

Maldives President Hails Successful Visit to India

Why In News

- **President of Maldives, Mohamed Muizzu**, praised his recent visit to India as a major success, highlighting its significance in **strengthening the ties** between the two neighbouring nations. President Muizzu attended the **oath-taking ceremony of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi** and held several high-level meetings during his two-day stay.



Positive Outcomes from the Visit

- **President Muizzu expressed his satisfaction** with the visit. He described the trip as beneficial for both the Maldives and the broader region.
- He stated, **“I was delighted to receive the PM’s invitation** and to participate in the swearing-in ceremony. I am also grateful for the opportunity to hold high-level meetings with the PM, President, and External Affairs Minister Jaishankar.”
- President Muizzu emphasized the potential benefits of **strengthened bilateral relations**, saying, **“I am confident that strong ties between the two nations will result in increased prosperity for the Maldives and Maldivians alike.”**

High-Level Delegation

- **President Muizzu's visit to India** was his first official trip since assuming office in November 2023. Accompanied by a high-level government delegation, he met with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Rashtrapati Bhawan. They discussed various issues and attended a banquet together.
- In his meeting with Indian **President Droupadi Murmu**, President Muizzu expressed his gratitude for the warm hospitality and acknowledged India's continuous assistance to the Maldives. The Maldives government readout noted that President Muizzu is committed to preserving the close and historic ties with India and looks forward to further strengthening the existing relations between the two countries.



- Discussions with **India's External Affairs Minister, S Jaishankar**, were also productive. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing Maldives-India collaboration in the coming years. Jaishankar expressed his anticipation for closer cooperation between the two nations in a tweet following the meeting.



Dr. S. Jaishankar

@DrSJaishankar · Follow



Delighted to call on President Dr Mohamed Muizzu of Maldives today in New Delhi.

Look forward to India and Maldives working together closely. @MMuizzu



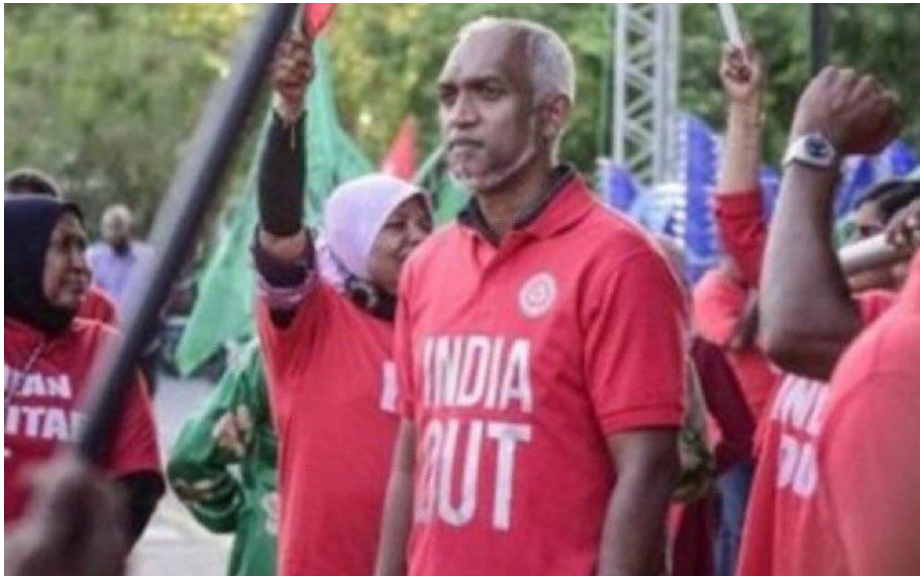
Recent Diplomatic Engagements

- **President Muizzu's visit follows** a recent visit by Maldives Foreign Minister **Moosa Zameer to India**, signalling renewed vigour in the diplomatic relations between the two countries. These high-level visits are seen as efforts to revitalize relations that had experienced a temporary lull earlier this year.



Historical Context

- **Invitation to Muizzu assumes significance** as it came amid frosty ties between the two countries. Muizzu rode on an **'India Out'** campaign to become President and has strongly pivoted towards China in terms of defence and trade.



- India and the Maldives have a history of close ties, with India providing significant assistance to the island nation. Two years ago, India handed over a chain of **10 coastal surveillance radars** to the Maldives, built with an Indian grant of US\$15.8 million and operated by the Maldives Coast Guard.



- However, relations were strained when President Muizzu, known for his pro-China stance, took office in November 2023. Shortly after his inauguration, he demanded the **withdrawal of Indian military personnel** from the Maldives. His party's victory in an April election indicated voter support for his tilt towards

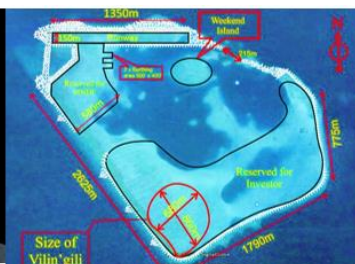
China and away from India. During his presidential campaign, Muizzu maintained a strong anti-India stance.



Maldives Asks India To Withdraw Military Personnel By March 15: Report

Review Of Three Agreements

- While Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu was in India, committing to expanding “close and historic” ties, a A parliamentary committee back home announced a review of three agreements which Muizzu’s predecessor and pro **India leader Ibrahim Solih** had signed with India because these allegedly violated the sovereignty of the Maldives.
- These include an agreement for **hydrographic surveys** another for building the **Uthuru Thilafalhu dockyard built** with grand assistance from India and yet another four the **Dornier aircraft** gifted by India to Maldives defense forces for humanitarian search and rescue operations



Conclusion

- A massive row had erupted over **derogatory remarks made by Maldivian ministers** about PM Modi on social media, resulting in a Boycott Maldives call in India that put a dent in the coffers of the island nation, where the tourism sector is its "lifeblood".
- **Muizzu's visit is being** viewed as a significant step in reviving relations between India and the Maldives.

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Congratulations to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP and BJP-led NDA, on the success in the 2024 Indian General Election, for the third consecutive term. I look forward to working together to advance our shared interests in pursuit of shared prosperity and stability for our two countries.

DR MOHAMED MUIZZU
Maldives President



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