

# BOATING INSIDER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER BY NBAM

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NBAM UPDATES

Welcome to the April edition of Boating Insider!

This issue brings together key developments, industry news, and highlights from across the boating and marine sector. As the industry continues to evolve, collaboration, innovation, and engagement remain essential to its growth and success.

We are pleased to share updates on activities, partnerships, and opportunities that support our members and contribute to the advancement of the boating industry in the Maldives.

Thank you for being part of our community, and we hope you find this edition informative and valuable

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# NHGAM Launches 'I AM Maldives' Southeast Asia Roadshow

The National Hotels and Guesthouse Association of Maldives (NHGAM), in collaboration with Visit Maldives Corporation and the Maldives Association of Travel Agents & Tour Operators (MATATO), has announced the launch of the "I AM Maldives Southeast Asia Roadshow", a focused trade initiative designed to showcase Maldivian tourism offerings in two key Asian markets.

The roadshow is scheduled to take place in Hong Kong on 13 April 2026 and in Kuala Lumpur on 15 April 2026. The initiative will bring together the full spectrum of Maldives tourism stakeholders, including guesthouses, resorts, hotels, and travel agencies, with a total delegation of over 20 companies and more than 50 industry participants.

Across both destinations, the event is expected to engage more than 120 travel trade professionals, including tour operators, travel agents, and senior industry decision-makers, creating a strong platform for networking and business development.

According to NHGAM Vice President Ahmed Waheed, the initiative reflects a renewed focus on the Southeast Asian market. He stated that the region presents significant potential for Maldives tourism and that the roadshow marks a strategic effort to rebuild presence and foster partnerships that support long-term, sustainable growth.

He further noted that the strong performance of key markets reinforces the importance of targeted engagement. In 2025, Greater China recorded 706,033 arrivals to the Maldives, marking a 12.1% increase compared to 2024 and maintaining its position as the leading source market. Malaysia also demonstrated strong growth, with arrivals rising by 25.2% to 24,847 visitors. Overall, Southeast Asia contributed 72,128 visitors, representing 6% growth and 3.2% of total arrivals.

NHGAM President Abdulla Nasheed highlighted the importance of connecting local tourism operators with emerging markets. He noted that Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur offer valuable opportunities for guesthouse operators and small tourism businesses, with the aim of driving sustainable growth and expanding market access for local industry players.

Meanwhile, Ibrahim Shiury described Hong Kong and Malaysia as high-potential markets for the Maldives, adding that the roadshow is a strategic step to strengthen visibility and introduce the destination's diverse offerings to a broader audience.

The "I AM Maldives Southeast Asia Roadshow" represents a broader strategic push by NHGAM to strengthen international outreach in 2026. With Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur marking the beginning of this initiative, the programme aims to deepen engagement in Asia's key source markets and ensure the Maldives remains strongly positioned in the minds of both trade partners and travellers.



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# Tourism Industry Leaders Convene to Address Middle East Air Corridor Disruptions

Visit Maldives Corporation (VMC) held the Maldives Tourism Intelligence Briefing (MTIB) for the second quarter of 2026 on 21 April 2026 at Barceló Nasandhura, bringing together tourism industry leaders, government officials, and key stakeholders to discuss the impact of ongoing disruptions in the Middle East air corridor and to identify coordinated response measures.

The briefing focused on how the disruptions are affecting global travel patterns and the resulting implications for tourist arrivals to the Maldives, particularly from major long-haul markets that depend on transit routes through the Middle East. Participants were provided with updated insights on booking patterns, flight route changes, and projected market demand to support industry-wide planning and collaboration.

Opening the session, Abdulla Ghiyas Riyaz stressed the importance of collective action and timely decision-making in response to the evolving situation.

He stated, "The situation we face today is serious and evolving rapidly. While this is a crisis, it is also an opportunity to act faster, work closer together, and build a stronger and more resilient tourism sector. We rely on the industry's feedback, coordination, and commitment to guide our response, because it is only through collective effort that we can stabilise and move forward."

The briefing included presentations from several key industry representatives. Paul Pruangkarn shared insights into global travel disruptions and their impact on destination strategies, while Mohamed Hammad outlined current policy priorities and regulatory considerations.

In addition, Nashaya Abdul Wahid provided updates on air connectivity and operational developments, and Nasrulla Adam presented the revised tourism outlook and strategic priorities for 2026.

A stakeholder feedback session formed a key part of the briefing, allowing participants to contribute recommendations aimed at strengthening ongoing marketing and operational responses. Discussions highlighted the importance of reinforcing the Maldives' image as a safe and fully operational destination, while also diversifying focus toward premium travel segments, including private jet and high-yield luxury travellers.

Participants also emphasised the need to strengthen digital marketing initiatives to maintain visibility in affected markets, enhance alternative air connectivity options, maintain close communication with travel trade partners, and ensure promotional messaging remains aligned with current market conditions.

The MTIB brought together more than 100 participants representing government agencies, tourism businesses, industry associations, and other sector stakeholders. The session served as a collaborative platform to coordinate immediate actions and strengthen industry alignment during a period of external challenges.

Visit Maldives Corporation reaffirmed that the MTIB continues to play an important role in facilitating real-time intelligence sharing and coordinated response planning, helping ensure the Maldives tourism industry remains informed, adaptable, and resilient amid changing global market conditions.



# Tatabye Tours Concludes Successful Four-City Maldives Roadshow in India



Photo: The Island Chief

Tatabye Tours has successfully concluded the second edition of its Maldives roadshow in India, further expanding its presence across Western India. Endorsed by Visit Maldives, the four-city roadshow was conducted in Ahmedabad on 31 March 2026, Vadodara on 1 April 2026, Surat on 3 April 2026, and Pune on 4 April 2026, representing another key step in the company's strategic expansion within the Indian market.

Following the success of its South India edition, the Western India roadshow attracted strong engagement from travel trade professionals and tourism stakeholders, further reinforcing the Maldives' reputation as a leading luxury holiday destination among Indian travellers.

More than 520 travel professionals participated across the four cities, alongside representatives from 25 well-known Maldives resorts, significantly enhancing the scale and impact of the event.

The roadshow was officially inaugurated in Ahmedabad by Aishath Azeema, whose participation reflected the strengthening tourism and diplomatic relations between the Maldives and India.

Speaking during the opening ceremony, the High Commissioner highlighted India's importance as a key tourism partner, citing the strong cultural and people-to-people connections between the two countries. She also emphasised the Maldives' continued popularity for honeymoon, celebration, and luxury travel segments, while acknowledging Tatabye Tours' contribution to enhancing tourism collaboration between both markets.

Founded in 2014 by Roshan Jain, Tatabye Tours has grown into a leading destination management company specialising in premium island experiences across the

Maldives and other destinations. The successful completion of the second roadshow edition further reflects the company's commitment to strengthening its outreach in key Indian cities.

The event brought together top Maldives resort brands and highlighted diverse travel offerings across leisure, luxury, weddings, and MICE segments. It also served as an interactive B2B networking platform, enabling travel agents to connect directly with resort representatives, explore exclusive travel packages, and strengthen commercial partnerships.

Each city recorded enthusiastic participation through networking sessions, destination presentations, and interactive engagements aimed at improving product awareness and driving sales for the Maldives as a premium travel destination.

Commenting on the success of the event, Roshan Jain stated, "The second edition of our Maldives four-city roadshow, our biggest to date, has delivered a highly encouraging outcome. The strong response across all cities reflects not only the strength of our partnerships but also the growing aspiration among Indian travellers for luxury island experiences. This platform has enabled us to strengthen collaborations, build valuable connections, and further position the Maldives as a leading premium destination in the market."

With the successful completion of the Western India edition, Tatabye Tours continues to strengthen its position as a key Maldives-focused destination management company in India. The initiative also highlights the increasing significance of India as an important source market for Maldives tourism and the company's continued efforts to make luxury island experiences more accessible and rewarding for travel trade partners.



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- 10 SPECIAL RATES FOR MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN MALDIVES MARINE EXPO

- 11 MEMBER TO MEMBER NETWORKING
- 12 PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM DISCOUNTS
- 13 FREE LISTINGS FOR MEMBER BOATS ON LIVEABOARDS OF MALDIVES MAGAZINE
- 14 LOGO ON BROCHURES AND ADDRESS CARDS / PROMOTIONS
- 15 SPECIAL DISCOUNTS FROM BOATING PRIVILEGE PARTNER BUSINESSES

- 16 EXCLUSIVE BENEFITS IN NOMINATING TO MALDIVES NATIONAL BOATING AWARDS
- 17 OPPORTUNITY TO COMMUNICATE WITH GOVERNMENT AND AUTHORITIES AS A TEAM AND COMMENT ON REGULATIONS

**MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

# Atmosphere Foundation Launches Dive Training Sponsorship Programme for Maldivians

Atmosphere Foundation, in partnership with Moodhu Bulhaa Dive Centre, has announced the opening of applications for the first intake of a new programme designed to sponsor 10 Maldivians annually for professional dive training.

The initiative aims to support youth development and increase the number of skilled local professionals within the Maldives' tourism and marine sectors. As tourism continues to play a central role in the national economy, the programme is intended to provide Maldivians with structured pathways into the industry, allowing them to build technical expertise and develop long-term careers.

Selected participants will receive fully funded training leading to internationally recognised dive certifications. The sponsorship package includes complete professional training, certification costs, accommodation, meals, and insurance coverage.

Applicants must be 18 years of age or older. Upon completion of the programme, successful candidates will be required to serve within the Maldives for a designated period, ensuring that the skills acquired directly benefit the local tourism and marine industries.



Abdul Azeez Abdul Hakeem said the initiative reflects the foundation's commitment to creating meaningful opportunities for young Maldivians.

He stated that the programme is designed to provide a clear pathway for those passionate about the ocean to enter the diving profession. By investing in training and development, the foundation aims to equip participants with the skills needed for meaningful employment in an industry that is vital to the country's economy, while also supporting long-term career growth.

Atmosphere Foundation has been actively engaged in community development through initiatives focused on education, skills training, youth empowerment, and social welfare. Its programmes and partnerships are aimed at creating practical opportunities that strengthen communities and contribute to sustainable national development.

This dive training initiative further expands the foundation's ongoing efforts to support Maldivians through targeted programmes that enhance access to skills development, encourage professional growth, and create tangible benefits for individuals and the wider community.



# IITE Opens Applications for June 2026 Diploma in Travel and Tourism Management

The Island Institute of Tertiary Education (IITE) has announced the opening of applications for its June 2026 intake for the Diploma in Travel and Tourism Management, with a 50% sponsorship on course fees available for eligible applicants. Applications will remain open until 25 July 2026.

The one-year programme is delivered in English through both face-to-face and online classes, providing flexibility for students and working professionals to continue their studies while managing their careers.

The curriculum covers key areas of the tourism industry, including tourism marketing, hospitality operations, destination management, customer service, and sustainable tourism practices. The programme is designed to equip students with the practical knowledge and leadership skills required for supervisory and management positions within the tourism sector.

IITE noted that the diploma is accredited by the Maldives Qualifications Authority (MQA), ensuring recognised academic standards and quality education.

Interested applicants may visit the IITE website, email [enrollment@iite.edu.mv](mailto:enrollment@iite.edu.mv), or contact 9639992 via WhatsApp or Viber for further information. As seats are limited and the 50% sponsorship is available for a limited number of applicants, early applications are encouraged before the closing date.



# Benefit of being an NBAM Member

The National Boating Association of Maldives (NBAM) continues to play an important role in supporting and strengthening the country's boating and marine tourism sector by offering a range of practical benefits to its members. As the representative body for boating stakeholders, NBAM serves as a unified platform that advocates for the interests of the industry, engaging with government authorities and relevant agencies on regulatory matters, policy discussions, and operational challenges. This collective representation helps ensure that the concerns of operators are heard and addressed, contributing to a more stable and supportive business environment.

Membership also provides strong networking opportunities within the marine and tourism industry. Through various industry events, meetings, and collaborative platforms, members are able to connect directly with resorts, suppliers, travel agencies, and other key partners. These interactions often lead to new business opportunities, partnerships, and long-term collaborations that strengthen operations across the sector.

In addition, NBAM actively supports capacity building and professional development within the industry. Members benefit from training programmes, safety workshops, and knowledge-sharing sessions designed to improve operational standards and enhance skills. These initiatives help raise overall service quality and ensure that industry practices continue to align with international expectations.

NBAM also contributes to the visibility and promotion of its members through participation in industry events and exhibitions, helping to showcase member businesses to both local and international markets. This exposure plays an important role in strengthening brand presence and supporting business growth.

One of the most recent and impactful developments for members is the introduction of a fuel benefit scheme. This initiative provides direct cost relief by offering special fuel advantages to registered members, helping to reduce one of the highest operational expenses in the boating sector. Given the Maldives' reliance on marine transport and excursions, this benefit is expected to significantly support operational efficiency, improve cost management, and enhance overall competitiveness for member businesses.

Through these combined benefits, NBAM continues to demonstrate its commitment to supporting the growth and sustainability of the boating industry in the Maldives. The association remains focused on creating meaningful value for its members while contributing to the long-term development of the sector.



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# NBAM Updates

The National Boating Association of Maldives (NBAM) met with the Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Ibrahim Ameen, on 27 April 2026 following his recent appointment, to discuss key challenges facing the safari boating industry and explore practical solutions for the sector's long-standing concerns.

During the meeting, Minister Ameen reaffirmed the Ministry's role in regulating and facilitating the tourism industry while expressing his commitment to engaging closely with stakeholders and addressing industry issues within the legal framework. Industry representatives highlighted several persistent operational and regulatory challenges that continue to affect safari boat operators across the Maldives.

One of the major concerns raised was the urgent need for a dedicated safe harbor for safari vessels. Stakeholders noted that congestion at Hulhumalé jetty, combined with the presence of unregistered and abandoned vessels, has created significant logistical and safety challenges for operators. Discussions also focused on the proposed development of Dhiyaneru Falhu as a possible long-term solution, with the Minister identifying the project as one of the government's priority initiatives, potentially through private sector investment and public-private collaboration.

Additional concerns included difficulties related to liquor collection procedures, regulatory inconsistencies, dinghy licensing requirements, limited promotional support for the safari boating segment, and the classification of safari vessels under the same regulatory category as resorts despite operating under different business models. Representatives also emphasized the lack of sector representation in tourism promotional planning and advisory structures in recent years.



Minister Ameen acknowledged many of the issues raised and assured stakeholders that several matters, particularly liquor regulations and harbor congestion, would be reviewed personally. He further noted upcoming changes to the Visit Maldives Corporation framework aimed at ensuring broader industry representation and stakeholder participation.

The meeting marked an important step toward renewed dialogue between the government and the boating industry, reflecting a shared commitment to strengthening the safari boating sector through improved infrastructure, clearer regulations, and stronger collaboration between authorities and industry stakeholders.

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# BOARD MEETING

The National Boating Association of Maldives (NBAM) held its 4th Executive Board Meeting for the 2025–2027 term on 26 April 2026, bringing together Board members to review ongoing initiatives, membership engagement strategies, and industry development opportunities.

A key outcome of the meeting was the unanimous approval of NBAM’s endorsement of TechEng Expo 2026, scheduled to take place from 6–8 October 2026 in Hulhumalé. The Association agreed to provide a formal endorsement, permit the use of the NBAM logo in event materials, and support promotional efforts through its communication channels.

The Board also discussed regulatory matters concerning the registration of the Executive Committee with the Ministry of Youth, emphasizing the importance of completing the required documentation to ensure compliance and facilitate the approval of the Association’s annual reporting requirements.

Membership growth and engagement remained a central focus of the discussions. Board members highlighted the need to strengthen connections with existing members while attracting new participants to the Association. Several initiatives were proposed, including informal networking sessions, quarterly engagement forums, and enhanced outreach activities aimed at increasing visibility and industry participation.

The Board further explored opportunities for advocacy and collaboration within

the tourism and maritime sectors, including potential partnerships that could support the Association’s operational and industry development objectives.

An update was also provided on the upcoming Boating Awards initiative, with further discussions planned to finalize outstanding arrangements.

In addition, members were informed of a new fuel benefit being negotiated exclusively for NBAM members. The initiative is expected to provide members with access to preferential fuel pricing and improved supply arrangements, further strengthening the value of NBAM membership.

The meeting concluded with discussions on industry representation and the Association’s participation in national-level business forums, reaffirming NBAM’s commitment to advocating for the interests of the boating industry and supporting the sustainable growth of the sector.

NBAM remains dedicated to enhancing member value, promoting industry collaboration, and advancing the interests of the Maldives’ boating community through active engagement and strategic partnerships.



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