



# **MATATO**

**MALDIVES ASSOCIATION OF  
TRAVEL AGENTS AND TOUR OPERATORS**

## **PROFILE**

**[www.matato.org](http://www.matato.org)**

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# HI THERE!

As we celebrate 18 years, I am filled with a deep sense of pride and reflection on the journey we have undertaken so far, and this year in particular.

2024 has been a particularly significant one for MATATO. In early 2024, we welcomed our first CEO, Aminath Suzan, whose contributions have made a substantial impact on both our membership and our activities. Her leadership has brought renewed energy and direction to our association.

One of our most notable achievements last year was the successful India Road Show, where we showcased the Maldivian tourism industry in three major cities. This was followed by a prominent event at the PATA Mart in Bangkok, which expanded our reach to a broader audience and deepened our connections within the Asia-Pacific region. These initiatives have opened new oppor-

tunities for our members, particularly SMEs, and we remain steadfast in our commitment to supporting their continued success.

A further milestone in 2024 was the formation of the MATATO Aviation Committee. This initiative marks a critical step in addressing key challenges related to air connectivity and the future of air travel to and from the Maldives.

The committee will serve as an essential platform for dialogue and collaboration between the aviation sector and the tourism sector.



Women's empowerment has been at the forefront of our efforts in 2024. The inaugural Women Maldives Travel Conference provided a valuable forum for women leaders in tourism to exchange ideas, share their experiences, and inspire the next generation. Additionally, "Chefun" Cooking Show was a celebration of local culinary talent, bringing together the community during the holy month and highlighting the rich cultural fabric of our nation.

Our advocacy efforts, along with the implementation of various training programs, have also been pivotal in advancing policies that benefit both our members and the wider industry. We have facilitated numerous workshops that provide critical opportunities for professional development and networking.

We have been working on our products and I am pleased to note that Maldives Finder 2025 was also launched in November 2024 at WTM London, where MATATO once again partnered with the WTM organisers.

We are also releasing monthly episodes of our new talk show, MATATO Talks, bringing you industry experts and addressing trending topics in the industry.

Lastly, I am delighted to announce the establishment of the MATATO Student Chapter. This initiative is designed to nurture the next generation of tourism professionals by offering mentorship, resources, and early engagement with the industry.

On 8 January 2025, we started the year with our AGM 2024/25 and elected a new Executive Board for the next two years.

As we look toward the future, MATATO remains dedicated to fostering, empowering, and supporting our members, and supporting SMEs. Together, we will continue to shape the future of tourism in the Maldives and contribute to global harmony through our shared values and collaborations.

*Abdulla Ghiyas Riyaz*  
President, MATATO

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

About MATATO

4

5

6

7

16

18

20

CEO's Message

Meet the Executive Board

Our Main Products

More Highlights of 2024

Why MATATO?

Contact Details

# ABOUT MATATO

Maldives Association of Travel Agents and Tour Operators, MATATO, established in 2006, by a group of visionaries to elevate the Maldivian tourism industry through unity, empowerment and cooperation, has been a strong partner in developing tourism in the Maldives.

Representing the largest industry in the Maldives, MATATO is an internationally recognised association and represented in Pacific Asia Travel Association, PATA, the 3rd biggest travel association internationally as their PATA Chapter in Maldives.

[www.matato.org](http://www.matato.org)



**MATATO**

**PATA**<sup>®</sup>  
Pacific Asia Travel Association



## CEO'S MESSAGE

As MATATO moves towards its 20th year, we reflect with pride on the journey so far and look forward with renewed ambition. Our mission has always been to empower travel agents and tour operators, while positioning the Maldives as a premier global destination.

The future we envision is defined by collaboration, innovation, and sustainability. Guided by our President, Mr. Abdulla Ghiyas, and supported by our Executive Board, we remain dedicated to amplifying the voice of our members, building international partnerships, and embracing digital transformation.

Together with our members and partners, MATATO will continue to stand as a unified, member-driven, and globally connected association, shaping the next era of Maldivian tourism.

Mohamed Bassam Adam, CEO

# MEET THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

**Abdulla  
Ghiyas Riyaz**  
President



**Ahmed  
Arshad**  
Executive  
Board Member



**Mohamed  
Khaleel**  
Vice President



**Mohamed  
Mauroof**  
Executive  
Board Member



**Mohamed  
Shaaz Waleed**  
Vice President



**Assad  
Riza**  
Executive  
Board Member



**Abdulla  
Suood**  
Secretary General



**Ibrahim  
Nizam**  
Executive  
Board Member



**Ibrahim  
Didi**  
Treasurer



**Ignaz  
Mansoor**  
Executive  
Board Member



# OUR MAIN PRODUCTS

## MALDIVES FINDER

Our annual magazine, Maldives Finder, is MATATO's official publication with Maldives Finder 2025 launched in November 2024 at WTM London.

The magazine features various articles relevant to the tourism industry, featured locals and properties and a collection of advertised alluring properties in Maldives

Available in both physical copies and digitally, the magazine is one of the most prominent products.

### *Annual Publication*





# MALDIVES TRAVEL CONFERENCE

MATATO has been holding an annual conference on travel where experts from the industry gather to discuss on the challenges faced by the travel industry and engage in dialogue to promote Maldives tourism.

After a hiatus, this was resumed in 2024. Maldives Travel Conference 2024, however, was dedicated to women, and held as a Women's Edition in August 2024, as MATATO's goal to empower women in the industry.

The Conference is in the works of being spread across different regions with the next Conference planned for Addu atoll.

Graced by Her Excellency Madam Sajidha Mohamed, the First Lady of the Republic of Maldives, endorsed by the Ministry of Tourism, Maldives Marketing and PR Corporation and various women's associations, the Conference was well received by the industry and highlighted on various complex reasons contributing to the alarming gender disparity in the industry.



A follow up report was published and is available for download on our website

<https://www.matato.org/downloads>



# MALDIVES TRAVEL AWARDS

MATATO launched the Maldives Travel Awards in 2012, an annual event eagerly looked forward to by the tourist industry. Maldives Travel Awards is an esteemed event that showcase the best of what Maldives has to offer. It serves as a platform to honor exceptional achievements by resorts, hotels, guesthouses, travel agencies and tour operators, and people who have continued to contribute towards the growth and development of the Maldives tourism industry.

After a hiatus due to Covid-19, Maldives Travel Awards 2024 is planned to be held in the second quarter of 2025. This awards will have 2 segments; Maldives Travel Awards 2024 – Guesthouse Edition and Maldives Travel Awards 2024- Gala Edition.







# WELCOME INDIA ROADSHOW



In association with Maldives Marketing and PR Corporation (MMPRC), and National Hotels and Guesthouse Association of Maldives (NHGAM), MATATO initiated the series of Welcome India Roadshow, with the first roadshow held in the tier 1 cities: New Delhi, Bangalore and Mumbai.

The series is expected to continue with other tiers in the pipeline.

Welcome India roadshow was a critical step, supported by the Governments of both countries and the tourism industry, to address the decline in Indian arrivals to the Maldives, and to strengthen the bond between both countries.

With major coverage in India media, this initiative is believed to have brought good changes in the Indian tourism market with celebrities also restarting to frequent their trips to the Maldives and promoting it.



## MATATO STUDENT CHAPTER

MATATO announced the launch of the MATATO Student Chapter in July 2024. This initiative, a dedicated wing of MATATO, is designed specifically for students and aims to be operated by the student members under the guidance of MATATO.

The primary purpose of the MATATO Student Chapter is to create a platform that empowers youth, fosters leadership skills, enhances industry knowledge, and provides valuable experience to benefit their future careers. This initiative will serve as a springboard for young minds eager to make a mark in the travel and tourism industry.

Students who are eligible to join the MATATO Student Chapter must be enrolled in any registered educational institute and be over 16 years old. This broad eligibility criterion ensures that a wide range of students can take advantage of this opportunity to grow and learn.

While the initial launch is focused on Malé, MATATO has ambitious plans to expand this initiative to other regions and islands of the Maldives. The goal is to create a network of student chapters across the country, providing students from various areas with the opportunity to participate and benefit from this enriching experience.

In the long term, MATATO plans to connect these student chapters with the international Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Student Chapters. PATA has over 20 student chapters worldwide, in countries such as Thailand, the Philippines, UAE, Malaysia, Japan, India, Hong Kong, Canada, Vietnam, Switzerland, and Australia. These PATA Student Chapters operate on the principle of “for students, by students,” providing a powerful platform for youth globally to become changemakers and drive the responsible and sustainable development of the tourism industry.

This connection will not only offer Maldivian students a chance to collaborate and network with their international peers but also to contribute to and learn from a global movement towards sustainable tourism development.

The MATATO Student Chapter in Malé represents a significant opportunity for students to develop essential skills, gain industry knowledge, and prepare for successful careers in the travel and tourism sector. With the guidance of MATATO and the potential for international connections through PATA, student members will be well-equipped to become the future leaders of the industry.



## MATATO TALKS

MATATO is thrilled to partner with ICE Network to produce the new TV series "MATATO Talks". MATATO Talks is a talk show that launched its first episode on 15 October 2024 on Data and AI in the tourism Industry.

With new episodes planned to air every month based on different segments of the tourism industry, the show will be aired on ICE Network, hosted by the talk show host and bringing the public two experts from the respective segments, and discussing about related trending and pressing matters.

Sponsorship opportunities are open for the shows and can be coordinated with ICE Network on [hello@ice.mv](mailto:hello@ice.mv)



# FRAME BY MATATO ART EXHIBITION

An annual art competition, followed by an exhibition of the winners, with different themes for each year, "Frame" by MATATO will bring "Maldivian Mystic" in the first quarter of 2025.

With entries in all artistic forms, the judging will be through a competent panel followed by public voting.

The guidelines and criteria are available on the website [www.framebymatato.com](http://www.framebymatato.com)



Experience Maldives :  
Where Art Meets Paradise

[www.framebymatato.com](http://www.framebymatato.com)



# MORE HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024

1

Organised Ramazan activities such as the Daily Ramazan Quiz, and the weekly culinary TV show in association with Baiskoaf (Gadha Chefun).

2

Hosted MATATO Iftar to engage our members and industry stakeholders. Attendees were requested to donate to the Palestinian cause.

3

Produced the TV show “Leading the Way: Women in Action” to celebrate Women’s Day 2024, which is available on Baiskoaf and MATATO YouTube Channel.

4

Endorsed various events: Aviation Forum 2024 and Air Service World Congress.

5

Initiated a go green activity with WAMCO, to collect plastic in Male’ City, towards our commitment for a sustainable environment and industry.



# MORE HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024

**6** Organised a free training in Digital Marketing, in collaboration with BCC.

**7** Participated in PATA Travel Mart 2024 in Bangkok.

**8** Signed MOU with Villa College for development of human capital and provide members with exclusive discounts and specialised courses.

**9** Launched MATATO's YouTube Channel and TikTok Channel.



# WHY MATATO?

Check out 101 reasons why you are advised to partner with or be a member of MATATO via the barcode below.

## INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

Established in 2006, MATATO continues to contribute to the industry as a strong partner to the growth of the industry.

The Executive Board comprises of experts in the industry.

## LOBBYING AND ADVOCACY

MATATO's lobbying and advocacy approach challenges policies, regulations, taxes and business practices that threaten the viability of a competitive business environment for local businesses. MATATO is actively engages with all major government and industry related boards, committees, and even consult with the Parliament on related bills from time to time. The association believes to positively seek out constructive relations with all stakeholders and industry partners.

## PATA COLLABORATION

PATA is one of the leading tourism Organizations in the world, with over 8000 members and 32 active PATA country chapters and 28 PATA Student Chapters worldwide.

MATATO is the Maldives Chapter of PATA and ensures that members can avail the rich resources of PATA, have discounts on international events and have the opportunity to network with PATA's diverse international members.



## RECOGNITION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

MATATO is a household name in the travel industry of Maldives, recognized at National and International level. Members of MATATO can benefit from representation by an Organization acknowledged by the stake holders.

MATATO's opinion and consultation is sought after from all areas including the business sector and in the highest level of the government.

## TRAININGS AND EVENT OPPORTUNITIES

MATATO has been conducting several workshops, trainings and events over the years, and has been an advocate for human capital development and women empowerment.

Opportunities in PATA events and other forums are available for members.

## REGISTERED CHARITABLE ORGANISATION

MATATO is one of the few registered associations with Maldives Inland Revenue Authority (MIRA) as a Charitable Organization. Approved charitable organizations are those

bodies, associations and public institutions approved by the MIRA

In computing the taxable profits, taxpayers can deduct the donations made to such organizations upto the amount of 5% of taxable income, on or before the date of filing their BPT for that year.

## SCAN TO READ 101 REASONS WHY MATATO





# MATATO

**MALDIVES ASSOCIATION OF  
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