



# 46th Anniversary of Independence

...the sunny side of life

HIGH COMMISSION OF MALDIVES SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT DHAKA, BANGLADESH



**His Excellency  
Mr. Mohamed Nasheed**

## Message from the President of the Republic of Maldives

Bangladesh. I would also like to take this opportunity to extend warm wishes to the Government and the people of Bangladesh with whom we share over 33 years of close and friendly relations. Forty six years ago today, the Maldives attained full independence and sovereignty, and embarked on the quest of nation-building. Today, we are in many ways a new nation, with new opportunities and a new mindset. The Maldives is now a modern democratic state which champions the values of freedom, equality and democracy. Today, as we celebrate the social and economic progress we have achieved, we are reminded that our progress has not only

been the result of the strong commitment of the people, but also the support of partners and friends in the international community. On this happy occasion, I take great pleasure in thanking the Government and the people of Bangladesh for the continued support and cooperation extended to the Maldives. Bangladesh, being a close neighbor and fellow-member of SAARC, has always been a strong ally and partner of the Maldives. Bangladesh and Maldives not only share similarities of perception as Muslim nations trying to drive national socioeconomic development, but are also united in the international arena in advocating pivotal issues such as Climate Change and sea level rise.

Bangladesh continues to contribute towards the human resource development of the Maldives. In recent times, Bangladesh and the Maldives have also been working together more closely within the SAARC framework to strengthen and promote regional co-operation in South Asia. I remain confident that the decades of friendship and cooperation between the Maldives and Bangladesh will continue to expand in the years to come. I wish continued peace, progress and prosperity for the people of Bangladesh and reiterate my Government's commitment to further strengthen and consolidate the close ties between our two countries.

## Message from the High Commissioner

On the joyous occasion of the Independence Day of the Maldives, I wish to convey my sincere felicitations to His Excellency President Mohamed Nasheed, the Government and the people of Maldives both living at home and abroad. May I also extend warm wishes and greetings to the Government and people of Bangladesh who have always been most supportive to the developmental needs of the Maldives. Our close contact with the people of Bangladesh go back many centuries. Memories and stories about trips to Bengal are the common folklore of Maldivians. We know that merchant ships from Chittagong frequently visited the shores of the Maldives carrying textiles and other necessities. History shows that Bengal used cowrie-shells imported from the Maldives, as a currency during medieval period. In fact, trade between our two nations continued almost uninterrupted well into the middle of the 20th Century. Fraternal links continue today in a much stronger and enduring manner. The establishment of a first ever resident diplomatic mission of the Maldives in Dhaka in July 2008 has further contributed to consolidate these ties. The first Maldives' Supplement issued today in a Bangladeshi newspaper is a case in point. Cordial relations at diplomatic level are only one aspect of the everlasting bonds between our two countries. Close interaction between our respective peoples forms the mainstay of relations between the Maldives and Bangladesh today. Presently, more than 60,000 Bangladeshi expatriates are contributing significantly to the economy of the Maldives. The Governments of our two countries are working towards expanding and facilitating people-to-people contacts. During the visit of His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Naseem, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Maldives to Bangladesh in May this year, a Memorandum of

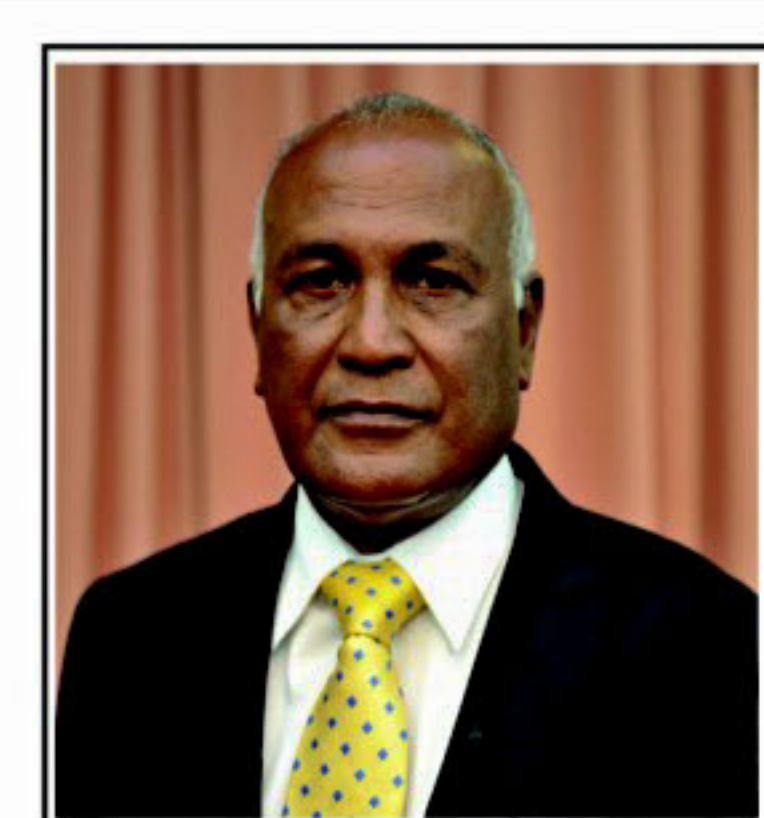
Understanding was signed between the two countries to ensure better recruitment and regulatory mechanism for the placement of manpower from Bangladesh. As Bangladesh is becoming an important destination for Maldivian students, especially in the field of medicine, an MoU was signed between the two governments for cooperation in the field of education during the visit of Bangladeshi Minister of Education, Honourable Nurul Islam Nahid to the Maldives in January this year. Enhanced economic and commercial ties are vital for linkage between peoples of any two countries. In this regard, Maldives has taken a number of initiatives recently towards reaching this objective. During Minister Naseem's visit, it was agreed to share Maldives' tourism experience with Bangladesh, and to encourage two-way tourism flows as well as tourism investment. Two weeks ago, the Government of the Maldives embarked upon an ambitious programme to begin a shipping link directly connecting Chittagong and Hittadhoo Port in the Southern Province of the Maldives. This regular sea-cargo service would revive the historic link between the business communities of the two countries. It would also provide an opportunity for high-quality Bangladeshi products that are in constant demand in the Maldives such as building materials, ceramics, textiles, pharmaceuticals, fresh fruits and vegetables to reach the Maldives on a regular basis. It is my wish that the bonds of friendship between our two countries will be further consolidated and expanded in the years to come

## Message from the Minister of Foreign Affairs

On the occasion of our 46th anniversary of Independence of the Maldives, I wish to convey warm greetings and good wishes to all Maldivians living in Bangladesh. I also wish to extend my best wishes to the Government and people of Bangladesh with whom we enjoy close ties of friendship and cooperation. The close and friendly relations that exist between the Maldives and Bangladesh is founded on mutual respect, goodwill and reinforced by a shared vision of a better future for our region. I am proud to note that the historical journeys our two countries have embarked upon, aimed at the realization of our peoples' aspirations for consolidated democracy, is a positive step towards achieving this shared objective. I also remain confident that this experience will contribute to further strengthening of the close relations that exist between our

two countries. As we celebrate our independence, we can, today, take pride in new found freedoms; an entrenched autocratic system has given way to a democratic system of governance through dialogue, reform and free and fair elections. I am also proud to note that in spite of a backdrop of challenges, our nation has attained remarkable progress both domestically, as well as in the international arena. In this regard, the Maldives has been playing a very proactive role in advocating for human rights issues in the United Nations Human Rights Council, and also in advocating for a smooth transition for Least Developed Countries (LDC's) that graduate to non-LDC status. As we mark this joyous occasion, I would also like to thank our friends in the international community for the partnership and generous support over the

years. As a vital development partner of the Maldives, Bangladesh extends cooperation in a number of fields including human resource development. Bangladesh also currently contributes the largest number to the expatriate workforce in the Maldives making positive contributions towards the socio economic development of our country. As our nation pursues continued progress, we look for the sustained engagement of the international community, and the Maldives is fortunate to have Bangladesh amongst its supporters and advocates in the region and across the globe. In this regard, let me once again, take this opportunity to thank the Government and people of Bangladesh for their continued support and collaboration, and reaffirm my commitment to work together in pursuance of common interests bilaterally and at the regional and global level. I remain confident that the strong



**His Excellency  
Mr. Ahmed Naseem**

ties of friendship between our two countries will be fortified in the years to come, and look forward to further enhancing cooperation between our two Governments and peoples. I wish continued peace, progress and prosperity for the friendly people of Bangladesh and all Maldivians living at home and abroad.

## Maldives ...the Sunny Side of Life

The Maldives has always been a unique nation. Apart from a period of Portuguese domination in the Sixteenth century and carrying the status of a British Protectorate from 1887 to 1965, the archipelago has been an independent country for at least twenty-five centuries. The Maldives is a member of the United Nations, the Commonwealth and the Non-Aligned Movement. The Maldives main

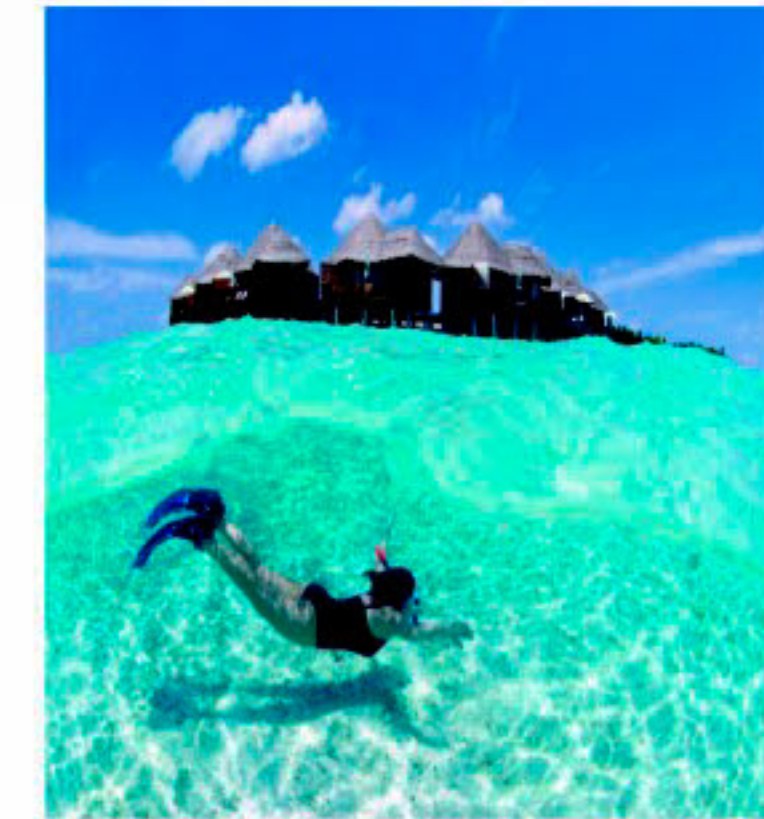


tains a very cordial relationship with the international community and the Maldivians themselves take pride in their hospitality and friendliness! The population of the Maldives currently stands slightly in excess of a quarter of a million. A common language (Dhivehi) and a religion (Islam) have been two blessings that unite the people into a cohesive and peaceful society. As a visitor, come to the Maldives and dare to count exactly how many islands there are in the country. They say that counting the islands including the sand spits is like trying to count how many stars there are in the sky! So, the commonly agreed upon figure of 1190 is but an approximation. These islands are grouped into natural atolls that are protected by surrounding reefs. The islands are of pure white coral sand are low lying, the



highest point on any given island being no more than a meter and a half above sea level. Coconut palms and an abundance of tropical plants make these islands an idyllic place for your holiday if you want to see nature at its best. The Maldives actually straddles the equator. The climate is tropical with no major seasonal differences. Though the southwest monsoon does bring most of the rain, mostly around June and July, tropical rain showers can occur any time! The skies are usually clear and the sun shines brightly. That is when the cooling

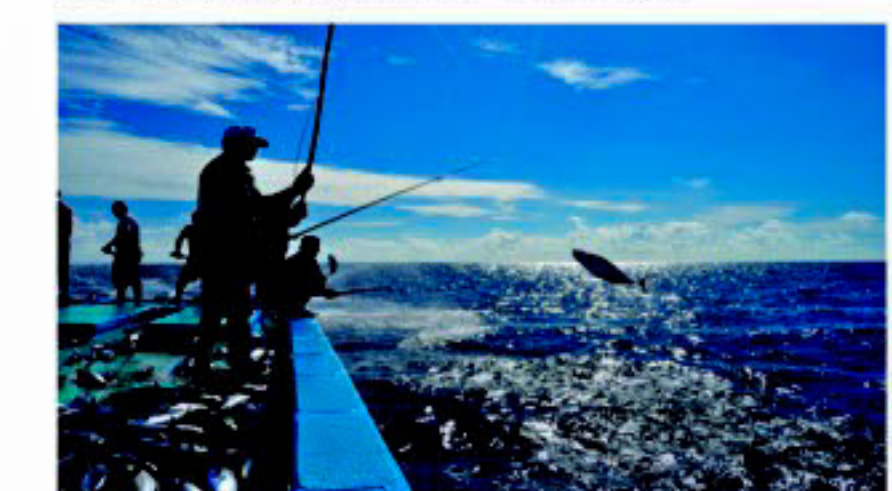
sea breezes, about which poems have been written, bring about the romantic in you. If you are a surfer you will find just the right waves in some places. If you are a diving enthusiast, be prepared for a binge! The white coral beaches are simply unbelievable. The fishing is out of this world. Perhaps because of this, the Maldives is increasingly becoming one of the most sought after holiday destinations in the world.



## A haven for foreign investments

Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) has played a crucial role in the economic development of the Maldives. The Government of Maldives acknowledges the importance of foreign investment and recognizes its contribution to economic development and employment creation. The Law on Foreign Investments in the Republic of Maldives (Law 25/79) governs foreign investments in the country. The success of foreign investments in the Maldives can be attributed to its open and liberal economic environment, relative political stability and the consistent growth of the economy, which has achieved an average annual growth rate of 7.5 percent over the last 15 years. Moreover, the dynamic private sector and development-oriented legal structure all contribute to a climate conducive to trade and investment. The World Bank's 2006 Investment Climate Assessment "Ease of doing business Index" ranked the Maldives top in South Asia.

Foreign investors are offered a simple and transparent policy environment and continuous efforts are being made to make the investing environment more predictable and transparent. Capitalizing on the numerous benefits of investing in the Maldives, many reputed international brand names have established their presence in the country. Amongst them are world class resort investments by international hotel chains and other regional brands. While all sectors of the Maldives economy are open for foreign investors, it aims to attract more foreign investment with an emphasis on investments that are capital intensive, enhance transfer of technology, introduce new skills and are environmentally friendly.



## Heartiest Felicitations to the People of Maldives on the Joyous Occasion

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Greetings and best wishes to the Government and the people of Maldives on the 46th Anniversary of Independence