



Maldives welcomes the 1 Millionth Tourist of 2021 to the Sunny Side of Life!

Joint Press Statement by the Ministry of Tourism, Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC), Maldives Airports Company Limited (MACL) and Maldives Immigration

A colorful celebration was held at Velana International Airport on Friday to welcome the 1 Millionth Tourists to the Maldives. The 1 Millionth Tourist Mr Victor Vincent Corentin from France arrived from EK652 flight this afternoon.

He was received by officials of Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC), together with the Ministry of Tourism, Maldives Airports Company Limited (MACL), Maldives Immigration, Maldives Association of Tourism Industry (MATI), and representatives of the Maldives tourism industry.

The commemoration of the event started with the stamping of the passport of the 1 millionth tourist by the Maldives Immigration officer. Victor and his spouse were escorted with a traditional Maldivian bodu beru procession to the VIP lounge area. They were welcomed by Deputy Managing Director of MMPRC Neesha Shahid, Deputy Minister of Tourism Ahmed Athif, CEO & MD of MACL Gordon Andrew Stewart, Chief Principal Immigration Officer Sheeneez Ali and the Chief Guest of the ceremony Secretary General of MATI Ahmed Nazeer. The venue was decorated for the ceremony and the was awarded with a congratulatory certificate and special gifts representing traditional Maldivian culture and tourism.

Victor and his spouse were given a complimentary holiday package sponsored by Villa Hotels & Resorts for 6 nights at Paradise Island Resort which can be redeemed during a period of 1 year. This is the couple's 20th time visiting the Maldives. In addition to this, Club Med Kani upgraded their accommodation and also prepared a warm welcome for the tourists.

Commenting on the achievement of this important milestone, Minister of Tourism Dr. Abdullah Mausoom said that "today we turn yet another page of the remarkable success story of Maldives tourism. Reaching our target tourist arrivals of One Million for the year 2021, two months in advance is a remarkable achievement. Congratulations to His Excellency President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, industry partners & employees, health professionals, local councils, related Ministries, authorities and agencies, NGOs and volunteers, tourists, fellow Maldivians; and MMPRC and Ministry of Tourism team for the continuous engagement and support towards Maldives tourism recovery. Thank you all for the valuable contributions to Maldives tourism success story."

Speaking about this CEO & Managing Director of MMPRC, Mohamed Thoyyib congratulated the industry stakeholders for this achievement "This milestone is only possible due to the perseverance and dedication shown by the government and all the industry stakeholders. Regardless of the predicaments faced due to the pandemic MMPRC ensured the destination was promoted in the most effective and efficient manner so as to maintain destination momentum, create brand awareness and market Maldives as a safe haven. The roles of industry stakeholders in delivering what we market abroad is what brings tourists to our shores."

CEO & Managing Director of MACL, Gordon Andrew Stewart said reaching this milestone is truly remarkable in the most challenging of times in travel and aviation history. "Today is a wonderful day as the Maldives receives the one millionth visitor this year. I am really impressed by the work done by Team Maldives in promoting this destination around the globe. We are seeing huge demand and our airport is now almost running at pre-covid capacity numbers, which is a unique success story in the current world of aviation. I thank all the stakeholders who have contributed to this extraordinary achievement and congratulate the lucky 1 Millionth visitor this year"

Controller General of Immigration Mohamed Ahmed Hanafy noted this is a truly remarkable milestone achieved during testing times and thanked the Immigration officers who work on the frontline to welcome visitors to the Maldives. "Resilience of the tourist arrivals has been a surprise, but the devotion of everyone involved in the tourism industry, both directly and indirectly, is compelling for the landmark, as we pass 1 million visitor arrivals today. I would like to express my gratitude to all of the contributors, particularly the immigration officers who have welcomed tourists a million times this year."

While we celebrated the arrival of the 1 millionth visitor to the country this year, all this could not have been possible without the collective effort of the Government, Ministry of Tourism, MMPRC, MACL, Immigration Maldives, MATI, Customs and Port Health and the rest of the industry stakeholders. The continuous effort by MMPRC to market the



destination as a safe haven at a time when people were reluctant to travel following the pandemic is especially noteworthy.

So far this year, MMPRC has taken part in 25 leading fairs across the world and conducted 5 physical roadshows and 1 virtual roadshow. We have also conducted over 39 campaigns with leading travel agencies across the globe, world-famous publications, major airlines such as Qatar Airways, and on TV channels such as CNN, among many others. We have also conducted 22 familiarization trips so far this year. Through these campaigns, we have reached a staggering 59,738,116,794 with a market value of \$119,595,365.

The government, MMPRC and all industry stakeholders hope for nothing but success in the future to come. We are also confident that whatever crisis comes our way, we are well-equipped and prepared to face the challenges head on and take the tourism industry to the next level.

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