

## Presidential Address

5 February 2026

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.

Honourable Speaker of Majlis, Honourable Members of Majlis.

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ.

Guided by the noble light of Islam; standing proudly in the enduring spirit of Maldivian nationalism; upholding the cherished customs, culture, and heritage of our esteemed civilisation; and with unwavering resolve to safeguard the glorious sovereignty and independence of the Maldivian nation—fortified by mutually beneficial and respectful relations with neighbouring countries and friendly states; committed to building our nation for the long term through sustainable, modern academic progress; dedicated to ensuring peace, development, and security; and guided by the resolute policy of this Government to tirelessly serve the happiness and wellbeing of our people—I stand before you today, Honourable Members of the Majlis, under Article 84 of the Constitution, to present the state of the nation and to outline the objectives for the coming year in accordance with these principles.

As such, under this policy, over the past year, extensive pillars of our national architecture have been reformed and revitalised, yielding tangible results for our people. In accordance with this same strategic policy, I intend to outline our forthcoming development initiatives, and precisely how these will be organised and executed.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The salvation of both worlds resides within the sacred religion of Islam. The most exalted structures in Islam are the mosques—the Houses of Allah. They constitute the most radiant blossoms of Islamic civilisation. It is my firm belief that this noble adornment should be fully reflected across the Maldives – a 100 percent Muslim nation. Last year, we implemented a total of 90 projects, including 74 mosques, seven Islamic centres, three Qur'an centres, and six waqf

buildings. Within this framework, the Haa Alifu Dhidhdhoo Islamic Centre and ten island mosques have been completed and inaugurated. Allah willing, a further eight mosques shall be opened before the blessed month of Ramadan.

In addition to constructing and inaugurating new mosques, this Government places special emphasis on the renovation and maintenance of mosques already in use. Last year, the Government spent MVR 19.4 million on repairing mosques across various islands. A further MVR 15 million has been allocated for mosque renovation this year. This year, the construction of Islamic centres in 10 additional islands will commence under the State budget. Agreements for three of these centres were executed on 21 January of this year.

Furthermore, the construction of mosques in 17 additional islands is scheduled to commence this year, Allah willing. Simultaneously, the vision for the construction of the Grand Mosque in Hulhumalé has been finalised, and construction is expected to commence this year, Allah willing. In addition, under the programme to fully air-condition the main halls and women's prayer areas of mosques with a capacity exceeding 800 worshippers, the main halls and women's prayer areas of four mosques in Malé City shall be fully air-conditioned prior to the commencement of the holy month of Ramadan.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The Holy Qur'an is the constitution of the Muslims—the divine light that guides humanity towards success in this world and the next. We must, therefore, accord due honour to the recitation of the Holy Qur'an and its preservation through memory by the Huffaz. In recognition of the noble service rendered by the Huffaz, and to encourage all those striving to commit the Holy Qur'an to memory in its entirety, the Government has increased the Hafiz allowance from MVR 2,000 to MVR 4,000.

The year 2025 has marked a historic milestone for our nation, witnessing the highest number of Hafiz graduates ever recorded; specifically, thirty students concluded their memorisation of the Holy Qur'an. Furthermore, a branch of the Centre for the Holy Qur'an shall be established on every inhabited island of the Maldives by the conclusion of 2028, and work on this initiative commenced last year.

Furthermore, to ensure sustainable funding for initiatives related to the Holy Qur'an, the physical construction of a dedicated Waqf building in Malé shall, Allah willing, commence this year. Moreover, this Government has commenced the full funding of all expenses pertaining to the organisation and conduct of the National Qur'an Recitation Competition

through the State budget. Furthermore, the prize endowments have been doubled, and the all-round first-place recipient is now accorded a Presidential Scholarship to pursue doctoral studies in any field and in any nation of their choosing.

Furthermore, Allah willing, we shall inaugurate a dedicated initiative this year to expand the cohort of teachers specifically trained to teach the Holy Qur'an to children with disabilities. This initiative is a vital component of our commitment to ensure that the profound talent of beautiful Qur'an recitation is accessible to all.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

For generations, Maldivian pilgrims travelling to the sacred cities of Mecca and Medina to perform the noble pilgrimage of Hajj — the greatest collective act of worship of the Islamic Ummah — have endured many hardships due to the constraint of facilities. Today, however, the Maldives has become the eighth permanent member of the Makkah Route Initiative, inaugurated by the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to facilitate the sacred journey, this membership ensures that Maldivian pilgrims shall henceforth benefit from unprecedented modern facilities and superior conveniences.

Hence, on behalf of the Government of the Maldives, the Maldivian people, and myself, I extend my sincere gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, in appreciation of this initiative. In addition, the traditional Category C service in Mina that has longsince been accorded to Maldivian pilgrims has been upgraded to Category B, with significant improvements in the range and quality of services provided.

For the first time, the long journey between Mecca and Medina will be undertaken by airconditioned highspeed train. This has not only made travel more comfortable but has also reduce the journey time from seven hours to just two. At the same time, free medical care will be provided to Maldivian pilgrims throughout the Hajj period. To ensure the health and well-being of Maldivian pilgrims, an agreement has been executed with a Saudi Arabian hospital, and services have been commissioned for the establishment of a high-quality clinic within the primary accommodation of our pilgrims.

I wish to highlight that all these positive changes — and the substantial improvements in service quality — have been achieved without any increase in the price paid by Maldivian pilgrims. This Government attaches the highest importance to ensuring that Hajj arrangements are completed as early and as efficiently as possible. I am pleased to announce that the Maldives

is among the first eight countries to have completed 100% of this year's Hajj preparations in Saudi Arabia. All arrangements in Mecca, Medina, and related areas have been finalised.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

For the first time in the history of our nation, a Zakat Act has been enacted to strengthen the payment, collection, and management of Zakat, ensuring that it fulfils the noble objectives prescribed by Islam. This marks the end of many years of anticipation and represents a significant milestone in the advancement and protection of religious affairs in the Maldives. The Government's efforts to reinforce the Zakat system have increased public confidence, and as a result, contributions have risen. Last year, a total of MVR 107,205,043 was paid as Zakat — the highest amount recorded in the past five years.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

It is the policy of this Government to shape and develop every aspect of state administration in accordance with the principles explicitly ordained in Islam. Allah Almighty has perfected this religion for our benefit and has illuminated the path through which He is pleased for us to reside. Our nation remains 100 per cent Islamic; therefore, the affairs of our country must be guided by this perfect faith.

I firmly believe that in a fully Islamic state, it is the duty of the Head of State to ensure that national policies are aligned with the teachings of Islam. As the Head of State of this proud Republic, and with the help and blessings of Allah, I will uphold and implement this policy. And even if those advocating for the separation of religion from the State hold alternative views, I will not be swayed.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

With the noble guidance of Islam, and with the aim of reviving Dhivehi nationalism, we have begun the important work of preserving and strengthening our national identity. We have commenced the preservation of the oral histories and memories of our native people, and we have inaugurated a nationwide initiative to identify the unique characteristics of Dhivehi heritage.

This effort seeks to cultivate a new generation of professionals across the nation specialising in the core concepts of the Dhivehi language, culture, and heritage. For the first time in the history of the Maldives, work has commenced to establish an academic society

dedicated to heritage studies, with research initiatives already underway involving 50 dedicated researchers.

At the same time, major national heritage projects have been designed, and work is currently underway in Haa Alifu Utheemu, Thakandhoo, and Baarah. In addition, in pursuit of global acknowledgement and sovereign prestige for our long-established Maldivian civilisation, the nomination dossier to inscribe our Coral Stone Mosques and their intricate stone carvings onto the UNESCO World Heritage List has now been formally submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. This milestone follows the successful conclusion of the requisite research and documentation.

And, the first interactive, immersive museum in the history of the Maldives is currently under construction at the *Us'gekolhu* in Sultan Park and its surrounding area. Allah willing, this historic digital museum will be opened to the public this year. At the same time, in order to revive the fading culture and traditional arts of the Maldives, and to ensure that our heritage, culture, and national identity are safely passed on to future generations, we have taken important steps to strengthen skills development in this sector.

Practical work has commenced on establishing the National Occupational Competency Standards (Level 3), alongside the requisite training frameworks for the National Certificate in traditional arts. This comprehensive programme encompasses Dhivehi carpentry and wood-lathing, lacquer work, goldsmithing and jewellery handicraft, and the intricate arts of *Kasab*, *Feyli*, and *Santhi* weaving, as well as palm-leaf handicraft and other traditional crafts.

Furthermore, this year we will commence the establishment of a wood-lathing and lacquer work skills training centre in Baa Thulhaadhoo, a goldsmithing and jewellery handicraft training centre in Dhaalu Rinbudhoo, and a traditional mat weaving training centre in Gaafu Dhaalu Gaddhoo.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Monuments and buildings serve as the physical expression of our heritage; concurrently, this year we shall undertake dedicated efforts to revive and fortify the spiritual and intellectual dimensions of our national identity. A primary area of focus shall be the noble manners and refined etiquette traditionally upheld by the Maldivian people. To ensure these virtues do not diminish, we shall formulate a "National Vision" to restore and nurture the social values and harmonious relationships that have long defined our society.

Furthermore, a national initiative dedicated to the cultivation of mutual respect shall commence this year—a nationwide campaign to ingrain the profound value of respect will be conducted across the country, Allah willing. Work is also underway to introduce the requisite legislation to support this effort. Accordingly, the National Symbols Bill and the National Heritage College Bill shall be submitted during the second session of this Honourable People's Majlis.

Similarly, the sustainable development, peace, and security of any nation depend upon the moral character and conduct of its people. To ensure that the younger generation of Maldivians is nurtured with steadfast values, exemplary character, and mutual respect, a specialised holistic character-building programme titled “Bingaa” has been inaugurated this year in all schools across the Maldives. Targeting our schoolchildren, this represents the first initiative of its kind in our nation's history.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

With this high priority, the Government continues its dedicated efforts in the field of Maldivian identity and heritage; for the Dhivehi language, Dhivehi culture, and Dhivehi heritage constitute the strongest pillars safeguarding the cultural freedom of our people, our islands, and the Maldivian oceans. It is my national duty to preserve this trust, to pass it to future generations, and to protect and fortify these foundations of Maldivian national identity; I shall carry out this duty tirelessly, and with unwavering commitment.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Significant progress has been achieved in upholding the prestigious sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of the Maldivian Nation, and in fortifying our collective defence and security. Over the past year, substantial work has been undertaken to enhance the capabilities across every sector of the Maldives National Defence Force. As part of our commitment to doubling the operational capacity of the Coast Guard, the largest military vessel ever commissioned into MNDF service was inaugurated last year—a generous gift from the Government of Türkiye.

The Maldives National Defence Force has also commenced the procurement of interceptor craft essential for maritime security and search and rescue operations. Three such vessels have already been commissioned into service. Furthermore, seventeen additional vessels are expected to be inducted this year. The Government of Japan has also agreed to provide financial assistance for the acquisition of two harbour craft patrol vessels.

Meanwhile, the vessel funded by the Government of Australia—dedicated to safeguarding our territory and the Special Economic Zone—is also expected to be commissioned this year, Allah willing. In addition, the development of the MNDF Air Corps was further advanced last year; the inaugural air station in Addu City was successfully completed and inaugurated.

Work on the northern air station, located on the island of Shaviyani Funadhoo, is currently in progress; it shall be completed and, Allah willing, brought into operational service this year. Furthermore, the MNDF Marine Corps last year received its most sophisticated armoured vehicles to date. Throughout the current year, the Marine Corps shall continue to procure advanced equipment and establish new facilities to further strengthen its operational capabilities.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

To elevate the educational and training capacity of the MNDF, land reclamation at Girifushi and the establishment of vital infrastructure are currently underway; furthermore, the expansion of the MNDF Addu Training Centre has also commenced. In addition, we shall, Allah willing, initiate significant structural works at Kalhuthukkalaa Koshi this year. Major improvements are required to strengthen the fire and rescue services, emergency operations service, operational logistics, accommodation, and administrative management of the Maldives National Defence Force.

Additional infrastructure required by the army must also be established across the country. Modern reforms must also be introduced to the education and training systems of the MNDF. New systems must be developed to enhance the MNDF's capacity across multiple fields. I intend to continue these efforts this year, giving special priority to all these areas.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

It is evident that the safety and security of the Maldives' commercial ports have not historically been maintained at the requisite standard, primarily due to the absence of a dedicated State agency responsible for port security. Consequently, the Aviation Security Command under the Ministry of Defence has been renamed as the Aviation and Port Security Command. Its mandate has been significantly expanded to encompass the security and safety of our commercial ports; specifically, it is now charged with ensuring the protection of the Malé Commercial Harbour, the Hulhumalé International Terminal, the Kulhudhuffushi Regional Port, and the Hithadhoo Regional Port. With this change, the Government is

prioritising equipping and strengthening this newly established Aviation and Port Security Command.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

In defending our State—alongside the fortification of our nation's faith, unique identity, and defence capability—it is equally essential to reinforce our external relations. In articulating the foreign policy of the Maldives, this Government prioritises the deepening of ties with our neighbouring partners and with fellow Islamic nations. Our focus remains on enhancing cooperation with international partners to expand trade and broaden economic opportunities.

We are committed to conducting diplomacy grounded in the noble principles of dialogue and mutual respect. In all such endeavours, our foremost priority is to elevate the standing of the Maldives on the global stage and to safeguard the interests of our people. In alignment with this Government's "Maldives First" foreign policy, we have engaged constructively with every nation and international organisation that respects our sovereignty and collaborates with us to advance the interests of the Maldivian people.

This principled approach has already yielded tangible successes over the past year. By reducing our dependence upon any single nation or restricted group of countries, and by fortifying international recognition of our independence, the Maldives is emerging as a nation that speaks with confidence, negotiates with dignity, and stands resolute upon its own principles within the global arena.

In this regard, we have been elected Vice President of the 80th Session of the UN General Assembly, and the Maldives has also been appointed Vice President of the UN Human Rights Council. For the first time in our history, the Maldives has been elected as a member of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. In addition, our nation has secured victories in three other international elections.

At the same time, I wish to highlight the reporting obligations currently pending under international courts and human rights treaties to which the Maldives is a party. The Maldives has participated in the advisory opinion proceedings before the International Court of Justice, concerning allegations relating to the inhumane actions of Israel within the occupied Palestinian territories.

We have also submitted a written statement as an intervener in the case brought by The Gambia before the International Court of Justice against Myanmar, regarding the atrocities and inhumane treatment inflicted upon the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar. Furthermore, the

Maldives has participated in eight meetings of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), where we have condemned — in the strongest possible terms — Israel's ongoing massacre in Palestine.

We have reaffirmed that the Maldives shall always stand at the forefront of global efforts to support the Palestinian people in the pursuit of their fundamental rights, most notably their right to self-determination.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Among the diplomatic engagements and international advocacy efforts undertaken to safeguard the rights and property of the Maldives, I wish to highlight two matters of great importance to the sovereignty of our State. One of these is the issue of *Foalhavahi*. Folhavahi has been known to Maldivians for centuries—long before the arrival of any colonial power within this region or the Indian Ocean.

It lies naturally within the maritime domain of the Maldives, and our ancestors bestowed its name in the Dhivehi language. It is formally referenced within the historical records of the Maldivian navy and our maritime traditions. Knowledge of Foalhavahi has been preserved through our folklore and oral histories to this day; likewise, the official documents of the Maldivian State confirm that the Maldivian kingdom historically encompassed Foalhavahi within its political boundaries.

With these factors in mind, the Atolls of Foalhavahi have—since ancient times and remaining so even today—been an integral part of the daily lives of Maldivian fishermen, who continue to navigate and fish within these waters with ease. This region has long formed an essential cornerstone of the maritime and fishing heritage of the Maldivian people. Accordingly, as the historical connection between the Maldives and Foalhavahi is verified through these extensive sources, the Government of the Maldives submitted formal written objections to the Government of the United Kingdom on 8 November 2024 and 18 January 2026.

These communications expressed our firm opposition to the British decision to cede sovereignty of Foalhavahi to Mauritius. Furthermore, on 15 December 2025, during an online call with the Deputy Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, The Right Honourable David Lammy, I raised this matter directly and conveyed the Government's desire to engage in discussions with the UK regarding this issue.

In addition to these efforts, we have consistently communicated and advocated the Maldives' concerns regarding any transfer of sovereignty to Mauritius in every relevant international forum. Simultaneously, we have conveyed our formal objections to the Government of Mauritius and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) regarding the adverse effects of policies adopted by Mauritius for the economic use of the Foalhavahi region. We have specifically highlighted the detrimental impact these measures impose upon the Maldivian economy, particularly within our vital fisheries and tourism sectors.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The second matter of equal sensitivity regarding the sovereign borders of the Maldives—which I wish to highlight—concerns the decision of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS). This ruling resulted in the loss of a significant portion of our southern maritime territory from within our Exclusive Economic Zone. I firmly believe that not a single grain of sand, nor the smallest iota of territory belonging to the Maldivian people, should ever be relinquished.

However, under the previous administration, Mauritius initiated legal proceedings against the Maldives, asserting that the southern reaches of our Exclusive Economic Zone conflicted with their claimed maritime boundaries of Foalhavahi. In consequence of the position adopted at that time, the Maldives relinquished a substantial portion of its southern maritime territory.

Therefore, on 19 November 2023, I instructed the Attorney General to conduct a comprehensive study of the ITLOS decision and to undertake all necessary legal measures to recover our relinquished maritime territory. In response, the Attorney General convened a three-member Coordinating Committee to examine the matter. On 22 January 2026, the Attorney General submitted to me the Committee's definitive reports, formulated with guidance by the counsel of international consultants.

A Cabinet paper summarising the committee's findings and recommendations was submitted on 25 January 2026. Following the deliberations of the Cabinet, it has since been decided to undertake specific measures regarding the reports provided. The Government has already commenced the implementation of these decisions. In accordance with the advice of the legal experts appointed to this case, we have now initiated the legal process to reclaim the relinquished portion of the Exclusive Economic Zone.

International advisers have provided counsel that the letter dispatched by the President of the Republic of Maldives to the Prime Minister of Mauritius on 22 August 2022 adversely affected the security of the sovereign territory of the Maldives. Upon receiving the advice of international experts, we have decided to withdraw this letter. I make this declaration today, on behalf of this proud nation and on behalf of all Maldivian people, before you—the Honourable Members of this Majlis.

Furthermore, with reference to the archipelagic base points established under the Maritime Zones of Maldives Act, I declare before this Honourable Majlis that the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Maldives—including the territory previously relinquished—remains defined in accordance with the Act. The Government will submit to this Majlis the necessary amendments to the Maritime Zones of Maldives Act to bring it into alignment with the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution.

In addition, experts have advised the establishment of a permanent office responsible for the definitive determination of the Maldives' boundaries, the determination of coordinates and baselines, and the comprehensive management of all matters pertaining to our national borders. It has therefore become necessary to establish a dedicated government agency for this vital purpose.

Allah willing, I shall establish a formal office for all matters relating to the territories of the Maldives. Moreover, as international experts have advised that specific decisions taken by the previous administration may have caused irreparable harm to the Maldivian State, it is essential to determine the justifications for those actions and pursue legal recourse against those responsible, should it be required.

Therefore, I have decided to establish a Commission of Inquiry, under Article 115(o) of the Constitution, to investigate this matter thoroughly; to scrutinise the motives behind those decisions, seek legal accountability where necessary, and establish robust frameworks to prevent such recurrences.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

One of the most critical areas directly linked to the independence and sovereignty of our nation — and the foundation upon which our progress and prosperity depend — is the national economy. A strong, resilient, and vibrant economy also contributes significantly to the peace and stability of our region. However, when this Government assumed office, the economic climate of the Maldives was in an extremely dire state.

Public finances had been severely weakened by the irresponsible and shortsighted policies implemented during the previous administration. State revenue had declined, sovereign debt had risen to unsustainable levels, and the excessive printing of currency had destabilised our economy. Upon taking office, I was compelled to act with utmost swiftness to address these challenges.

This Government has undertaken decisive measures to restore stability. In shaping our fiscal policy, I placed particular emphasis on re-establishing fiscal and debt sustainability and restoring macroeconomic stability. Strengthening investor confidence in the Maldivian economy remained a key priority. Accordingly, from the moment I assumed office, I brought an immediate end to the practice of seeking legal exemptions to print money.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The budget passed by this Honourable Majlis for 2025 is the first budget prepared by this Government. The MVR 56.6 billion budget approved last year has been implemented without adding a single rufiyaa beyond what was authorised by this Honourable Majlis. This marks the first time in five years that a budget has been executed without a supplementary budget. Of this budget, MVR 34.8 billion was spent on recurrent expenditure.

Staff expenses — including the pay harmonisation that came into effect in November 2025 — amounted to MVR 14.2 billion. Interest payments totalled MVR 4.6 billion, whilst Government assistance, statutory contributions, and subsidies amounted to MVR 9.9 billion. Other recurrent government operational expenses stood at MVR 6 billion. Capital expenditure totalled MVR 6 billion. A further MVR 7.9 billion was spent on the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP), and MVR 5.2 billion was allocated for debt repayment.

Loans and other investments amounted to MVR 5.6 billion. Over the past five years, the overall budget deficit averaged more than 9 percent of GDP annually. However, we have now successfully reduced this figure to below 9 per cent of GDP. In fact, the 2025 budget deficit was curtailed to 5 per cent of GDP. Furthermore, in a significant departure from the fiscal patterns observed in recent years, the first forty weeks of 2025 were recorded in a budget surplus. The Government aims to maintain the budget deficit below 9 percent of GDP in 2026 and over the medium term.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

In terms of State revenue, total income and grants for 2025 amounted to MVR 38 billion. Tax revenue reached MVR 28.1 billion, bolstered by the revenue-enhancing policies

implemented under this administration. Non-tax revenue climbed to MVR 9.6 billion, whilst grant aid amounted to MVR 378.2 million. Overall, total revenue and grants experienced a 12 per cent increase compared with 2024.

With these advancements and the continued strengthening of the economy, it is estimated that revenue and grants shall reach MVR 40.4 billion this year. As earnings improve, foreign exchange inflows reached USD 1.2 billion in 2025. As a result, foreign exchange deposits into the Sovereign Development Fund (SDF)—our national debt repayment fund—have increased, contributing to positive developments in our official reserves.

Furthermore, the revitalisation of our official reserves has been significantly bolstered by an agreement with the Government of China—one of our key development partners—to restructure a portion of our existing loan obligations under highly concessional and sustainable terms. Concurrently, India has waived the prior conditionality within their swap facility requiring the Maldives to enter an International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme, and has successfully rolled over the facility.

From January to December 2025, a total of USD 492 million was deposited with the Maldives Monetary Authority, subsequent to the implementation of the Foreign Exchange Act. This influx contributed significantly to the increase of our official reserves in 2025. As of today, the official gross reserves of the Maldives stand in excess of USD 1.13 billion—representing the highest level in the history of our nation.

Furthermore, as a direct result of our proactive engagements, the USD 100 million bond issued by the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development on 26 April 2018 has been successfully rolled over. The maturity of this obligation has been extended for an additional five years, with the Fund formally acceding to the terms of the revised agreement. In addition to the revenue expected this year, USD 100 million in non-tax revenue has already been confirmed and will be received within the next 45 days. Insurance cover for Maldivian creditors has been arranged through AAA rated insurance agencies, and several transactions amounting to an additional USD 150 million have already been completed.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The most serious financial instability confronting the nation when this Government assumed office stemmed from the debt cycle initiated in 2017. To settle a USD 250 million bond borrowed by the then administration from the international debt capital market, the last

administration in 2021 issued a USD 500 million sukuk at a significantly higher rate—a substantial obligation which this Government is now required to discharge this year.

Furthermore, the International Monetary Fund's Article IV Consultation on the economic status of the Maldives, issued on 23 November 2022, stated that the nation was at a "high risk of debt distress"—presenting yet another formidable challenge. Consequently, from the very first day of this administration, we have been preparing meticulously to ensure the repayment of the sukuk.

As a result of this Government's policy to deposit foreign currency into the Sovereign Development Fund (SDF), alongside robust measures to augment these reserves, the SDF today holds in excess of USD 275 million. When this administration assumed office, the usable balance of the SDF stood at a mere USD 2 million. International credit rating agencies have acknowledged this marked improvement in the fund's foreign exchange liquidity under our stewardship. Regrettably, due to the fiscal conduct of the two preceding administrations, the effective cost of financing had escalated to double digits—reaching 10.5 per cent.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The USD 150 million portion of the sukuk maturing this April shall be discharged using the foreign currency reserves deposited to the Sovereign Development Fund (SDF). I assure the Maldivian people, and you, the Honourable members of this People's Majlis, that the interest rate on any sovereign debt undertaken to refinance the remaining balance—following this initial repayment—shall not exceed 9 per cent.

This represents a definitive departure from the unsustainable fiscal practices of preceding administrations. This Government has consistently worked to ease the heavy debt burden inherited from past governments and to secure a more stable and prosperous financial future for our nation. Allah willing, the sukuk maturing this April will be repaid in a manner that strengthens debt sustainability, reduces the burden of repayment, and restores long-term fiscal and debt stability.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The uninterrupted provision of essential services and basic goods to the people is one of the foremost responsibilities of the Government of the Maldives. For an import dependent economy such as ours, maintaining adequate levels of foreign exchange in our official reserves is critical. It offers the assurance that, even amid global economic uncertainty.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The funds deposited into the Sovereign Development Fund (SDF) will be incorporated into the medium-term budget framework to support the repayment of future foreign currency debts. This approach will reduce the need for additional borrowing to service existing debt, thereby lowering the overall debt stock year after year. With the help of Allah Almighty, the measures we are implementing today will pave the way for a future in which the Maldives can rely on the SDF to meet its debt obligations without resorting to further borrowing.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

When addressing the repayment of foreign debt, the Government must give particular attention to the largest source of foreign exchange expenditure: energy. The Maldives expends an average of USD 443.6 million annually on the importation of diesel, with the majority of this expenditure arising from the consumption of imported fuel for electricity generation. Our dependence on diesel for energy production represents the greatest threat to the "energy security" of the Maldives.

To mitigate this, we are undertaking extensive initiatives to deliver results in accordance with my climate mitigation policy, which mandates an increase in the share of electricity generated from renewable sources to 33 per cent by 2028. This is a critical sector that previous administrations failed to prioritise adequately. In this context, when this administration assumed office, only 4 per cent of national electricity—equivalent to 53 MW—was generated from renewable energy sources.

Over the past two years, we have increased this capacity to 110 MW. The Government aims to double this figure and increase it to 220 MW by the conclusion of this year. Achieving this milestone shall represent 50 per cent of the total target required to reach 33 per cent renewable energy generation in the Maldives by 2028. In addition, to diversify energy generation sources within the Maldives, numerous renewable energy projects shall be implemented this year in the Malé region and across various cities and islands throughout the nation. These initiatives shall, Allah willing, reduce our dependence on imported fuels and decrease the foreign exchange burden associated with the provision of essential services.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

In achieving sustainable and meaningful economic development, and in cultivating a vibrant national economy, it is a pivotal policy of this Government to accord special attention to the small and medium-sized enterprise sector—the most dynamic component of the

Maldivian economy. Over the past year, significant progress was achieved in the implementation of this policy. The most substantial exhibition ever held in the Maldives—the Maldives Expo 2025—was successfully held, showcasing the profound creativity and innovation of our people.

As a pivotal advancement towards providing legal protection for Maldivian producers, brands, and intellectual creations—and to safeguard Maldivian enterprises from imitation and fraud whilst protecting the rights of our innovators and creators—the Trademark Act has come into force, and a dedicated Intellectual Property Office was established in the Maldives on 1 January 2026.

To further empower and encourage small and medium enterprises, the nation's first ever MSME Awards were introduced, with recipients recognised across multiple categories. To date, MVR 349 million has been disbursed to 595 small businesses. In addition, the SME Development Finance Corporation has been rebranded as SME Digital and restructured as a subsidiary of the Bank of Maldives, enabling its transition to a modern business model.

Notably, SME Digital has also converted the loans of recipients facing repayment difficulties into Islamic financing facilities, and extended repayment periods, allowing these businesses to continue operating sustainably. We are also addressing the longstanding issue of delayed payments for goods and services provided to the Government and State Owned Enterprises—a systemic challenge that has placed significant strain on the income and cash flow of small and medium enterprises.

Last year, the Government settled MVR 6.3 billion in outstanding payments owed to Maldivian businesses. In addition, MVR 882 million was disbursed to State Owned Enterprises to settle “legacy bills” that had remained unpaid for many years. After verifying the validity of these bills and acting upon the professional counsel of the Auditor General, MVR 469 million has been paid to date. Furthermore, the Government has directly settled an additional MVR 1 billion in outstanding bills owed by State Owned Enterprises.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

As part of several important measures introduced under our ongoing efforts to strengthen the SME sector, the traditional 80-hour clearance window for imported goods at the airport has been extended to 124 hours. Similarly, the demurrage-free period for general goods cleared at the Malé and Hulhumalé ports has been increased from five days to ten days. Furthermore, demurrage fees and freight charges may now be settled in Maldivian Rufiyaa.

In addition, the registration fee for small and medium sized cafés and restaurants has been reduced by 50 per cent for the next two years. The Government also intends to exempt companies holding fewer than 20 foreign worker quotas from paying the annual quota fee, starting from March this year. To implement this, the necessary amendment to the Act will be submitted early in the first session of this Honourable Majlis.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

One of the greatest obstacles to the growth of our small and medium enterprises has been the absence of a robust and reliable online payment infrastructure within the Maldives. To address this, extensive efforts have been undertaken to enable PayPal's operations in our nation, and we have been formally informed that arrangements for its use will become available very soon.

Furthermore, the Bank of Maldives has introduced "Swipe," a multicurrency digital wallet—a 100 per cent Maldivian innovation—enabling fast, secure, and convenient financial transactions both domestically and internationally. This platform allows residents and foreign visitors alike to deposit funds into the wallet and carry out seamless transactions across the Maldives.

In addition, through a strategic agreement with the Alibaba Group, one of the world's largest e-commerce platforms, Maldivian products now have access to a broad range of international markets. As part of this initiative, Alibaba has established an online marketplace specifically for Maldivian vendors, including 400 entrepreneurs from Authentic Maldives. For added convenience, WeChat Pay has been enabled across the Bank of Maldives' POS terminal network, facilitating easier transactions for both the public and businesses.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Financing opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises were significantly expanded and strengthened last year. In this regard, the "Thijara Rashu Fathuru" scheme was introduced as a dedicated Shariah-compliant financing facility to support SMEs operating in the tourism sector. In addition, to address the maritime vessel requirements of SMEs specifically, a "Vessel Financing" product of up to MVR 5 million has been introduced.

Additionally, a financing facility of up to MVR 500,000 has been introduced for content creators and film producers. At the same time, applications have opened for a new financing scheme designed specifically to encourage and empower women entrepreneurs. This scheme provides Sharia-compliant financing ranging from MVR 25,000 to MVR 250,000. Similarly,

applications for Islamic microfinancing under the Maldives Islamic Social Finance Initiative (MISFI) are now available through SME Digital.

This facility is designed for individuals who face challenges in accessing finance through the traditional banking system, as well as for aspiring new entrepreneurs. Fully compliant with Islamic principles, the facility is particularly targeted at those who have not previously received financial assistance from any bank or financial institution. Under this scheme, financing of up to MVR 100,000 is available at the lowest rate in the Maldives—2.5 per cent per annum.

Furthermore, individuals and businesses can now open Indian Rupee (INR) and Chinese Yuan (CNY) accounts online. Positive changes have also been introduced to business financing conditions: the equity requirement for business loans has been reduced from 30 per cent to 20 per cent, and the repayment period has been extended from 15 years to 20 years. To further support businesses, the Bank of Maldives has reduced the merchant fee for POS transactions from 2.5 per cent to 1 per cent. In addition, SME Digital has, on 1 February 2026, opened applications for low-interest general financing, specifically targeting our small and medium enterprises.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The Creator Hub, currently under construction in Malé by the Business Centre Corporation (BCC), marks an important milestone, especially in our efforts to build a thriving creative economy for small and medium-sized enterprises in the country. This facility will provide dedicated, workspaces for Maldivian artists and craftsmen. It will also bring together, under one roof, all services offered by the BCC to support small businesses.

Consultancy services provided by the BCC to local micro, small, and medium enterprises, business workspaces, and the Authentic Maldives Malé outlet will all be housed within this building. The slab work for the eighth floor has now been completed, and Allah willing, the building will be fully completed and inaugurated on 11 November this year.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

To facilitate the growth and development of small and medium enterprises, the Government has decided to designate specific regions across the Maldives for investments in SMEs, offering a range of concessions for a defined period. These include exemptions from land rent and income tax, as well as relief from other state-imposed fees and business levies, alongside additional incentives.

In this regard, I am pleased to announce that the first such zone will be established in the Addu Atoll region—comprising Addu City, Addu Hulhudhoo, and Addu Meedhoo—where, beginning on 1 January 2027, SME investments based within this zone will receive multiple concessions for a period of three years. Throughout the current year, we will establish the legal, administrative, and technical frameworks required to operationalise this initiative.

This effort will, Allah willing, lead to the expansion and growth of small and medium enterprises, create new employment opportunities, and generate significant economic benefits for Addu Atoll and for the entire nation. The Government invites all interested parties to seize this opportunity and help transform Addu Atoll into the IT hub of the Maldives.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The Government aims to elevate the productivity of the Maldives by building upon the foundations established last year for the development of the SME sector, and through the additional initiatives planned for this year. Accordingly, this year has been declared the “Year of Productivity” in the Maldives. My goal is to ensure that every Maldivian becomes a truly productive citizen who actively contributes to the nation’s development. And to ensure that, Allah willing, the Maldives becomes a full-fledged developed country by 2040.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

One of the key indicators of a strong economy is the stability of prices for essential commodities. In this regard, significant progress was made last year. We expanded the list of basic food items to 23 essential goods, ensuring their availability at affordable prices in the Malé market. Furthermore, we announced the seeking of STO agents to supply goods to islands with a population exceeding 3,000, and arrangements are being made to supply these 23 items at STO regulated rates.

In addition, STO has begun importing these 23 essential items to Addu City and Kulhudhuffushi City, ensuring that prices in these regions match those in Malé. An STO distribution centre has been opened at the Malé Commercial Harbour, and an STO outlet will be established in Hulhumalé before Ramadan this year. Furthermore, a duty-free cargo storage zone was established at the Kulhudhuffushi port on 26 August last year.

Allah willing, a similar duty-free zone will be established and operationalised at the Addu Port within this month. The first phase of relocating the Malé commercial port to Thilafushi is another major undertaking. Today, MPL will sign with a contractor for the

construction of the 125-metre international quay wall—the most critical component of Phase One.

Contracts for the remaining works required to relocate the domestic port to Thilafushi, including the construction of the 2-kilometre quay wall, paving, construction of infrastructure, and procuring the equipment, will be awarded midyear. Allah willing, all works will be completed and the Malé Commercial Port will be fully relocated to Thilafushi on 11 November 2027.

This transformation and operationalisation will facilitate a reduction in vessel clearance times from the current seven days to just 48 hours, extend port storage periods, and significantly reduce the cost of importing goods into the Maldives. These improvements will lower commodity prices and directly benefit the public. The provision for storing goods and commodities in Thilafushi will be established to supersede the current storage facilities in Malé; wholesale businesses currently operating in the Malé market area will be entirely relocated to Thilafushi.

Cargo vessels will achieve greater ease of berthing, thereby reducing turnaround times for loading and unloading, and accelerating the distribution of goods to the islands. Allah willing, this will also resolve the logistical challenges faced by the public due to the fragmented storage of goods across multiple areas of Malé. Consequently, the market district—presently among the most congested sectors of Male'—and the MPL zone will become more accessible for both vehicles and pedestrians to navigate.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

In the development and expansion of the Maldives' economy, alongside our commitment to promoting small and medium-sized enterprises, our policies also include creating opportunities for both local and international premium investors. We place great importance on ensuring that the Maldivian economy remains a reliable, secure, and attractive environment for foreign investment.

As a result of our efforts last year, 54 foreign investments were successfully registered in the Maldives. Among the most distinguished is Google's international submarine cable project, "Dhivaru". This milestone investment serves as a testament that the economic reforms undertaken by this Government are securing the confidence of the world's most prominent and technologically advanced companies.

At the same time, under the Sustainable Township concept launched on 29 January 2026 in Noonu Atoll, Project Ayla represents the unprecedented and largest private sector investment in the Maldives to date. Allah willing, the first phase of this investment, valued at USD 790 million, will deliver a transformative boost to the Maldivian economy. Similarly, to adapt to the rapidly evolving tourism landscape, the Government has introduced the "Maldives Pearl Residence" programme, with its international promotion entrusted to Henley & Partners.

This initiative is designed to foster long-term, sustainable economic growth by granting residency visas in exchange for targeted investments in key sectors, in strict adherence with the regulations established by this Government. This programme will facilitate a significant increase in foreign exchange inflows, expand the investment capital, and act as a catalyst to stimulate and flourish new industrial activity across the Maldives.

The legal framework for this programme is currently being developed with the support of this Honourable Majlis. The Government is set to commence the full-scale roll out this April, at which time the intake of applications will formally open.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

In building and diversifying a robust and competitive economy, I firmly believe that increasing the number of educated, capable youth and citizens of all ages is intrinsically linked to the progressive transformation of the Maldives. In this regard, to prioritise Maldivians, an inclusive employment policy has been crafted, and a National Human Capital Needs Analysis has been conducted and published for the first time in the nation's history.

Last year, the Maldives Polytechnic conducted specialised training programmes in the Government's priority technical sectors designated exclusively for Maldivians. To further bolster the national development in various professions, a total of 852 scholarship opportunities and 880 student loans were awarded. Similarly, the technical and vocational education programmes within the school system have been comprehensively revised to ensure our youth are equipped with the exact competencies required by the Maldivian economy.

As a core component of this effort, a Vocational Education Stream has been introduced at the higher secondary level, to enable our students to transition seamlessly into the workforce as productive and skilled contributors. At the same time, we have established the first Vocational High School in the Maldives—a landmark milestone in strengthening the nation's human capital.

I am pleased to announce that during the current academic year, the operations of this Vocational High School will be expanded to train an even greater number of students, directly addressing the skills gap in fields critical to our national progress. Expanding higher education opportunities for youth and citizens of all ages across the entire country and ensuring access to learning in every atoll is a pivotal step toward achieving sustainable development.

Efforts in this regard include, for the first time in our nation's history, the launch of a landmark project to establish higher education campuses in every atoll where no government institution providing higher education and training currently exists. Accordingly, 26 projects of the Maldives National University are underway across 16 atolls, and 12 projects of the Islamic University of Maldives are underway across 10 atolls.

In addition, to ensure that technical education and training opportunities are accessible, 14 projects are in progress to construct technical vocational training centres in 10 atolls, alongside the establishment of accommodation facilities. Furthermore, last year, the First Degree Scheme was extended to an additional 2,728 students, bringing the total number of beneficiaries to 11,252, supported through financial assistance amounting to MVR 921,636,657.

Moreover, regarding student loans extended by the Government to date, for the first time in the history of the Maldives, the Government has aligned student loan facilities with Islamic Shariah, eliminating administrative fees previously charged in addition to the loan amount. Furthermore, to alleviate the foreign exchange constraints encountered by Maldivian students pursuing their studies overseas, the monthly transaction limit has been increased to facilitate withdrawals of USD 1,200 for our students studying abroad.

To address longstanding challenges and find an adequate solution for the concerns faced by students in accessing services from relevant government agencies, the “Kuri” system was introduced on the 3rd of this month. This initiative will further modernise student services by establishing a sophisticated digital framework that automates these processes, replacing the antiquated manual systems previously in effect.

One of the greatest advantages of the “Kuri” system is that it provides a permanent solution to the systemic challenges previously encountered in the timely receipt of funds. The outdated manual payment voucher system will be discontinued, as all processes are now directly integrated with SAP, the Government's financial system. Allah willing, as a result of

this integration, once documentation is finalised, students will be able to monitor the progress of their payments in real time, facilitating immediate deposits without delay.

Furthermore, the protracted waiting periods for loan eligibility assessments will also come to an end. Through modern, automated workflows, the system will facilitate real-time verification upon the submission of applications, instantly determining whether an applicant is currently enrolled in another course or has been blacklisted. Similarly, Allah willing, under the “verify once” principle, students will only be required to authenticate their certificates and personal information once in their lifetime.

This landmark shift will eliminate the burden of repeatedly submitting the same documentation, Allah willing making the entire experience seamless, efficient, and significantly faster. The “Kuri” system also accelerates the selection process for students, owing to the previously mentioned efficiencies. Instead of the time-consuming manual evaluations that have been historically followed, applications will be assessed automatically from the moment of submission through automated evaluation; subsequently, via the ‘one-click awarding’ mechanism, students with the highest scores will be selected instantly, and award letters will be generated.

Agreements and payment schedules will be prepared automatically, eliminating confusion and saving the time previously exhausted by manual drafting. Moreover, students will be able to sign these agreements electronically via a digital link and immediately proceed to request their funding. Furthermore, to resolve communication bottlenecks and to eliminate the frustration of unanswered emails the “Kuri” system includes an AI powered chatbot that provides instant responses to student queries in both Dhivehi and English.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

As a result of the policies implemented to expand opportunities for our educated and capable youth and citizens of all ages—directed at the development and diversification of the Maldives’ economy—since 17 November 2023, 21,174 new jobs have been established within the economy of the Maldives. According to the Pension Office, this includes 6,724 jobs created in the private sector.

Similarly, I announce that following the deliberations of the Cabinet, it has been decided that twelve months from today, commencing 5 February 2027, the role of cashier shall be reserved exclusively for Maldivians across the nation. This decision shall facilitate a minimum of 25,000 additional employment opportunities for Maldivians within the forthcoming year. I

provide the assurance that the Government shall extend comprehensive support across all facets to prepare merchants, collaborating with them to ready their business outlets to ensure the successful implementation of this initiative in the spheres of capacity building, the fostering of strong work ethics, and the promotion of work discipline within the forthcoming year.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The efforts undertaken to expand employment opportunities for Maldivians, especially Maldivian youth, will only bear full and lasting fruit and have a positive impact on the nation's economy if we address the longstanding issue of illegal foreign workers in the Maldives. This Government has, therefore, launched a comprehensive three-year operation to resolve this challenge.

Under operation "Kurangi", biometric data—including ten fingerprints and facial recognition photographs—have been collected and updated for 205,701 foreign nationals thus far. Any foreigner now identified who has not provided biometrics and is without a valid work permit will be immediately deported. As a result, from 17 November 2025 to 31 January 2026, 228 undocumented immigrants identified as having failed to provide biometrics were deported.

From 17 November 2023 to 3 February 2026, a total of 11,496 undocumented immigrants have been deported. To provide perspective, between 2018 and 2023, the total number of foreigners deported amounted to only 2,649. Furthermore, the second phase of operation Kurangi has now commenced. Under this phase, the regularisation programme for foreigners who have provided biometrics but remain without legal status began on 1 January 2026, with 3,837 applications received to date.

The third phase of operation Kurangi will, Allah willing, commence on 3 May 2026. Under this phase, the Maldives Police Service, Local Councils, and the Department of Immigration shall collaborate across the nation to deport any foreign worker who remains unregularised and without a valid work permit, providing no further opportunity for compliance.

With the help of Allah, when this operation concludes on 2 May 2027, it will enable us to identify foreigners residing illegally in the Maldives and verify their precise number. This shall, Allah willing, allow us to establish a reliable and permanent resolution to the issue of illegal immigration in the Maldives.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The tourism industry remains one of the highest priorities of this Government in our efforts to strengthen the national economy. Tourism serves as the backbone of our economic structure and the primary gateway through which foreign exchange enters the Maldives. The past year has witnessed remarkable progress within this sector. A total of 2.2 million tourists visited the Maldives last year, representing an increase of 9.8 per cent compared with 2024.

According to the Maldives Monetary Authority, the tourism industry generated USD 5.55 billion in revenue last year, which constitutes a 13.8 per cent increase relative to the previous year. The Maldives Monetary Authority estimates that tourism revenue shall reach USD 5.6 billion this year. The Government aims to welcome 2.5 million tourists to the Maldives this year, an anticipated increase of 11.3 per cent.

To support this goal, the Government intends to transform the promotion of the Maldives into an inclusive, nationwide endeavour. In pursuit of this vision, I hereby declare 2027 as the “Visit Maldives Year.” This shall be a significant national initiative, implemented with the participation of all stakeholders, both within the Maldives and abroad, who are directly or indirectly involved in the tourism industry.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

In 2023, not a single resort nor a single tourist hotel commenced operations in the Maldives. However, over the past two years, the tourism industry has expanded substantially, with 6,535 new tourist beds established nationwide. These include 1,474 beds established across six resorts inaugurated over the past two years; 708 beds added from three tourist hotels, 3,574 beds from 194 guesthouses, 463 beds from 22 tourist vessels, and 316 beds through homestay initiatives within the same period.

In addition, 391 new travel agencies and 45 dive centres have been registered and operationalised. A further seven resorts and guesthouses are scheduled to commence operations in the tourism sector this year. One of the Government’s primary objectives is to ensure that the benefits of tourism extend to every region of the country. To achieve this, six atolls where tourism remains underdeveloped have been opened for investment with specialised incentives to facilitate expansion, including targeted opportunities for halal tourism.

Thus far, eight locations have been awarded, and six lease agreements have been executed. Additionally, one island dedicated to halal tourism has been leased. Dedicated efforts were also undertaken last year to revitalise tourism in Addu Atoll. The closed Shangri-La Resort has now been reopened—a testament to the close cooperation between the Government

and the resort's management. Furthermore, the previously stalled Hankede Integrated Tourism Development Project has been re-awarded.

Honourable Speaker of Majlis, Honourable Members;

Tourism in the Maldives officially commenced in 1972—fifty-four years ago. Yet, despite more than half a century of this industry's expansion, no administration has heretofore established a mechanism through which every Maldivian receives a direct share of the wealth generated from this national asset. In reality, tourism constitutes the single largest contributor to our economy.

It is an industry founded upon—and continuously benefiting from—the natural assets and beauty of our islands: our beaches, reefs, and lagoons. It is an industry that thrives upon the transformation of these natural assets, which is irreversible in all but a few instances. Therefore, I maintain that it is only just that the true proprietors of these natural treasures—the beloved Maldivian people—receive a direct and equitable share of the revenue generated therefrom.

Following extensive deliberations within the Cabinet, the Government has now resolved that, through a state owned enterprise, a minimum of ten resorts shall be developed over the next three years. The majority of the profits from these establishments shall be deposited directly into the bank accounts of every Maldivian citizen without exclusion, distributed equally and annually in foreign currency.

Every citizen of the Maldives shall be an equal shareholder in all resorts developed under this initiative, a mandate to be established by law. As a consequence of this initiative, the dividends generated by these properties shall be distributed equally, year after year, to every Maldivian holding a national identity card. For the first time in our nation's history, every Maldivian citizen shall become a direct shareholder in the Maldives' tourism industry; the direct financial profit, Allah willing, shall be deposited for every Maldivian citizen.

It is estimated that the initial deposits into citizens' accounts from this investment shall commence in 2030. Based on current projections, Allah willing, each citizen shall receive an average minimum of USD 400 per annum. For instance, within a family of five, each member shall receive this amount—signifying that the household shall accrue a minimum of USD 2,000 annually, in addition to holding equal shares in at least ten resorts, Allah willing. With the help of Allah, all necessary measures to translate this vision into reality shall be undertaken with the utmost urgency.

Honourable Speaker of Majlis, Honourable Members;

The development of airports, the expansion of airlines and routes both internationally and domestically, and the fortification of air, sea, and land transport networks constitute essential pillars in advancing the Maldives' tourism industry. These networks are equally vital for enabling Maldivians to travel, engage in commerce, and participate fully in our national economic growth.

Moreover, within the Maldivian context, the strengthening of these transport networks is indispensable for climate adaptation. Among the significant achievements in this sector, the new terminal of Velana International Airport was inaugurated on 26 July 2025, followed by the development and inauguration of the Hanimaadhoo International Airport on 9 November 2025.

The national airline, '*Maldivian*', introduced widebody operations and commenced commercial flights to three destinations in China on 22 January last year. A second widebody aircraft, Allah willing, is scheduled to join the operational fleet this year. In addition, Maafaru International Airport has undergone significant enhancement, including the expansion of its runway and apron to accommodate larger aircraft such as the Boeing 777 and Airbus A350.

The airport terminal expansion project is currently underway. Furthermore, the Muli Airport was inaugurated on 8 May 2025, and services have commenced. Numerous airport development projects are advancing across the country at various stages of completion. These airport development initiatives include Haa Alif Dhiddhoo, Haa Dhaalu Makunudhoo, Shaviyani Bileiyfahi, Shaviyani Komandoo, Shaviyani Milandhoo, Noonu Vihafaru, Raa Alifushi, Raa Fainu, Baa Thulhaadhoo, Alifu Alifu Mathiveri, Faafu Nilandhoo, Faafu Magoodhoo, Thaa Guraidhoo, Thaa Vilufushi, Laamu Kaddhoo, Gaafu Alif Vilingili, Gaafu Dhaalu Kaadeddhoo, and Addu Gan.

In addition, upgrade works are advancing in Haa Alifu Hoarafushi, Haa Dhaalu Kulhudhuffushi, Shaviyani Funadhoo, Gaafu Alifu Maavaarulu, and Fuvahmulah City at various stages of completion. As a consequence of these development efforts, all operational airports within the Maldives are now equipped for night flight operations and are fully functional. The transfer of Baa Dharavandhoo Airport to Island Aviation shall be concluded by the end of this month, Allah willing, after which development works shall commence.

Similarly, the construction of a second airport in Laamu Atoll is scheduled to commence this year. Moreover, since 1 February this year, flight operations have been inaugurated to

Addu Atoll Gan, Fuvammulah, and Huvadhoo Atoll utilising Twin Otter aircraft on wheels. This initiative constitutes the integrated air connectivity network linking the four southernmost atolls of the Integrated Development Zone, established under the Sustainable Development Policy.

A comparable integrated air connectivity network shall be established within the Integrated Development Zone comprising the three northernmost atolls—linking Haa Alif Hoarafushi, Haa Alifu Dhiddhoo, Haa Dhaalu Kulhudhuffushi, Haa Dhaalu Hanimaadhoo, and Haa Dhaalu Makunudhoo—once all airport developments in the region are concluded. Similarly, seaplane operations to Noonu Velidhoo commenced on 22 January this year as part of the initiative to expand seaplane services, benefiting the tourism industry specifically and all citizens broadly. Flights to Alifu Alifu Thoddoo shall commence this month.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

As part of our commitment to establish a high-quality and reliable maritime transport system, high-speed ferry services were inaugurated across three atolls last year. The remaining eight atolls where the service has yet to be introduced shall, Allah willing, be fully integrated into the high-speed ferry network within the next six months. A sustainable and efficient sea transport network necessitates robust harbour infrastructure.

To this end, 14 harbour construction projects have already been concluded. With 33 new projects executed last year, a total of 102 harbour development projects are currently advancing across the Maldives at various stages of completion. Construction of harbours in 16 additional islands shall be contracted this year. In total, 118 harbour projects shall be concluded and commissioned within the next 19 months, Allah willing.

To attain this objective, and with the aim of reducing costs, the relevant ministries—in collaboration with state owned enterprises—have initiated a dedicated programme to import rock boulders in bulk and stockpile them within the Maldives for this initiative.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

In our commitment to establish a high-quality, sustainable road transport infrastructure, road development projects in six islands were concluded last year. With 57 new projects executed last year, a total of 97 road construction projects are currently advancing across the country at various stages of completion.

Road development works shall be contracted in 13 additional islands this year. Allah willing, a total of 110 island road projects shall be concluded and commissioned within the next 22 months. In the context of road development, communities in many islands where local tourism is expanding have requested high-quality sand-paved roads equipped with proper drainage systems.

To accelerate the implementation of these projects and to reduce the significant costs associated with the simultaneous hire of heavy machinery and equipment, , the Road Development Corporation shall be empowered to operate across multiple islands with cost-effectiveness and self-sufficiency. To this end, the Corporation shall receive all necessary modern machinery and equipment by the end of April this year.

One comprehensive machinery assembly shall be mobilised to Gulhifalhu, where, Allah willing, the construction of water, sewerage, and electricity networks, alongside road development works, shall commence in May through the unified collaboration of all relevant ministries and state-owned enterprises. Similarly, upon the conclusion of land reclamation in Giraavaru Falhu, a secondary assembly shall be deployed to the area, where comparable infrastructure works are scheduled to begin mid-year, Allah willing.

In addition, the design phase for the road re-development project in Malé and Vilimalé, facilitated under Chinese government grant aid, is scheduled to commence early this year, with physical works expected to begin later in the year, Allah willing.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

A major component of the road development programme is the establishment of water and sewerage infrastructure. Since 17 November 2023, water supply systems have been established and commissioned in 42 islands, and sewerage systems have been concluded and operationalised in 39 islands. Consequently, with the completion water systems in 51 additional islands and sewerage systems in 40 islands, every inhabited island in the Maldives will be equipped with these essential services.

Allah willing, all these initiatives shall be concluded across all inhabited islands within the next 18 months, at which time water and sewerage services shall commence. As a pivotal component of the water supply development programme for Addu City—the most densely populated urban centre outside of Malé—the comprehensive upgrade of the city's water generation system shall be concluded before the end of April this year, and services shall commence, Allah willing.

Furthermore, to ensure the security and continuity of the water supply within the Malé region, the water network between Malé and Hulhumalé has been successfully integrated via the Sinamalé Bridge and is now fully operationalised. Last year, a 10,000 tonne water storage reservoir was concluded and commissioned as part of our initiative to enhance water storage capacity within the Malé area. Furthermore, the installation of two additional 13,000 tonne reservoirs in Malé is already advancing.

Moreover, physical works for an additional 13,000 tonne water storage facility shall commence this year to address the requirements of the rapidly expanding population in Hulhumalé. Upon the conclusion of these works in 2027, the water storage capacity of the Malé region shall increase by 130 per cent, Allah willing. In addition, whilst the city's water production capacity was increased by 16 per cent in 2025, the total water production capacity of the Malé region shall increase by 25 per cent, Allah willing, following the conclusion of the ongoing 5,000 tonne production upgrade by the end of March this year.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Ensuring the meticulous maintenance of infrastructure across all islands of the Maldives—conducted according to a structured and professional schedule—is imperative for the delivery of sustainable and cost-effective development. In this regard, as part of our commitment to expand public works services nationwide, Public Works Units equipped with state-of-the-art facilities shall be established by mid-year in 19 islands across 15 atolls where such services are currently unavailable.

With this system in place, the maintenance of island infrastructure—encompassing harbour and canal dredging, various harbour and road repairs, building maintenance, and the upkeep of various public facilities—shall become more efficient, more reliable, and significantly more cost-effective.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

This Government has consistently placed sustainable development at the core of urban planning within the Maldives. True sustainability necessitates that every developmental activity be executed in a manner that safeguards our fragile environment. In this spirit, the Government is undertaking major climate adaptation initiatives. One of the most pressing environmental challenges confronting our islands is severe coastal erosion.

To address this challenge, a National Coastal Zone Management Policy has been formulated. Utilizing remote sensing and artificial intelligence, data has been collected

regarding shoreline changes across all inhabited islands from 2015 to 2023. Last year, six coastal protection projects were concluded across the islands as part of our commitment to resolve coastal erosion.

With 14 new projects executed, a total of 62 coastal protection initiatives are currently advancing through various stages of completion. Coastal protection works shall commence in 15 additional islands this year. Allah willing, all 77 projects shall be concluded and commissioned within the next 18 months. The absence of adequate waste management systems has been a longstanding cause for significant hardship for the people across many islands.

To resolve this grievance, agreements have been signed and projects contracted for the establishment of waste management centres in 135 islands where such facilities are currently unavailable. All initiatives across these islands shall, Allah willing, be concluded and commissioned within the next 15 months. In addition, as a cornerstone of environmental preservation and with the objective of fostering a greener Maldivian landscape, a visionary climate mitigation initiative—the Five Million Trees by 2028 Programme—has been inaugurated.

To date, 1.5 million trees have already been planted under this initiative. A further one million trees shall be planted during the current year, followed by 1.5 million trees in 2027; furthermore, the final one million trees scheduled for 2028 have been integrated into the plans and arrangements.

Honourable Speaker of Majlis, Honourable Members;

For the continued development of Fisheries, the backbone of the Maldivian economy, deserves our utmost attention. The fisheries industry, long neglected, remains the strongest sector our forefathers entrusted to us. This government has put an end to that neglect. Moving forward, the Administration will continue to work steadfastly to bring prosperity to the fisheries sector by listening closely to our fishermen.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

One of the key challenges facing the fisheries sector is the shortage of adequate cold storage capacity for harvested fish. To address this issue, new cold storage facilities are being developed in Gaafu Dhaalu Thinadhoo City, Lhaviyani Felivaru, Meemu Mulah, Gaafu Alif Kooddoo, Addu Hulhudhoo, Haa Alif Ihavandhoo, Gaafu Dhaalu Fiyoari, and Faafu Nilandhoo. These projects are scheduled for completion within the next 15 months.

To meet the increasing demand for ice among fishermen, ice production plants have already been established and commissioned in Gaafu Dhaalu Dhehvadhoo, Shaviyani Funadhoo, Dhaalu Meedhoo, and Dhaalu Bandidhoo. Additional production facilities currently under construction on Meemu Veyvah and Laamu Maabaidhoo are expected to be completed by midyear. Meanwhile, ice plants in Haa Alif Dhidhdhoo, Alif Alif Rasdhoo, Gaafu Dhaalu Rathafandhoo, Haa Dhaalu Kulhudhuffushi, Gaafu Alif Villingili, Gaafu Alif Nilandhoo, Kaafu Gaafaru, Dhaalu Hulhudheli, Shaviyani Komandoo, Lhaviyani Naifaru, Laamu Maavah, and Laamu Hithadhoo are on track for completion and operationalisation by the end of the year.

To further enhance the adoption of refrigerated seawater (RSW) systems on fishing vessels, approvals have been granted for 45 installations to date, with MVR 25 million disbursed in support. In addition, SME Digital has opened financing applications for RSW systems for a further 200 fishing vessels.

Honourable Speaker of Majlis, Honourable Members;

Another significant challenge faced by our fishermen is the limited access to affordable fuel across the Maldives. As part of the government's efforts to ensure that fishermen can obtain fuel at State Trading Organisation (STO) rates, the first fuel skid was inaugurated in R. Dhuvaafaru on 13 December 2025. The government is committed to expanding this initiative, with STO fuel skids planned for every atoll within the next three months.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Since 10 December 2024, payments owed to fishermen have been processed within 48 hours. Under this expedited system, a total of MVR 1,016,329,376 was disbursed between 10 December 2024 and 3 February 2026.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

We are also actively addressing the concerns of yellowfin tuna fishermen. Work is underway to provide subsidised fuel to yellowfin tuna fishermen, ensuring they receive support comparable to that extended to skipjack tuna fishermen. To further strengthen the sector, the government will initiate the establishment of a modern packing facility in Hulhumalé within the year. This facility is expected to significantly enhance the value chain for yellowfin tuna fishermen by better facilitating the needs of export companies. An agreement has already been signed allocating 25,000 square feet of land for the construction of a 100-tonne packing facility, with construction scheduled to begin midyear. The government is also fast-tracking efforts to facilitate yellowfin tuna purchases. The administration remains committed to advancing the

yellowfin tuna fishing industry and ensuring that the economic benefits derived from this sector surpass historical levels.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) play a vital role in supporting the fishing industry. Accordingly, the government is committed to expanding FAD deployment nationwide. In parallel, we are undertaking design enhancements to identify ways to minimise the loss or cutting of FADs and to extend their operational lifespan. As part of these efforts, 41 FADs were deployed over the past year for both handline and pole-and-line fisheries, marking the highest number ever recorded in a single year.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

I believe the establishment of the National Fishermen's Registry marks a major milestone for the fishing industry, significantly strengthening the social and economic security of those working in the sector. I am pleased to announce that all fishing vessels operating in the Maldives are now registered in this national system. The implementation of the registry has played a pivotal role in enabling fishermen to access formal financial services, an important step that is already producing results. To date, the Bank of Maldives has disbursed MVR 10.4 million in loans to 80 registered individuals. Moreover, individuals listed in the national database are now eligible for a range of financial products tailored to their income profiles, including personal financing, credit card services, home purchase, construction and renovation facilities, as well as dedicated financial support for the education of fishermen's children.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

A new financing initiative, Mahaa Manfa, was introduced during last year's Fishermen's Day celebrations to support businesses operating within the fisheries sector. Through Mahaa Manfa, financial support ranging from MVR 50,000 to MVR 400,000 is available for value-addition activities, including fish cooking and drying, product packaging, and the establishment of storage systems. In addition, the initiative will facilitate the development of 200 community-level shallow water hatcheries. To further enhance the resilience and growth of small-scale fisheries enterprises, the scheme also offers soft Islamic finance loans ranging from MVR 80,000 to MVR 640,000.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

As fishing patterns continue to evolve, the government is taking steps to support sports fishing. Accordingly, Kaafu Bohchu Faru, Vaavu Maadhiggaru Falhu, Gaafu Dhaalu Bolimathaidhoo, and Gaafu Alif Maafaru have been designated as special sports fishing zones, an announcement formally made during last year's Fishermen's Day. In line with this development, I intend to submit to this Honourable Majlis, during the first session of this year, the legislative amendments required to establish dedicated sports fishing harbours in these areas.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

To support the continued expansion of the fisheries sector, the government has designated five special zones for mariculture development. These zones are Bodu Thiladhunmathi, Raa Atoll, Kaafu Atoll, Meemu Atoll, and Thaa Atoll. To attract investment into these regions, the administration has introduced substantial incentives, including the waiver of acquisition fees and a three-year rent-free period for all new operations. In parallel, construction of the multi-species hatchery in Gaafu Alifu Maanagalaa is progressing steadily, with official services expected to commence within the current year.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

There are sectors within our domestic economy that have long been neglected by successive governments. However, from a sustainable development perspective, I believe the agriculture sector requires some of the most urgent and focused attention. The Government's policy is to strengthen national food security by ensuring that key food items capable of being grown in the Maldives are produced in sufficient quantities to meet the needs of our population, thereby contributing to a more resilient economy. To achieve this objective, we have established a highly conducive environment for agricultural investment, and work is already underway to expand agricultural enterprises and encourage increased private-sector participation. Under the Public-Private Partnership model, agricultural projects have already been opened in Kondey and Kaashidhoo, with additional projects in Laamu Gan and Haa Dhaalu Nolhivaram scheduled to open later this year. These initiatives are designed to promote sustainable agricultural development across the islands and to address the localised challenges faced by farmers, including obstacles related to the trading and marketing of their produce.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The administration firmly maintains that sustainable, meaningful, and holistic development can only be achieved by formulating policy and implementing initiatives with the

understanding that social and economic development are fundamentally interconnected. Our policy aims to build a nation of citizens who are academically capable, healthy, physically fit, mentally resilient, and ethically grounded. My obligation, My Responsibility. The development of such a community is regarded as essential to transforming the Maldives into a country that is economically resilient, socially stable, and secure.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

An academically capable generation can only be nurtured by strengthening the quality of school education. Achieving this requires the introduction of sustainable, positive reforms to the education system and a sincere commitment to addressing long-standing issues that have previously been overlooked. This government has initiated those efforts. Notably, because the learning progress of primary-level students was not previously assessed in a sufficiently robust manner, a specialised *National Curriculum Exam* was introduced last year for Grade 6 students to evaluate the extent to which they are meeting the standards outlined in the national curriculum.

Simultaneously, to assess the proficiency of students completing primary education and to enable international benchmarking, the *Assessment of Minimum Proficiency Level (AMPL)* exam was piloted for the first time last year for students completing Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. This assessment will be administered nationwide this year, allowing the performance of Maldivian students to be compared with that of students in other countries.

In addition to assessment reforms, work has begun on reviewing primary education syllabi and developing a curriculum integration model, including the redevelopment of Key Stage 1 materials into thematic books. This approach is intended to shape teaching and learning in a way that connects concepts across subjects, making it easier for students to understand and master core content.

Furthermore, in alignment with the *Maldives 2.0* vision, a digitised information system will be established during this academic year to ensure that education-sector data is efficiently and accurately managed. This system will support evidence-based decision-making by providing real-time, reliable information related to learning and teaching. To facilitate this transition, the necessary digital infrastructure and equipment will, Allah willing, be installed in all schools throughout the Maldives within the year.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

To strengthen educational infrastructure across schools, the government completed the construction of 142 classrooms, 9 multipurpose halls, and 56 educational support facilities, including science laboratories, libraries, and staff rooms, by December of last year. For the current academic year, an additional 216 classrooms, 7 multipurpose halls, and 250 educational support facilities have been completed and are now in use. Meanwhile, construction work is ongoing for a further 955 classrooms, 78 multipurpose halls, and 2,923 educational support facilities.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

My policy is also centred on ensuring equity within the education sector. Every Maldivian child is equal before me, and no child should be denied their rights due to any disability. Accordingly, a special project to implement the inclusive education policy in its broadest form will, Allah willing, commence this year. One of the most pressing challenges in this regard is the shortage of special needs educators. To address this, a training programme for teachers of students with special needs was initiated last year under the National Teacher Training Programme, and this programme will be further expanded this year. In addition, efforts will be undertaken to ensure the provision of specialised classrooms, dedicated educational support facilities—such as private toilets designed to accommodate students' specific conditions—and the necessary learning equipment and devices across all schools. The initiative also includes the development of specialised textbooks for various subjects for children with disabilities, as well as the introduction of tailored programmes to support their preparation for O-Level examinations in ways appropriate to their individual needs. To further strengthen support for these students, an amendment to the law will, Allah willing, be proposed during the first session of the People's Majlis this year to establish a home-schooling pathway based on professional assessments of a student's disability or mental health condition. Additionally, beginning on 1 March, Civil Service employees who are parents of children with disabilities will be granted the option to work from home.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Ensuring good health for every Maldivian citizen is one of the most vital pillars of this government's development strategy. To achieve this, I firmly believe that progress in the health sector must advance in a balanced and integrated manner, placing equal emphasis on preventive healthcare policies that safeguard against illness, as well as curative healthcare measures that ensure effective treatment and recovery when diseases arise. Both approaches must function in

harmony, within a unified framework that fully serves every citizen. I believe that the most fair and equitable approach to strengthening the health sector is to end the long-standing reliance on Malé as the primary hub for essential health services, while simultaneously working to reduce the need for Maldivians to seek medical treatment abroad.

Honourable Speaker of Majlis, Honourable Members;

In pursuit of improving the overall health of citizens, my Administration has begun establishing General Practitioner (GP) and Urban Primary Healthcare Centres in the Malé area. The first centre is already operational in Malé, and additional clinics are scheduled to open this year in Hulhumalé Phase 1 and Phase 2, as well as at two other locations within the capital. To further strengthen public health safeguards, we have also decided to establish facilities this year for analysing pesticide residues and heavy metals in food items to ensure food safety. As part of our efforts to combat tobacco use, we have amended the Tobacco Control Act and implemented a generational ban on tobacco consumption. Tobacco cessation services have been established on all islands, with 433 health professionals trained to support these services. In addition, Nicotine Replacement Therapy has been made available nationwide through the Aasandha scheme. To date, 2,003 citizens have enrolled in the tobacco cessation programme, and 375 have successfully quit using tobacco.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

For many years, ambulances on numerous islands have fallen into a dilapidated state due to prolonged neglect. To address this long-standing issue, the government has launched a comprehensive replacement initiative, through which 56 new ambulances have been brought to Malé for distribution across the islands. An additional 31 ambulances, along with 10 paramedic ambulances, are scheduled to arrive in March and will be dispatched thereafter. Efforts to strengthen the MNDF-managed sea ambulance system are also underway. Several ageing vessels have been repaired, and 12 new sea ambulances are expected to enter service this year, the first of which is already operational in N. Velidhoo. To expand air ambulance capabilities, arrangements were finalized last year to allow medical evacuation flights to four countries. In this regard, an agreement was signed on 16 November 2025 to facilitate the transport of patients by air ambulance to the UAE, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore at the expense of the government. Additionally, a dedicated medical evacuation helicopter service is planned to commence within the Maldives this year, further strengthening the country's domestic air ambulance capacity.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The government has taken decisive action to address the long-standing gaps in thalassaemia care and has initiated comprehensive improvements across the entire system. To that end, the establishment of the Thalassaemia Centre at Orange Hiya in Hulhumalé was tasked to MNDF. All required preparations were completed swiftly, fulfilling the task as an important national duty. Services previously delivered at the deteriorated Thalassaemia Centre have now been successfully relocated to this new facility. Management of the centre has been assigned to the Malé City Group of Hospitals. This ensures that children can now access specialist services such as endocrinology, internal medicine, and haematology, which were previously unavailable. To further strengthen service delivery, 38 new positions have been approved, with 30 staff members already recruited. Critical diagnostic services have also been enhanced. MRI T2 scanning, which previously required patients to travel abroad, is now available at Hulhumalé Hospital and has already benefited 28 patients.

In addition, the free bone marrow transplant programme facilitated procedures for 10 children last year, and a total of 24 children have undergone the procedure since 17 November 2023. Starting this year, every child living with thalassaemia will receive a monthly allowance of MVR 2,000 to support their care and overall well-being. Furthermore, an automated DNA analysis laboratory capable of detecting 27 types of haemoglobin mutations is ready to be introduced in a government hospital for the first time. This service will identify previously unknown genetic variants, enhance diagnostic accuracy, and significantly improve treatment outcomes. It will be made available through Maldivian Blood Services under the Malé City Group of Hospitals within the coming week. At the same time, preparations to establish a dedicated Thalassaemia Hospital, Allah willing, will commence this year.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Therapeutic services are among the most urgently needed forms of healthcare in our nation, yet for many years this field has suffered from a severe shortage of trained professionals. To address this critical gap, a national project to train 250 Maldivian therapists at the degree level will commence in March, while 50 foreign therapists will be recruited over the next six months to provide immediate relief in speech, occupational, behavioural, physio, and psychotherapy. These individuals will be trained under employment agreements, ensuring that they join the national workforce upon completion. We will also begin establishing a state-of-the-art therapy centre in Hulhumalé, known as the National Disability Services and

Therapy Centre, by mid-year. At the same time, work will begin to establish branches of this centre in all cities across the country. Once these facilities become operational, the Government will revise the existing cost coverage structure for therapy services under the Aasandha scheme, which has been covering therapy services since 1 January 2026. The revised structure will allow a portion of the coverage to be directed to the new centres, thereby further enhancing the services provided.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Mental health is another area of national importance that requires strong and immediate attention. In line with our policy to provide meaningful solutions, a 24-hour National Mental Health Helpline was launched on 21 February 2025. Since then, a total of 13,741 individuals have received support through this service. We have also opened a new mental health treatment unit at Hulhumalé Hospital, and from 1 January this year, comprehensive mental health services have been made available to the public. In addition to these developments, we will begin offering mental health treatment in selected regional hospitals across the Maldives within the year.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Another key priority for this Government, as we work to strengthen the health sector, is fertility treatment. Fertility services, including specialised care for endometriosis and polycystic ovary syndrome, are now covered under Aasandha. As a result, 1,965 people have so far sought treatment for endometriosis, and 9,650 people have sought treatment for PCOS. Among eligible patients who applied for IUI and IVF through Aasandha, 68 have completed IVF procedures, and by the grace of God, 23 have been successful. Thanks to this service, two babies were born in the country on the 7th and 11th of January this year. This marks a historic success in resolving a longstanding issue, while allowing families to receive treatment at zero cost and to finally experience this joy together with their loved ones. A total of 30 million Maldivian Rufiyaa has been deposited into the Fertility Care Fund established by this Government. At present, 93 individuals are receiving treatment through the fund, and 20 children have been born as a result. In addition, 35 more patients have already been deemed eligible for IVF under the fund.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

To ensure uninterrupted access to essential medicines for the people, the Government has established the State Pharmaceutical and Medical Supply Corporation Limited (State

Pharma). This new corporation has already begun importing critical medicines that are currently unavailable, and these supplies are expected to be accessible by the end of April. State Pharma is also working closely with regional and international partners to build a sustainable and responsible medical supply system. Through these efforts, we are working to create a permanent, long-term solution to the recurring challenges in the national drug supply chain, so that we can continue to safeguard the health and well-being of every citizen.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Even as we continue to expand our health infrastructure and build new facilities, the reality is that people will not receive the care they need unless we have enough trained professionals to deliver those services. That is why developing human resources in healthcare is a top priority for this Government. To support the infrastructure, the administration has hired 1,711 healthcare professionals to date, 669 deployed to serve in atoll-level facilities, and 1,042 to the Malé Group of Hospitals. Furthermore, an additional 1,957 healthcare professionals are planned to be recruited this year to staff newly established Health Centres, Hospitals, and expanded services across the country. The necessary budget for all of this has already been earmarked in this year's health sector budget.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Last year, extensive work was carried out to strengthen health services in the atolls and to expand diagnostic capabilities nationwide. This included a major project to increase access to MRI, CT scan, X-ray, and ultrasound services, as well as the establishment of dialysis services in nine additional islands. At present, 143 healthcare infrastructure development projects are underway across 143 islands.

Significant progress has also been made in improving healthcare services in the Malé region. In this regard, at IGMH, we established a 75-bed multi-specialty surgical ward last year, and services there have now begun. As a result, several new surgeries and procedures are currently being performed. To expand the services available at Hulhumalé Hospital, we have increased the number of emergency room beds and dialysis services, improving overall access for the public. Optical centres have also been opened at both IGMH and Hulhumalé Hospital, with Aasandha providing coverage of up to 2,000 Maldivian Rufiyaa. Through this service, 12,988 individuals have received eye examinations, and 12,056 people have obtained prescription glasses.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

This year, among the major health projects starting in the Malé region, we will begin practical work on the 100-bed tertiary hospital in Vilimalé, developed with assistance from the Chinese government. And Allah willing, we will begin construction mid-year on a 500-bed multi-specialty hospital in Hulhumalé Phase Two. In addition, Allah willing, mid-year we will begin work on establishing a radiation chamber required for cancer treatment, along with a specialised diagnostic center for cancer patients. At the same time, construction of a 250-bed multi-specialty tertiary hospital will begin as an extension of Hulhumalé Hospital. Beyond this, Hulhumalé Hospital will introduce a new range of specialised services. These include urology services supported by an additional MRI machine, urodynamic services, gastroenterology services with a dedicated endoscopy suite, neurology services including OPD and EEG facilities, the introduction of CXL surgery, and the expansion of ophthalmology services. A new dental laboratory will also be established at the hospital, Allah willing, within this year.

Similarly, this year, Allah willing, we will establish a dedicated Cath Lab at Dharumavantha Hospital and continue work to strengthen the National Cardiac Centre. Dharumavantha Hospital and IGMH will also begin providing cardiothoracic and vascular surgery, interventional radiology, gastro ERCP procedures, and robotic surgery.

Within the next week, Allah willing, the National Centre for Neuroscience and Stroke will open at Dharumavantha Hospital. With this center, the standard of neurological care nationwide will rise to a new level. Through this facility, we will be able to perform advanced spinal and brain operations using modern robotic technology. It will also help us build a unified nationwide system that ensures stroke patients receive timely and effective treatment. With related programs connected to atoll hospitals, Allah willing, strong neurological services will soon be available across every region of the Maldives.

Looking at priority health projects in the atolls this year, we have finalized plans to introduce mammography services in regional and tertiary hospitals that do not yet offer them. Major upgrades are also planned for Addu City Hospital. These include the construction of a private ward, expansion of the administrative building, establishment of a mental health centre, integration of multiple therapeutic services, and expanding OPD services into two daily sessions. Allah willing, Service capacity will also be significantly enhanced.

Similarly, at Kulhudhuffushi Hospital, Thinadhoo Hospital, Fuvahmulah Hospital, and Ungoofaaru Hospital, we will complete the required medical equipment and fast-track the setup of all services needed for full tertiary-level operations.

At the same time, physical works for hospital projects in Fuvahmulah City, Alif Dhaalu Mahibadhoo, Thaa Veymandoo, Laamu Fonadhoo, and Faafu Nilandhoo, which are planned with foreign assistance, Allah willing, will begin this year. We have also planned to complete laboratory setups in 76 islands that currently do not have these facilities. Moreover, to replace outdated and non-functional machinery and equipment that have been halting services for years, a major project has been handed over to STO. Allah willing, this work will be completed within the next six months, after which the public will begin receiving these services.

At the same time, work is in progress following the signing of contracts for essential medical equipment. These include MRI machines, CT machines, decompression chambers, dental equipment, and X-ray machines. They are needed for upgrading regional hospitals to tertiary level and for developing hospitals in seven urban centres. Allah willing, this work will be completed within the next seven months, with services being rolled out simultaneously. This is a transformative project that will raise the standard of healthcare across the atolls to an entirely new level.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Preventing diseases, especially lifestyle-related illnesses, must remain our foremost priority in implementing the national health prevention policy. This government views the advancement of the sports and fitness sector as essential to reaching that goal.

Last year, 33 new sports and fitness projects initiated by this government were completed. In addition, 59 previously stalled projects were revived and brought to completion. As a result, this government has now completed and handed over 92 sports and fitness projects. Across the country, the work of 879 additional sports and fitness projects started by this government is progressing at various stages. All of these are expected to be completed and handed over within the next 12 months. This includes the establishment and opening of fitness and recreation centres on every island, as well as the opening of 16 spacious, modern sports complexes with seating for 1,200 spectators and full indoor sports facilities, including those in both phases of Hulhumalé and in Vilimalé. This year, we will also proceed with building similar sports complexes in five additional islands.

Among other projects underway in Malé, the development of a Skate Park Arena featuring an inline speed skating and roller skating rink is included. This facility, being built in the Malé Ufsagandu area, marks a major step forward in promoting skating culture in the Maldives. Although skateboarding and inline speed skating have been active here since the

1980s, we have never had an adequate facility. This new arena will meet international competition standards. Allah willing, it will be completed and officially opened before the end of March this year.

In addition, land reclamation work to establish an arena specifically for racing and drifting will begin in March. Furthermore, construction of a state-of-the-art multi-story futsal complex, which will include four indoor training pitches and an indoor futsal stadium capable of hosting international matches, will begin in Hulhumalé in April. At the same time, a multi-story netball complex with four indoor training pitches and an international-standard indoor netball stadium will also begin construction in Hulhumalé, Allah willing, during April. Additionally, the work of establishing an e-sports center in Malé, and the work of establishing a complex for arcade games, a bowling arena, and children's indoor activities, will also commence during April of this year. Additionally, the work of establishing an e-sports center in Malé, and the work of establishing a complex for arcade games, a bowling arena, and children's indoor activities, will also commence in April of this year.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Serving the people with equality and fairness, ensuring that no individual is left behind, is the principle this government follows in delivering services across all sectors. For this reason, one of the areas we have given the highest priority to is improving the quality of services provided to individuals placed under state care for various reasons, and finding opportunities that can meaningfully change their circumstances. In this regard, 110 children have so far been placed in safe and nurturing family environments, giving them the stability and care they deserve. This year, we will also begin a program aimed at improving the standards of the centers where children reside and providing further training to those who work in these centers. In January this year, we also initiated practical work to establish the 'Empowerment Hub', a national initiative designed to empower persons with disabilities, develop their skills, and create pathways toward financial independence. To further support employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, three key regulations were passed and gazetted last year. As a result, 356 individuals with disabilities have already secured employment. The government's aim is to facilitate employment opportunities for an additional 500 persons with disabilities every year for the next three years.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Increasing the participation of women in nation-building and expanding opportunities for them to earn an income is one of the key policies of this government. To empower women economically, the ‘Fashaa Madhadhu’ loan scheme was introduced to support women entrepreneurs, and so far, loans have been facilitated for 92 women. Furthermore, to strengthen the work of the elected Women’s Development Committees in islands and cities, relevant amendments have been made to the Decentralization Act. As a result, the budget allocation for these committees has been increased from 5 percent to 10 percent starting this year. In addition, the Ramadan allowance provided to committee members has now been arranged as an allowance issued directly from the council budget. At the same time, the position of President of the Women’s Development Committee has been made a full-time, directly elected role, with the full authority required to carry out its responsibilities effectively.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

This government will always remain close to the senior citizens who carried our nation forward and shaped the generations of today. Last year, 1,185 senior citizens from 13 atolls participated in the Ufaaveri Raasthaa programme, an initiative designed to ensure that our elders live with dignity, fulfilment, and good health as valued members of society. In addition, 15,213 senior citizens took part in community programmes conducted across the islands. We are now putting in place a sustainable system so that this programme can continue and expand to every inhabited island. Among the centres this government has begun developing to care for senior citizens who live in the most vulnerable conditions without any caretaker, physical work on the centre being built in Addu City began in January this year. The work of establishing two additional centres, one in the North and one in the South of the Maldives, will also begin this year.

Furthermore, to provide the opportunity for senior citizens who wish to remain employed until the age of 75 instead of being required to leave work at 65, the Re-employment law has been ratified. This now allows them to continue working through the formal system on annually renewed contracts. The psychological, social, and economic benefits of this change are immensely significant.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Social development and social security can only be fully realised when we address the greatest social challenge facing our nation — housing. Delivering a permanent solution to this challenge is one of this Government’s highest priorities.

Accordingly, the Cabinet has approved and made public the "*Housing for All*" policy, which guarantees every Maldivian citizen the right to secure and dignified housing. Under this policy, affordable housing will be made available to all segments of society. It includes expanding access to real-estate housing for higher income families, enabling middleclass families to purchase affordable homes through bank mortgages, and constructing social housing for families who are unable to secure housing on their own.

Under our "Housing for All" policy, we have launched a new initiative known as the Family Housing programme. As part of its first phase, we have announced the regulations for 15,000 land plots in Rasmalé and 7,900 three-bedroom flats in Hulhumalé and Vilimalé for the residents of Malé. The application process is now officially open.

While the Family Housing programme is currently accepting applications from families who do not own any housing, we want to ensure these opportunities are accessible to everyone. To achieve this, we will shortly introduce a specific category that allows an individual to apply for land even if their spouse already possesses a home. Furthermore, we have decided to establish a category for those who received joint land plots under the Binveriya scheme launched in 2022. Provided that all joint owners agree to relinquish their shared land in its entirety, each person will be permitted to apply for an individual plot. Out of the 15,000 plots available in Rasmalé, we have specifically reserved 1,000 plots for each of these two new categories.

The work to reclaim the land for the 15,000 plots in Rasmalé is currently progressing at a very fast pace. The Government aims to complete the dredging works by April this year, Allah willing.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The Hiyaavehi Financing Scheme, which was introduced to provide financial assistance for housing, represents a major advancement for the housing sector. Under this scheme, a total of 2,256 applications have been submitted for Rahvehi, Saharu, and Fahimalé housing loans. Of these, 821 applications have already been approved and forwarded to the bank for processing. The total value of the loans approved to date already exceeds nine million eighty-nine thousand Rufiyaa.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Last year, we successfully completed 3 housing projects, and the process of handing these over is currently underway. At this moment, physical work is progressing on 13 housing

projects, while we have already signed agreements for a further 25 projects. Included in these new agreements is a project in collaboration with the Bank of Maldives and our contractors; through this contractor finance model, we will begin the physical work on 800 housing units across 13 islands this April. In total, 9,175 housing units are now in various stages of development across the country. Allah willing, all 9,175 units will be completed within the next 26 months. At the same time, construction of an additional 1,300 housing units in various islands will commence in August this year. When we open these housing units for applications, we have also decided to set aside a specific number of units for those among our citizens who work in the fishing industry and the tourism industry who need housing.

Honourable Speaker of Majlis, Honourable Members;

Under the *Binveriya Scheme*, a total of 3,548 plots is to be allocated. Of these, 2,781 beneficiaries have already been issued their land registration documents. Furthermore, for those who were allocated land within the Hulhumalé Phase 3 lagoon, we have now completed reclaiming their designated areas. We have also conducted the draw and officially assigned plots to 689 recipients. Furthermore, on 31 January 2026, a land draw was conducted for all individuals who received documentation to obtain land from Giraavaru Falhu. And when the dredging works are completed within the next three months, we will be handing over the land registration documents to those who have been allocated plots in that area, Allah willing.

Under the Gedhoruveriya Scheme, agreements have been signed with 3,850 beneficiaries, and so far, keys to their flats have been handed over to 3,647 of them.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

To increase the involvement of the Maldivian banking sector in providing housing, the MMA has formulated an Inclusive National Affordable Housing policy through which banks are now required to ensure that between 10 percent and 15 percent of the loans they issue are dedicated to providing housing at affordable rates. Following this change, the Bank of Maldives has contracted two international companies and three Maldivian parties to begin work on new affordable housing units in Hulhumalé. Under this specific project, the physical work to build 3,260 housing units in Hulhumalé and Villimalé will begin, Allah willing. All these units, Allah willing, will be completed and handed over to beneficiaries within the next 30 months. With land provided by the government for free, these homes will be reserved for those selected under our social housing schemes.

In addition to these building projects, we have worked to bring the banking sector closer to our goal of making housing truly affordable. In line with our national policy, the equity required by the Bank of Maldives for a loan to purchase a house or flat has been reduced from 20 percent to just 5 percent. We have also increased the maximum loan amount for building homes in Malé from 15 million Rufiyaa to 45 million Rufiyaa, while extending the repayment period from 15 years to 20 years. Furthermore, we have now started a scheme where loans of up to 3 million Rufiyaa can be issued for building or repairing a home on any island in the Maldives without the need for any additional collateral. This brings an end to the old system where people had to provide extra security just to build on their own land, and it offers a significant level of support to our citizens.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

To further strengthen housing security and expand opportunities for homeownership, the Government has proposed an amendment to the Pension Act. This amendment will allow pension funds to be used as collateral under specific circumstances, providing much needed concessions for individuals seeking to purchase, build, or repair their homes.

At present, the law permits the use of pension savings only for the down payment on completed housing units. However, once the proposed amendment is passed into law, citizens will be able to use their pension funds as collateral to secure loans from financial institutions for purchasing, constructing, or renovating their homes.

Furthermore, to ensure that every resident of the Maldives has access to safe and adequate shelter, the government has submitted the Housing Bill to this honourable Majlis. This bill is designed to create a robust housing system by establishing clear rules for registering housing providers and setting the specific standards and facilities that must be included in any housing project. Crucially, the bill also proposes the establishment of a Housing Fund to provide direct support to those who are most in need of a place to live. I am very pleased to note that the debate on this bill is already moving forward at the committee stage, bringing us one step closer to a fairer housing system for all.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Our national economic and social development, along with our collective security, can only be guaranteed by establishing peace and stability and by ensuring the safety of our citizens. Providing this assurance is one of the most vital duties entrusted to me. To this end, we have launched a major initiative to expand and strengthen the Maldives Police Service, the

institution entrusted with maintaining public safety and enforcing the rule of law. Last year, we established police presence in 39 islands where such services did not previously exist. As a result, police officers are now stationed and providing essential services on every single inhabited island across the Maldives. Furthermore, at the start of this administration, dedicated police centres existed on only 17 islands. We have transformed this situation by signing contracts for 147 separate projects to build dedicated police stations, and work on these has already commenced. This represents the largest number of police infrastructure projects ever undertaken in the history of the Maldives Police Service. Allah willing, all these projects will be completed within the next 15 months, and services will be provided from these new stations.

At the same time, we have begun a comprehensive review of the organisational structure of the police institution. As a result of this work, we will see a more active police presence in serving our public, and the quality of criminal investigations will be raised throughout the year. Moreover, the system of accountability will be strengthened, which will, Allah willing, increase public trust and confidence in the police service.

Honourable Speaker of Majlis, Honourable Members;

To establish peace and order in our country and to ensure the safety and security of our citizens, we are currently working on two fronts at the same time to solve the drug problem. Our efforts are focused on reducing the supply and availability of drugs within our community, while also working to rescue and rehabilitate those who have fallen victim to this addiction. To curb the supply of narcotics, 212 operations were conducted during 2025. As part of these efforts, we have launched a special nationwide initiative against those involved in the drug trade known as "Operation Alimagu". This operation began as a major effort involving 500 police officers who simultaneously searched 100 locations across the Maldives, and this work continues today. So far, 204 locations have been searched, 271 individuals have been taken into custody, 120 cases have been investigated, and cases of 37 individuals have been sent for prosecution.

As a result of all these operations, the police brought a total of 712 kilograms of various types of drugs under their control last year, alongside 7,245 bottles and cans of alcohol. If we look at the street value of these items, they represent more than MVR 1 billion worth of narcotics. Furthermore, from 17 November 2023 to the present day, we have seized a total of 1,366 kilograms of drugs and 14,825 bottles of alcohol. The total street value of these seizures

stands at MVR 2.3 billion. This represents the highest volume of narcotics seized in the first two years of any of the past three administrations.

Similarly, we have launched special operations to identify drug trafficking networks operating across the country and to dismantle the transnational networks responsible for smuggling drugs into the Maldives and the networks that launder the money gained from this trade. Targeted operations have already been conducted in several cities, resulting in the arrest of network leaders and their associates. Their cases are now under investigation. This year, we will expand these operations to every atoll of the country.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The challenges our government faces in saving the Maldives from the scourge of drugs are indeed many. To remove these obstacles, we have brought significant and comprehensive amendments have been made to the Drugs Act. As part of these reforms, severe penalties will now be imposed on drug traffickers. This includes the implementation of the death penalty for cases involving specific quantities of drugs, provided there is a unanimous verdict from the bench of the Supreme Court.

In addition, these reforms will further strengthen the national treatment system for individuals struggling with drug addiction. The operational rules of the Drug Court and the Drug Court Treatment Programme have been reviewed and updated. Similarly, law enforcement agencies have been granted additional powers to prevent and respond to drug related crimes. The regulations governing the seizure and confiscation of criminal assets have also been revised. Because of these vital changes to the law, we have now closed the legal loopholes and removed the obstacles that previously hindered our investigations and the delivery of drug treatment services.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

I place a very high priority on establishing a robust system to provide treatment for those addicted to drugs, so they can be successfully reintegrated into our society. Within the current framework of drug rehabilitation treatment, we have found that religious lessons have not been provided to an adequate level so far. To address this, and to ensure that comprehensive Islamic upbringing lessons become an official part of the drug rehabilitation programme, we have now arranged for the Ministry of Islamic Affairs to conduct its Risaalaath programme for those receiving drug treatment. These efforts will begin, Allah willing, during May of this year. Furthermore, the construction of dedicated rehabilitation centres in K. Kaashidhoo, N.

Velidhoo, and L. Gan has been contracted and physical work is currently underway. Allah willing, the construction of these 3 centres will be completed, and operationalised very soon.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

A permanent solution to the problem of gang related crime — which is directly and indirectly linked to the drug trade — is essential for maintaining peace, order, and security in our country. Since the enactment of the Gang Crimes Prevention Act last year, gang activity has declined, and many young people have begun distancing themselves from these harmful networks. This Government welcomes such youth and will provide them with every opportunity to rebuild their lives and become responsible, productive citizens. However, if any individual continues to operate within a criminal gang environment despite the new law, action will be taken strictly in accordance with the law. For the first time in the history of the Maldives, a gang has been referred to the Prosecutor General's Office to be formally declared under the new Act. The case has now been filed with the High Court. In addition, the Commissioner of Sports has been instructed to dissolve a sports club believed to be associated with such criminal groups.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

Another area where we must bring about real and sustainable positive change to establish peace and security in our community is the field of providing rehabilitative treatment and support to children who are at risk of offending, or who have already been driven into crime for various reasons. When we look at this issue, under Child Justice Act of 2019, two essential facilities were mandated for establishment within 18 months, the Juvenile Residential Treatment Centre and the Juvenile Halfway House. However, 4 years after that law was passed, the previous government had still not established them. This Government has now established both these centres, and services have already begun. These facilities are currently delivering structured rehabilitation programmes for children rescued from criminal environments to facilitate their return to society. Their establishment marks a major step forward in ensuring that vulnerable children receive the rehabilitation, guidance, and support they need to reintegrate into society.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

It is the responsibility of the state, and I believe specifically the responsibility of the government, to save our youth and children from the clutches of drugs, violence, gang crime and other harmful activities. We must strive to turn them into productive and useful members

of society. In this regard, I believe the area that requires our greatest priority is the upbringing and discipline of our young people. The direction our beloved nation takes tomorrow will depend entirely on the aim and the energy of the youth of today.

Therefore, to bring an end to the years of neglect faced by our younger generation, this government launched a special effort to build a resilient youth population through the National Service movement. I am pleased to share that the first batch of 344 youth graduated from this training programme on 28 December 2025. Out of these graduates, 65 individuals were selected for technical and vocational training, which began on 15 January this year at the Technical and Vocational Education Centre in Baa Atoll Kihaadhoo. For the graduates who were not selected for that specific technical path, the government has already arranged employment in the areas where they expressed an interest to work. To give you the details, 171 graduates have been placed in the MNDF, 7 as auxiliary firemen within the MNDF, 32 in the Aviation and Port Security Command, 23 in the Maldives Police Service, 5 in Maldives Immigration, and 3 in MACL. Furthermore, 38 graduates expressed a desire to work in the private sector, and we have facilitated those opportunities and released them to begin their careers. Furthermore, on 24 January, 350 youths departed for Maafilaafushi to begin the second batch of the National Service Programme.

This year, the Government aims to provide an additional 1,000 young people with the opportunity to complete the National Service Programme. Allah willing, we will achieve this goal.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

To provide our youth with spaces for recreation, to offer training for talented individuals in the field of the arts, to empower civil societies, and to instill a spirit of reading and learning, we have opened a Youth Hub. I am pleased to share that, so far, 680 young people have accessed the various programmes and facilities provided at this centre.

To conduct various skill-based programmes and to organise activities specifically for our younger generation, the work of establishing such Youth Hubs in all our cities has now been contracted. Furthermore, we have allocated land for the establishment of such hubs in Gaafu Alifu Villingili, Haa Alifu Dhihdhoo, Alifu Dhaalu Mahibadhoo, Baa Eydhafushi, Dhaalu Kudahuvadhoo, Faafu Nilandhoo, Laamu Fonadhoo, Lhaviyani Naifaru and Raa Ungoofaaru, Allah willing, with work to commence within the year.

To further empower our youth, we have made arrangements to provide training in the field of fine arts, to host a National Youth Conference, and to establish a Youth Parliament that includes young people from various islands and diverse sectors. In addition to this, to increase the participation and inclusion of our young people, we have begun seeking their opinions on various matters carried out by government ministries. We have also launched specific reintegration activities targeted at our youth. Finally, to save our young people from environments of crime and to eliminate extremist ideologies, we have decided to launch a special programme to increase religious awareness among the younger generation.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

To establish true stability in our nation, it is absolutely essential that we bring about a holistic solution. In this regard, we must ensure that when individuals are sentenced to prison, the arrangements are made in a way that protects human dignity and meets international standards. If we look at the situation on 17 November 2023, many prisoners in our jails were living in cells without any electricity. As part of our urgent work to improve the conditions for inmates, I can confirm that electricity has now been provided to every cell in all our prisons. To stop the smuggling of prohibited items and to prevent crimes from being committed within the prison walls, we have brought a state-of-the-art body scanner to Maafushi Prison. This scanner will be installed and our staff will be trained so that it can be put into use by April of this year. Allah willing, this will bring a definitive end to scam calls and other similar criminal activities conducted from within the prison. It is my firm belief that a prison should not just be a place for punishment. Instead, it must be a place where those serving their sentences are given a real opportunity for reform and rehabilitation so they can become successful members of society. To achieve this, we have changed our policy so that for every day an inmate regularly participates in rehabilitation programmes and maintains a high standard of conduct, a day is deducted from their prison sentence. For the first time in the history of the Maldives, we are introducing the Open Prison Island concept. This entire island will be designated as a prison where inmates can live and work. This project has been handed over to the Maldives Correctional Service. We plan to start the physical infrastructure work by the middle of this year, and we intend to move inmates to the island by the end of the year. This facility will be reserved for those serving sentences for minor offences who only require minimum security. On this island, they will be taught valuable skills such as agriculture and other similar trades to prepare them for a productive life.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

In all our efforts to address the needs of our people, we follow a single, inclusive policy. This is the policy of working through a decentralised system, staying close to our citizens, listening to your voices, and striving to reach the goals you desire. At the same time, it is a core policy of this government to empower our local councils financially. We have opened up the opportunity for councils to acquire uninhabited islands as a means of securing financial stability. 27 such islands have been specially designated for this purpose, and so far, 12 councils have submitted 15 proposals. I am pleased to note that 7 islands have already been released to 6 councils.

With the vital objective of providing essential services to our citizens as easily as possible, we have worked to ensure that identity card and passport services are available in every inhabited atoll in the Maldives. During 2025, we have successfully launched these services across all atolls. Furthermore, in our more populated atolls, we have introduced these services in more than one island. By decentralising and expanding these services in this way, the difficulties and the expenses that our citizens previously faced have been significantly reduced. I am happy to see that our people are now receiving these services with much greater speed and ease.

At the same time, we have decentralised banking by establishing self-service ATMs in every inhabited island of the Maldives. This ensures that residents can easily access services such as depositing, withdrawing, and transferring money, or paying for credit cards and loans, right from their own islands. In addition to this, we have opened dollar ATMs in 7 new islands, and we have already begun the work to install dollar ATMs in a further 70 islands. Allah willing, by the end of March this year, we will have these 70 islands equipped and providing dollar ATM services to the public.

Beyond this, we are working to improve the physical condition and resolve the space constraints of our council offices. These infrastructure projects are a key part of our effort to strengthen the decentralised system. In 2025, we commenced the physical work to build 55 new council offices. Allah willing, the construction of these 55 offices will be completed within this year, and they will be ready to serve the public with all the necessary facilities. Furthermore, under the government's PSIP programme, we have already finished work on 6 council offices, while the construction of 19 more is currently progressing. We have also completed the feasibility study for 50 additional council offices to be built with grant aid from the Chinese government, and we are now in the process of securing land and finalising the administrative details.

Additionally, for the 2 newly formed councils in Addu Hulhudhoo and Addu Meedhoo, the work to increase the necessary office space will begin this month. Allah willing, we will also move as quickly as possible to recruit the administrative and municipal staff required to strengthen the services of these 2 councils.

In addition, we plan to redevelop the Atholhu Fihaara (Atoll Shops) area in Malé to ensure these establishments can deliver greater value to the residents of our atolls. Our vision is to transform this area into a modern commercial front, and by mid-year, we will invite those who wish to invest alongside the government to come forward. Recognizing that the Atoll Shops frontage is a long-standing symbol of Malé and an important part of our heritage, I intend to carry out this redevelopment in a manner that protects and preserves the historic outer façade of these buildings for the long term.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

This year, the Government has placed the highest priority upon establishing a modern, fully digital governance system, grounded in the principles of integrity, transparency, and efficiency. Our objective is to create a service environment that is seamless for the public, intuitive for service providers, and inherently transparent. We seek to build a system that leaves no room for corruption—a system that commands and retains the absolute confidence of the Maldivian people.

This represents a historic transformation of the administrative framework that has served the Maldivian State for generations. Under the Maldives 2.0 initiative, launched on 21 May 2025, we shall—over the forthcoming three years and in collaboration with all State institutions—fortify our cybersecurity, introduce internationally compliant digital identities to facilitate secure transactions, and establish the Maldives Data Exchange to ensure the secure and seamless transfer of information between authorities.

We shall also develop a sovereign cloud to securely store and archive sensitive government information and create a citizen-centred service platform that integrates all public services within a single digital domain. This initiative will cultivate a future-ready generation, equipped to thrive within a digital economy. The Digital Transformation Roadmap has been approved by the Cabinet, and this year's budget accords special priority to its implementation.

In an effort to expedite this initiative, legislation essential to establishing the legal framework required to accelerate this national project, including the Digital Transformation Bill, the Digital Identity Bill, and the Cybersecurity Bill, shall be submitted to the first session

of this Honourable Majlis. Under the Maldives 2.0 mandate, the Government aims to establish a single, unified network of civil registration services across the Maldives by the conclusion of this year, positioning our country as the most advanced in the region regarding civil registration. As part of this effort, the national ID card will undergo major improvements and will be upgraded to a smart ID card.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

I firmly believe that once our public administration system is fully digitalised, the scourge of corruption will be significantly reduced. Several key legislative proposals are being prepared for submission during the first session of this year. These include the Amendment Bill to the Anti-Corruption Act, the Asset Recovery Bill, and the Amendment Bill to the Criminal Procedure Code.

In addition to these bills, the passage of the Amendment Bill to the Penal Code concerning illicit enrichment, alongside the Amendment Bill to the Evidence Act, both of which are currently at the committee stage of this Honourable Majlis, shall mark significant progress in addressing the critical national challenge of corruption.

I assure this to you Honourable Members of the Majlis, that if any case of corruption, theft, or misuse of public office is brought to my attention with credible evidence, I will not hesitate to take the necessary action against the individual concerned.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

I consider the establishment of an independent judiciary to be essential for ensuring lasting peace and security in our country. Last year, the long-dilapidated Criminal Court and Drug Court were reopened within spacious, high-quality facilities in Hulhumalé.

In addition, the judiciary has now been granted full independence in the implementation of its budget. This year's budget allocates MVR 808 million as a judicial sector grant, equivalent to 2 per cent of the State's estimated revenue. This represents an increase of MVR 208 million compared to the previous allocation of MVR 600 million maintained until the end of 2025. We have ensured full financial autonomy in the implementation of this budget, in accordance with public finance management regulations, with the respective regulation gazetted on 19 January this year. Looking ahead, we shall begin construction of the Superior Court Complex in Hulhumalé within this year, Allah willing.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

As part of this Government's commitment to bringing the State closer to the people, I am pleased to announce the establishment of a 24-hour Citizens' Complaints Bureau within the President's Office. The primary responsibility of this Bureau shall be to manage and respond to public grievances, following a thorough verification of all relevant information from respective state institutions. These complaints, submitted through a multitude of platforms including formal correspondence, electronic mail, the Citizen's Voice portal, the GEMS messaging platform, telephone communications, and social media channels, shall be processed through a single, unified digital system.

The Bureau shall operate utilizing a state-of-the-art automated digital platform, enhanced with artificial intelligence, to ensure that every complaint is meticulously recorded, tracked, and resolved. Under this system, each submission made through any government platform shall be logged, assigned a unique ticket, and rigorously monitored until a formal resolution is issued. A 24-hour call centre will also be established as part of the Bureau.

The digital system of the Citizens' Complaints Bureau shall also be implemented across all government agencies to manage and resolve grievances submitted directly to individual institutions. Every agency shall operate under a single, unified complaints management mechanism. The Citizens' Complaints Bureau shall serve as the overarching authority responsible for monitoring the responsiveness of government bodies and ensuring that they strictly fulfil their obligations to the public.

Importantly, this initiative shall not require the recruitment of additional personnel. Instead, the President's Office and relevant government agencies shall reassign existing staff, following requisite training, to ensure the Bureau is comprised of capable officers from within the current civil service structure. This office shall, Allah willing, be fully established and its services commissioned within the forthcoming five months.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

A strong and responsible media is essential for maintaining stability within our country, for communicating the progress of national development to the people, and for ensuring the security and wellbeing of our citizens. It is the inherent right of the Maldivian people to possess a responsible media sector that provides accurate, reliable information while upholding the values and standards expected in a society that is 100 per cent Islamic. This Government shall continue to safeguard and fortify this vital right of the people.

For the first time in the history of the Maldives, the State budget has allocated direct financial support to media outlets. A sum exceeding MVR 27 million has already been disbursed to 40 media organisations. Recognising that numerous media outlets face substantial financial strain due to high rental costs for office and studio spaces, the Government is rapidly advancing the development of the Media Village. This dedicated complex shall offer office and studio facilities at significantly reduced rates, ensuring that their financial burdens are eased and their revenue is utilised for the professional advancement of the media.

The Media Village, currently under construction in Hulhumalé Phase I, will include 34 purpose-built spaces. This facility will be completed and opened to media organisations in the middle of this year, Allah willing. This Government will also continue to work closely with the media to ensure transparency and timely access to information.

Over the past year, Ministers have convened with local and international media on 424 occasions to provide updates on government initiatives and address inquiries. In addition, officials from various ministries have disseminated essential information to the public through media channels on 493 separate occasions.

All government agencies continue to disclose information comprehensively, within the bounds of the law, upon the submission of formal requests by our citizens. Over the past year, 1,341 Right to Information (RTI) requests were submitted to the President's Office and various ministries; of these, 1,251 requests, representing 93 per cent of the total, have already been answered.

Responses to the remaining requests are being finalised, as additional information is gathered and procedural extensions are completed. This work continues every day without interruption. As a result, there are no barriers to accessing information through mass media, print media, or individual requests. In addition, the Government published 40,875 social media updates throughout 2025 across multiple platforms to keep the public informed.

To further strengthen the close and constructive relationship I have maintained with the media, I shall commence holding weekly press conferences, beginning in March of this year. These briefings will take place every Monday from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., during which I shall provide information directly to the press. Allah willing, this schedule shall be maintained, unless adjustments are necessitated by official travel, public holidays, or other unavoidable circumstances.

Similarly, beginning this March, each Cabinet Minister shall meet with the press for one hour every week. The President's Office will disclose the formal schedule for these ministerial briefings.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

One of the greatest frustrations felt by the Maldivian people is the constant shift in national direction every five years. I believe that listening to the voice of the people, establishing a twenty-year national direction, and vesting that direction with legal authority is among the most meaningful and constructive steps we can take to ensure the development, stability, and security of our country; consequently, I have included this initiative among my presidential campaign pledges. In fulfilment of this pledge, extensive work has already commenced, and significant progress has been achieved.

A total of 10,088 public opinions has been gathered. This initiative included 192 public meetings held across all inhabited islands; 96 focus group discussions with youth, women, business owners, fishermen, and farmers; and 67 consultations with state-owned enterprises, private sector organisations, and non-governmental organisations. Discussions concerning 66 distinct topics were also held with the honourable members of this Majlis and cooperative political parties. Furthermore, 20 sectoral roundtable discussions and meetings with 40 government and state institutions were conducted.

Using the insights gathered from these consultations, the core framework of the 20-year National Development Plan has now been formulated.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

The next stage of this process shall involve regional validation workshops, scheduled to continue until the conclusion of May this year. These workshops aim to ensure that the plan remains inclusive, and to secure the cooperation of citizens and all stakeholders for its successful implementation.

Before the end of June this year, a National Conference shall be convened. The purpose of this conference, prepared with the participation of the whole nation, is to formalise the development roadmap for the coming years. During this stage, the ideas emerging from the regional workshops will be assessed against the State's financial capacity and core government policies; once final decisions are reached, we shall ensure that sectoral development plans are harmonised so that no sector places an undue burden upon another.

Following these steps, the final 20-Year National Development Plan, complete with its implementation and monitoring framework, will be finalised by the end of July this year, Allah willing.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

This Government shall continue to serve based upon the pledge we made to the people and the trust they have placed in us. Our work is grounded in Islamic principles, in Dhivehi nationalism, and in an unwavering commitment to the safety and security of our citizens. It is guided by modern academic understanding and creativity, fostering a nation where every Maldivian enjoys self-sufficiency, ease of life, peace, equality, fulfilment, and confidence in the State.

We have restored genuine political stability to this country. In the days ahead, this Government shall continue to uphold that stability. We shall ensure that justice is delivered without discrimination, and that our nation reaches new heights in knowledge, innovation, infrastructure, and national development.

This is the country of the Maldivian people. This is the Government of the Maldivian people, the government of the Maldivian citizens. This Government shall always stand with the people and remains firmly on their side.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members;

With Allah's grace, I—together with the entirety of this Government—shall dedicate our strength, our resolve, and our tireless efforts, by day and by night, to ensure the development, peace, and security of the Maldivian people.

May Allah bless this sincere endeavour in every regard, for the enduring benefit of our nation! May Allah bestow His blessings upon our people and our State! May development, peace, and security remain the everlasting bliss of all Maldivians. Ameen.

وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوْكِيدٌ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ.

وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ