



# CLAWS Newsletter



The Perimeter Watch: Sri Lanka & Maldives | Volume I | No 1

by Diksha Jain

## **WEATHER WARNINGS**

### **Sri Lanka**

#### **Flood warnings issued in major river basins**

*(Flood Warnings Sri Lanka, Feb 10-11, 2025)*

On Feb 10-11, 2025, the Sri Lankan hydrology and disaster management division of the irrigation department issued flood warnings in Kelani Ganga, Kalu Ganga, Gin Ganga and Nilwala Ganga, among other major river basins, due to heavy rainfalls. The warning was issued at 9 am on both days (local time).

### **Maldives**

#### **White alert declared from Baa Atoll to Thaa Atoll; Alert White for strong winds of 19 – 24 mph with rough seas**

*(Maldives Meteorology, Feb 09, 2025)*

On February 09, the Maldives Meteorological Service (MET) issued a White Alert for given atolls due to extreme weather conditions:

- Baa Atoll (North Province) to Alif Dhaal Atoll (North Central Province) from 3 pm to 8 pm (local time)
- Baa Atoll (North Province) to Vaavu Atoll (North Central Province) from 8 pm Feb 09 to 2 pm Feb 10, 2025
- Baa Atoll (North Province) to Thaa Atoll (Upper South Province) from 8 pm Feb 09 to 2 pm Feb 10, 2025

Gusts of wind reaching 19-24 mph were expected, accompanied by rough seas.

## **EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

### **Sri Lanka**

#### **Turkey-Sri Lanka PTA to be active in the next two months**

*(Sangu, Feb 03, 2025)*

According to Economic Minister Mohammed Saeed, the Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) between Sri Lanka and Turkey will become active within the next two months. At the inauguration ceremony of the Dhanvantari Productivity Fair 2025, he emphasised creating more business opportunities, particularly for small businesses to grow and expand this year,

while the government works to facilitate the lawful storage of their products. Under the agreement, Sri Lanka has asked the Turkish government to cut duties on 38 items.

### **Sri Lanka calls for expediting humanitarian aid to Gaza**

*(Sangu, Feb 03, 2025)*

Sri Lanka has requested the expedited provision of humanitarian assistance to all regions impacted by the crisis in Gaza. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs approved the outcomes of the “Arab Six-Party” consultative meeting held in Cairo, Egypt. Furthermore, Sri Lanka endorses all endeavours aimed at sustaining the ceasefire agreement in Gaza and urges all relevant parties to implement it in its entirety.

### **President to meet several world leaders in UAE**

*(Daily Mirror, Feb 11, 2025)*

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake arrived in the UAE on February 10 for a three-day official visit at the invitation of President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. During his visit, he is set to discuss with several world leaders, including Colombian President Gustavo Petro, Pakistani Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. On February 11, he also participated in the ‘World Governments Summit 2025’ plenary session in Dubai, themed ‘Shaping Future Governments,’ according to the President’s Media Division (PMD).

### **Vice Minister for the Office of the Prime Minister of Thailand pays courtesy call on Sri Lankan Prime Minister**

*(The Island Online, Feb 12, 2025)*

General Nipat Thonglek (Retd), Vice Minister for the Office of the Prime Minister of Thailand, paid a courtesy call on Sri Lankan Prime Minister Dr. Harini Amarasuriya on February 10, 2025. During the meeting, they discussed the MoU on defence exchanges and joint efforts to combat human trafficking. Prime Minister Amarasuriya thanked Thailand for assisting in the rescue of Sri Lankans held in Myanmar and sought further support for the release of 18 more Sri Lankans in distress. The discussions also covered the Thailand-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and strengthening economic ties. The meeting was attended by Paitoon Mahapannaporn, Ambassador of Thailand to Sri Lanka, along with the visiting delegation from the Kingdom of Thailand.

## **Maldives**

### **India-Maldives Joint Military Exercise Begins**

*(Indian Defence news, Feb 04, 2025)*

The 13th edition of the joint military exercise “Exercise Ekuverin” between India and the Maldives commenced on February 02, 2025, at the MNDF Northern Area Command in Maafilaafushi, Lhaviyani Atoll. It is scheduled to run until February 16, 2025, and last 14 days. The Chief of Defence Force, Major General Ibrahim Hilmy, inaugurated the joint exercise with India.

### **New Ambassador of Japan to Maldives calls on Minister of Foreign Affairs**

*(Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Maldives, Feb 04, 2025)*

The new Ambassador of Japan to the Maldives, Her Excellency Ishigami Rumiko, met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Abdulla Khaleel on February 04 following the presentation of her credentials to President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu. Minister Khaleel reaffirmed the strong bilateral ties between the two nations and expressed gratitude for Japan’s continued support, mainly through its official development programs and Grass Roots Project schemes benefiting local communities. Senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs attended the meeting.

### **Chief of Defence Force Maldives called on Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf**

*(Daily The Spokesman, Feb 06, 2025)*

Major General Ibrahim Hilmy, Chief of Defence Force Maldives, met with Pakistan’s Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, at Naval Headquarters in Islamabad. Both leaders discussed matters of mutual interest, including bilateral collaboration and regional security. The visiting dignitary will also participate in the AMAN Dialogue alongside the multinational maritime exercise AMAN-25.

### **Speaker of Parliament visits India today**

*(Javiyani, Feb 10, 2025)*

A parliamentary delegation from the Maldives, led by Speaker Abdul Raheem Abdulla, visited India from the 10th to the 14th of this month. The delegation observed parliamentary proceedings at sessions in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar welcomed the delegation, highlighting the strengthening diplomatic relations between India and the Maldives.

## **INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

### **Sri Lanka**

#### **Sri Lanka Police to establish Central Crime Investigation Bureau**

*(Daily Mirror, Feb 11, 2025)*

The Sri Lanka Police is set to establish the Central Crime Investigation Bureau (CCIB) to handle various criminal investigations, including investigating illegal assets, homicides, organised crime, financial fraud, cybercrime, human trafficking, smuggling, and maritime crimes. Senior Superintendent of Police Shani Abeysekera will serve as the Director, while Deputy Inspector General of Police, Attorney-at-Law Nihal Thaldewa, will act as the Deputy Inspector General. The CCIB will work alongside the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), assigning cases based on their nature to either agency.

### **Maldives**

#### **Facebook Marketplace: Cyber Crime Center urges beware of scams**

*(Sangu, Feb 03, 2025)*

The Maldivian Cyber Crime Center recently announced the introduction of flash calls as an additional authentication method to replace OTP verification. Many companies are now adopting this method for customer authentication. However, the centre has warned that flash call scams are on the rise, as many users are unaware of how these calls work, making them more vulnerable to fraud.

#### **Maldives' govt promises control over data through digital ID after party membership scandal**

*(Biometric Update, Feb 10, 2025)*

Homeland Security Minister Ali Ihsan announced that the Maldives' national digital identity, 'eFaas', will soon notify citizens whenever a government agency or private entity accesses their data. This move follows a scandal involving the unauthorised use of personal data for political party registrations. The digital ID system will require user consent before any data access and will allow individuals to track who accessed their information and for what purpose. The system, featuring facial recognition by Regula, provides access to official documents like ID cards and driver's licenses.

## **ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**

### **Sri Lanka**

#### **Sri Lanka's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) Summit 2025 advances action on building an inclusive digital economy**

*(UNDP, Feb 05, 2025)*

The Sri Lanka Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) Summit 2025, held on February 5-6, commenced in Colombo and was organised by the Ministry of Digital Economy in partnership with UNDP Sri Lanka, ADB, and key stakeholders. Deputy Minister of Digital Economy Eranga Weeraratne highlighted the government's ambition to achieve a USD 15 billion digital economy by 2030. The event also introduced the 'Transforming Local Administrative Data Collection Systems for SDG Acceleration in Sri Lanka' project.

#### **Adani wind power: Project committee decided on lower tariff, report reveals**

*(Energy Central, Feb 10, 2025)*

Sri Lanka's project committee has unanimously recommended lowering the tariff for the proposed 484 MW Adani wind power plants in Mannar and Pooneryn to below US cents 5.50 per kWh, down from the Cabinet-approved US cents 8.62 in May 2024, according to documents submitted by the Attorney General's Department to the Supreme Court. The USD 442 million wind farm projects were assessed based on technical and financial evaluations, but the revised tariff is not reflected in the new Cabinet decision dated December 30, 2024.

### **Maldives**

#### **FTA with India to be finalised soon: Economy Minister Saeed**

*(Ras Online, Feb 11, 2025)*

According to Economy Minister Mohammed Saeed, the Maldives is on track to finalise a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with India shortly. During President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu's trip to India, he and Prime Minister Narendra Modi showed a shared interest in moving forward with the FTA between their nations. He also highlighted that the agreement with India would be designed to ensure considerable advantages for the Maldivian people.

## About the Author

Diksha Jain is a dedicated scholar in Defence and Strategic Studies, with a strong academic foundation in International Relations. She completed her master's degree in Defence and Strategic Studies, focusing on areas such as maritime security and the strategic importance of the Indian Ocean Region. Prior to this, she earned her bachelor's degree in International Relations, where she developed a comprehensive understanding of global politics and regional dynamics.

As a Research Assistant at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), Diksha explores critical issues related to defence strategy and maritime security. Her work focuses on the Indian Ocean Region, examining its geopolitical challenges and their implications for regional stability.



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