TRANSPARENCY MALDIVES
A Coalition for Integrity

**Press Statement: Urgent Action Needed to Protect the Rights, Safety and Wellbeing of Migrant Workers**

**10 August 2026:** Transparency Maldives is deeply concerned by reports of at least eight Bangladeshi nationals dying in the Maldives in the past ten days, including in a workplace accident, serious health-related incidents and death by suicide. These deaths highlight the urgent need to strengthen protections for the health, safety and wellbeing of migrant workers in the Maldives.

These deaths are not isolated tragedies. Migrant workers have faced systemic vulnerabilities and gaps in the protection of their rights, health, safety, and wellbeing. This leaves many migrant workers without adequate safeguards and accessible channels to seek protection and justice when their rights are violated.

Despite legal protections for employment rights and occupational health and safety, a significant gap remains between the law and the realities faced by migrant workers. Employers bear responsibility for safe working and living conditions, yet enforcement remains inadequate where these obligations go unmet. The State has a corresponding responsibility regulate and inspect workplaces, investigate violations and workplace deaths promptly, and ensure accountability and access to justice.

These deaths also underscore that protecting migrant workers cannot be limited to the workplace. Many spend years living and working in the Maldives, building their lives here while separated from family and support networks. Their mental health and social wellbeing require the same attention as their physical safety. Financial pressures, debt bondage, isolation, discrimination, and exploitative conditions can have lasting consequences. These realities demand support not only from employers and the State, but greater recognition and responsibility from the wider society.

Protecting migrant workers requires more than laws and policies on paper; it requires effective implementation and a genuine commitment to the dignity, equality and wellbeing of every person who lives and works in the Maldives. Transparency Maldives calls on the State to take immediate measures to:

- Strengthen enforcement of all laws protecting migrant workers and ensure that responsible parties in violation are held accountable;
- Strengthen occupational health and safety standards, workplace inspections and preventive measures to protect workers from avoidable injury and death;
- Improve access to healthcare, mental health and psychosocial support, with a specific focus on migrant populations; and
- Address the structural vulnerabilities that leave migrant workers at greater risk of exploitation and abuse.

We must not allow our economy to be dependent on the exploitative conditions that put migrant workers at risk. Every migrant worker deserves the right to live and work in safety and with dignity.

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