposition are vital to any healthy democracy, and that any actions taken to undermine the Constitution, the law of the land or actions that impinge on other's freedoms will not be tolerated.

<https://raajje.mv/en/news/34164>

<http://menafn.com/1096947586/Maldives-tells-Western-envoys-it-will-not-allow-unlawful-political-acts-of-the-opposition>

The Maldives- A Top Tourism Destination

- Over 1.2 million tourists traveled to the Maldives in 2017, accounting for \$2.5 billion in revenue, 1/3 of the Maldives GDP last year.
- In the first quarter of 2018 there was a 17% increase in tourist arrivals.
- With nearly 83,019 Indian tourists visiting the Maldives in 2017 (a 14% increase), several initiatives have been launched to increase Indian visitors even more this year.
- The Maldives Tourism Ministry stated that its occupancy rate has gone up by 2.2%, reaching 67% in the first few months of 2018. Tourist visits from January-May reached 632,729, a 10.6% year-on-year increase.
- The Four Seasons Resort Maldives is hosting "the world's most luxurious surfing event," the Surfing Champions Trophy, this August.

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- gardens, and lots of other marine life.
- The new JA Manafaru is synonymous with pure luxury and relaxation, with 84 incredible beachside villas and ocean bungalows. In addition, it brings an added level of adventure to entice tourists and travelers, offering local Maldivian delicacies, wine tastings in an underground volcanic cave, paddle boards, jet-skis, snorkeling, Maldivian cooking classes, and guided dolphin tours.
- Soneva Fushi is not only the leading sustainable resort in the world, but it also offers luxury amenities, such as: dining at a treetop restaurant which serves produce straight from its gardens, sailing on a massive yacht with a glass bottom bathtub or watching a movie at the overwater cinema.

<https://www.travelpulse.com/news/hotels-and-resorts/four-seasons-resort-maldives-to-host-luxurious-surfing-contest.html>

http://www.tnworldwide.com/Article/278851/Maldives_magic_stays

<https://avas.mv/en/49690>

<http://divemagazine.co.uk/travel/8095-10-best-dive-resorts-in-the-maldives>

<https://www.harpersbazaar.com/uk/travel/hotel-reviews/a18658634/ja-manafaru-maldives/>

<https://www.coastalwatch.com/surfing/24949/why-every-surfer-should-go-to-the-maldives-at-least-once>

<https://www.albawaba.com/print/business/pr/jumeirah-introducing-fairy-tale-overwater-wedding-ceremonies-maldives-1150380>

<https://avas.mv/en/50465>

The Maldivian Economy is On the Mend

- The World Bank is giving the Maldives \$12 million to help manage its public finances by increasing its planning and budgeting, increasing debt and cash management, requiring financial reporting, monitoring and overseeing state-owned enterprises, improving how it makes affordable public investments, optimizing the costs and risks of public debt, and tightening public procurement all while improving transparency.
- The Maldives' Ministry of Finance and Treasury has reduced the fiscal deficit from 10.6% of GDP in 2016 to 2.5% in 2017, increased revenue collection, and has increased transparency and accountability.

<http://www.publicfinanceinternational.org/news/2018/06/world-bank-backs-maldives-budget-modernisation>

The Maldives Enhances Bi-Lateral Relations

- Japan has given the Maldives ¥300 million for the development of its health sector.
- Despite earlier media distortion, India and the Maldives are sorting out their diplomatic issues and express confidence that a solution will be found.
- The UAE will establish an embassy in the Maldives. The UAE shares strong ties with the Maldives, with the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development having given the Maldives around \$550 million for various projects, including a new terminal for the Velana International Airport.

<https://raajje.mv/en/news/34873>

<https://raajje.mv/en/news/35019>

<http://gulfbusiness.com/uae-establish-embassy-maldives/>

All the best,

The Honorable Robert Wexler