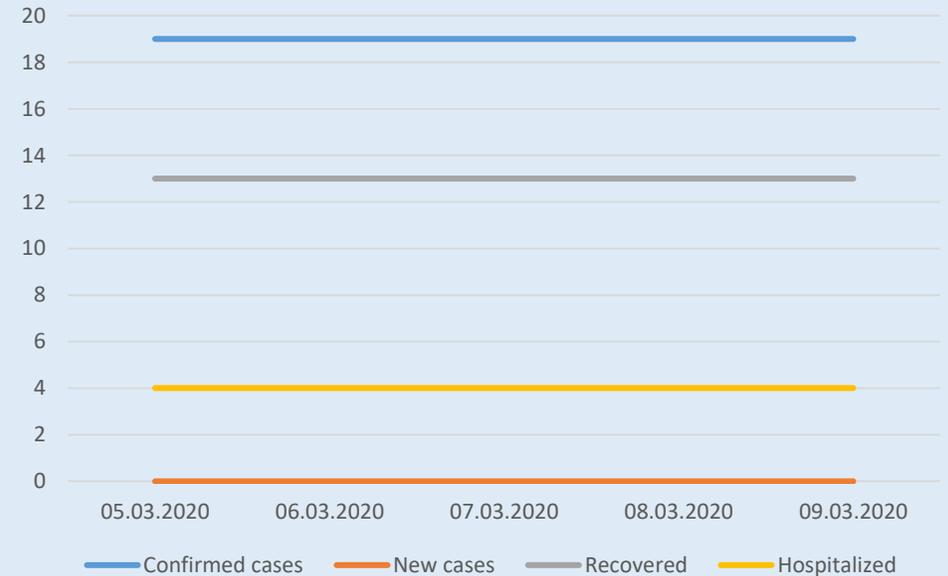


Key Milestones

- The Maldives confirmed its first positive tested case of COVID-19 on 7 March 2020 at Kuredu Island. At 9 April 2020, a total of 19 cases have tested positive (15 foreigners and 4 Maldivians).
- Thursday 9 April marks 14 days since borders were closed to tourists, an important milestone in containing imported COVID-19 cases. The Government continues to facilitate foreign nationals who have cleared the quarantine period.
- The increasing numbers in quarantine facilities comprises those Maldivians being returned home from abroad, and who must enter quarantine upon arrival for 14 days.

	Confirmed Cases	19
	Recoveries	13
	Isolation Facilities	11
	Quarantine Facilities	1002
	Cases in Greater Male'	0

COVID 19 - Maldives



Public Health Risk Alert Levels

National	Yellow
Kuredu Island Resort & Spa	Orange

WHO Risk Assessment

Global level	Very high
Global status	Pandemic

Economic Sector

- Maldives generates approximately 30% of direct revenue and 60% of indirect revenue from the tourism industry. Thursday 9 April marks 14 days since the country's borders were closed to tourists.
- If the country's borders remain closed, the Central Bank estimates that **growth will fall to a negative 9%** in the worst case scenario.
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) speculated that Maldives' **economic growth will fall to a negative 3%** in the financial recession predicted to result from the pandemic.
- However, the bank estimated that the economy will stabilize and see a growth of 7.5% the next year, with an increase in inflation from 1% in 2020, to 1.2% in 2021.
- The impact on unemployment losses and income losses is expected to be significant.
- Employees working in the tourist resorts, aviation sector and other tourism support industries are expected to experience pay cuts, no-pay leaves and lay-offs.
- Government stimulus measures to the resorts are in part designed to mitigate the impact on employees of the tourism industry, with eligibility dependent on employers not laying off workers. Loans are targeted to those companies with a minimum of 45% comprising Maldivian nationals.

Political Sector

- The *Special Bill for Local Council Elections 2020* to postpone local council elections beyond April 18 was submitted to parliament.
- It is expected to provide legal remedies for legal issues related to an election delay, while a minor amendment has been proposed to the procedural aspects of the 5th amendment of the constitution (related to decentralization) which states that incumbent councilors will remain until new councilors are elected and take office.
- While **there is an agreement to delay the elections, there is disagreement on extending the term of councilors** through a constitutional amendment during an emergency.
- A separate bill on extending the term through a legislation has been submitted by the MDP parliamentary group, while debate on this issue is currently ongoing.
- Four workers unions (including Tourism Employees Association) have called on Government and employers to create a safe working environment for their workers, for wages to be paid, and for employees not to be laid off unfairly. Three protests by workers occurred in the tourism sector.

Health & Social Sector

- The Government closed its offices on 19 March for an initial period of one week. The closure has been extended until 16 April 2020. The closure will continue to impact with non-essential services remaining closed.
- Initially closed on 19 March for a period of one week, all schools, colleges and universities will remain closed for an additional week through 16 April 2020
- The Ministry of Islamic Affairs extended the ban on congregational prayers until 11 April 2020
- The impact on families from job losses of livelihood opportunities across all sectors is increasing. As at 7 April, **857 people had registered at the job centre** (of which 92 were self employed).
- The risk of increased gender based violence and violence against children is expected to increase, with Government measures taken to ensure that hotlines remain resourced for children and women experience violence and abuse.
- An increase in incidental familial & random violence was observed in media reports during the week.
- Congested living spaces posing extra risk of spread and challenges in following preventive guidelines

Economic Sector

- A **COVID-19 Economic Relief Package** was introduced by the government, comprising:
 - i. Loans with 6% interest rate with a grace period of 6 months, to be paid over 3 years.
 - ii. Loans for Resorts and those with profits over MVR10 million will be administered through the Bank of Maldives:
 - A resort will receive a maximum MVR7.71 million
 - Other businesses with profits over MVR10 million will receive a maximum of MVR 1 million
 - iii. Loans for businesses with profits less than 10 million in 2019, self employed persons and freelancers would be administered through the SME Development Finance Corporation:
 - Businesses will receive a maximum of MVR500,000
 - Self employed and freelancers will receive a maximum of MVR 18,000
- Water and Electricity bills will be subsidized by the Government in by 40% for May, and by 30% in June.

- A moratorium of 6 months is made for principal and Interest payments for loans from BML, HDFC and SDFC.
- A moratorium of 6 months on repayment of loans under the National Student Loan Scheme.
- The Government will, **for the first time, provide 3 months allowance to those unemployed** due to COVID-19.
- **Companies that do not adhere to the Employment Act will not be eligible to receive assistance** from this package.

Health Sector

- The government is developing an isolation facility of 300 additional beds by 15 April.
- Efforts continue to increase the number of ventilators.
- The Centre for Mental Health, IGMH has introduced consultation via telephone.
- Information sessions on COVID-19 has been conducted for staff at correctional centres.

Social Sector

- All services to vulnerable groups provided by the Ministry of Gender Family & Social Services to continue.
- The Ministry of Education is working through local councils to **monitor children living in high-risk households once a day.**
- The Government is providing **financial assistance to Maldivians abroad for medical treatment** via the national social protection scheme through diplomatic missions.
- For Ramadan, the government will create a platform to enable the sale and transport of locally farmed products through the State Trading Organisation.
- Close monitoring of staple food stocks and stockpiling of essential items will begin by mid-April
- The Bar Council will provide pro-bono legal services for citizens during the pandemic.
- A **job centre has been established** for people who face unemployment due to COVID-19.
- The Government have announced **plans to transfer migrant workers living in congested spaces to safer, less-congested environments.**

