

The Maldives Independence Day Special

Leadership role for small island state

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AMBASSADOR OF THE MALDIVES



On behalf of the Embassy of the Republic of Maldives in Japan, I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all my fellow Maldivians, and in particular to my fellow nationals living in

Japan, as we celebrate our 56th anniversary of independence.

On behalf of the government of the Maldives, and on my own behalf, I take this opportunity to express my sincere and deepest respect to Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, and to the distinguished members of the imperial family, while wishing them good health and happiness.

I wish also to convey my warm greetings to H.E. Yoshihide Suga, prime minister of Japan, and to the friendly people of Japan. Our sincere appreciation goes to the gov-

ernment of Japan and the Japanese people, for the invaluable support and cooperation extended to us in our efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. We reiterate our commitment to deepening our long-standing bilateral friendship. We wish Japan all the best in the ongoing Olympics.

The Maldives gained its independence on July 26, 1965, and has since committed to building upon its accomplishments, from being one of the poorest countries in the world to becoming a middle-income country. As a small island state, the Maldives has been extremely vulnerable to environmental challenges. President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih has renewed our commitment to sustainable development, prioritized human rights issues, implemented institutional reforms for democratic governance and women's empowerment, and is re-engaging with our international partners. The Maldives has also made significant progress in the U.N.'s global Human Development Index.

Today I am proud to highlight that despite all the challenges of being one of the smallest countries in the world, this June, Maldives

Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid won the election for president of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly. This is the first time the Maldives has presented a candidate for the presidency of the General Assembly. The victory means Shahid will be only the sixth president from a country defined as a small island developing state to preside over the General Assembly in the history of the United Nations.

As Shahid stated: "This world needs a stronger and more effective United Nations, to bring together the best of humanity, to rebuild communities, rescue the planet, recover economies, and restore hope. This is why my presidency will be a presidency of hope. One that looks to deliver for people, for planet and for prosperity." The Maldives is geared and committed to building a resilient world through multilateralism.

Despite the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world economy, due to the timely and vigilant steps taken by Solih, the government has been able to revive its tourism sector while ensuring safety against the novel coronavirus. Today the government is accelerating its efforts to recover,



Maldives Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdulla Shahid has been elected president of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF MALDIVES

rebuild and restore the tourism sector. To support our government's continued initiatives to strengthen tourism, the embassy recently hosted webinars for major Japanese companies and tour and travel operators providing information on existing guidelines and practices for international tourists in the Maldives. The embassy hopes to continue this series in collaboration with close partners as part of increasingly closer investment, trade and tourism cooperation between Japan and Maldives.

Next year, we will celebrate the 55th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Maldives and Japan. I am hoping 2022 will be a remarkable year for Japan-Maldives relations as well as close cooperation with Japan in the region.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.

**Congratulations
on the Anniversary of
the Independence of
the Republic of Maldives**



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