



KEYSTAGE 1 FACT SHEETS

PARLIAMENTARY EDUCATION
INFORMATION PACK



PEOPLE'S MAJLIS SECRETARIAT 2024

THE MALDIVIAN CONSTITUTION

A Constitution is like the most important law book that everyone in the country agrees to follow. It makes sure that everyone is treated fairly, and the country runs smoothly. The current Maldives constitution was written in 2008. It explains what the people can do and what the State can do.

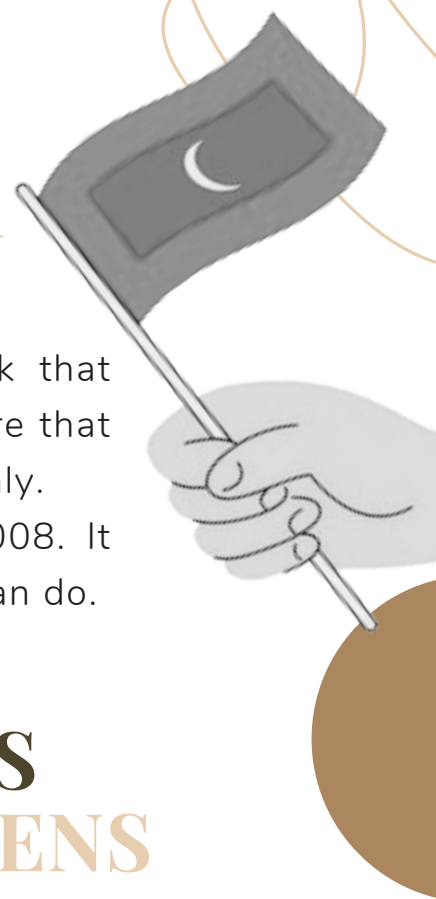
DUTIES OF THE STATE VS DUTIES OF THE CITIZENS

WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF THE STATE IN MALDIVES?

The State's responsibility is to follow the Constitution and to protect and support the freedoms and rights stated in it. In this way, it is the duty of the State:

- To protect and take care of the environment, resources, and beauty of the country for the present and future generations.
- To ensure everyone is treated equally under the law and gets the same protection.
- To ensure social and economic rights, like providing food, water, housing, healthcare, a clean environment, and equal access to things like communication and transportation for everyone.
- To make sure every citizen gets the basic human rights listed in the Constitution, like privacy, education, voting, and freedom of speech etc.

The Constitution says that having and enjoying rights comes with individual responsibilities and duties. Being a good citizen means respecting others and meeting personal and national duties.



WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF CITIZENS OF MALDIVES?

Following are some of the responsibilities of every citizen:

- Stand up for the rights and freedoms of others.
- Be kind, respectful, and accepting of everyone.
- To contribute to make the community better.
- Support the Maldives by keeping it strong, safe, and united.
- Respect the Constitution by following the rules and obeying the law.
- Support democratic values and practices in a way that aligns with Islamic tenets.
- Protect and honor Islam, the culture, language, and heritage of the nation.
- Take care and protect the country's natural environment.
- Show respect for National symbols like the national flag, state emblem and the national anthem.



FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND FREEDOM

WHAT ARE RIGHTS?

Rights are basic things that everyone deserves simply because they are human. Laws, ethics, and societal norms protect and recognize these rights.

Everyone should have these fundamental rights and freedoms without being discriminated or treated unfairly based on things like race, national origin, their color, gender, age, mental or physical abilities, political views, or anything else about them - Giving extra help or protection to people who are struggling or need special support, as outlined in the law, is not considered unfair treatment.

The chapter two of the **Constitution** of Maldives clearly lists the basic rights and freedoms that every citizen has.

Below are some examples;

INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS



- **Equality** - Everyone is treated fairly by the Law and gets the same protection and benefits.



- **Privacy** - Everyone has the right to respect their private and family life.



- **Freedom of expression** - Everyone has the right to freedom of thought and the freedom to communicate opinions and expression in a way that does not conflict with any tenet of Islam.



- **Right to life** - Everyone has the right to be alive, free, and safe.



- **Freedom from restraint** - One is free to take part in any activity that is not expressly forbidden by Islamic Shari'ah or by law.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS



- Everyone has the **right to nutritious food and clean water, clothing and housing, better health care, a healthy and ecologically balanced environment, equal access to means of communication, etc.**



- Everyone has the **right and freedom to gain knowledge, information, and learning.**



- **Children and young people, elderly and disadvantaged people are entitled to special protection and special assistance** from the family, the community and the State.

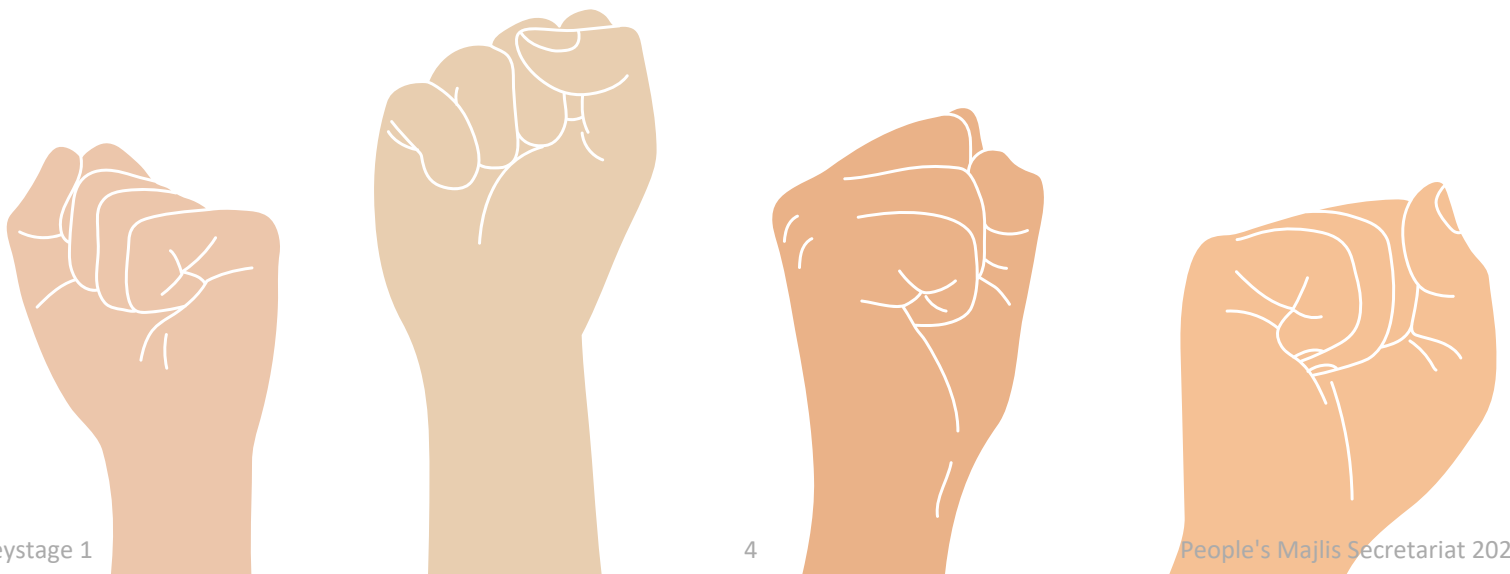
CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS




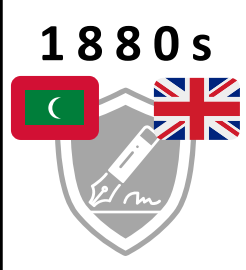


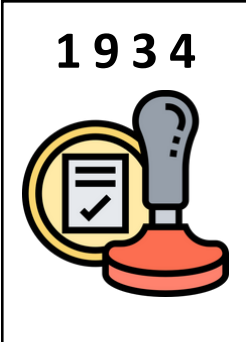
- **Right to vote** - Every individual above eighteen years of age has the right to vote in elections, and in public referendums.











- **Freedom of Assembly and Association:** The right to gather and join with others for peaceful reasons.



THE MALDIVES PARLIAMENT AND CONSTITUTION'S TIMELINE

YEAR	EVENTS
 <p>1153</p>	Maldives converts to Islam
 <p>1880s</p>	Maldives signs a protectorate treaty with Britain.
 <p>1932</p>	The first Constitution of Maldives was approved on 22 December 1932. With the constitution, the first parliament was also created.
 <p>1933</p>	First constitution of Maldives gets cancelled.
 <p>1934</p>	Constitution approved with changes to the first one.

YEAR	EVENTS
<p>1951</p>	<p>First Political Party formed. "Rayyithunge Muthagaddim Party"</p> 
<p>1953</p> 	<p>Changed from Monarchy to a Republic after a public referendum. Government switches back to a Monarchy in 1954</p>
<p>1965</p> 	<p>Independence from Britain</p> 
<p>1968</p> 	<p>Referendum voted and Second Republic formed</p>
<p>2004</p> 	<p>Political reform begins The constitution also underwent changes to include good governance, democratic values, and practices</p>
<p>2008</p> 	<p>Constitution approved on 7th August 2008</p>
<p>2009</p> 	<p>The 17th sitting of Parliament, sworn in on 28th May 2009, consisted of MPs representing different political parties.</p>

SEPARATION OF POWERS: UNDERSTANDING THE THREE BRANCHES OF THE STATE

WHAT IS SEPARATION OF POWERS?

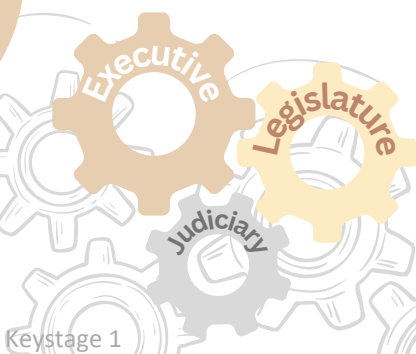
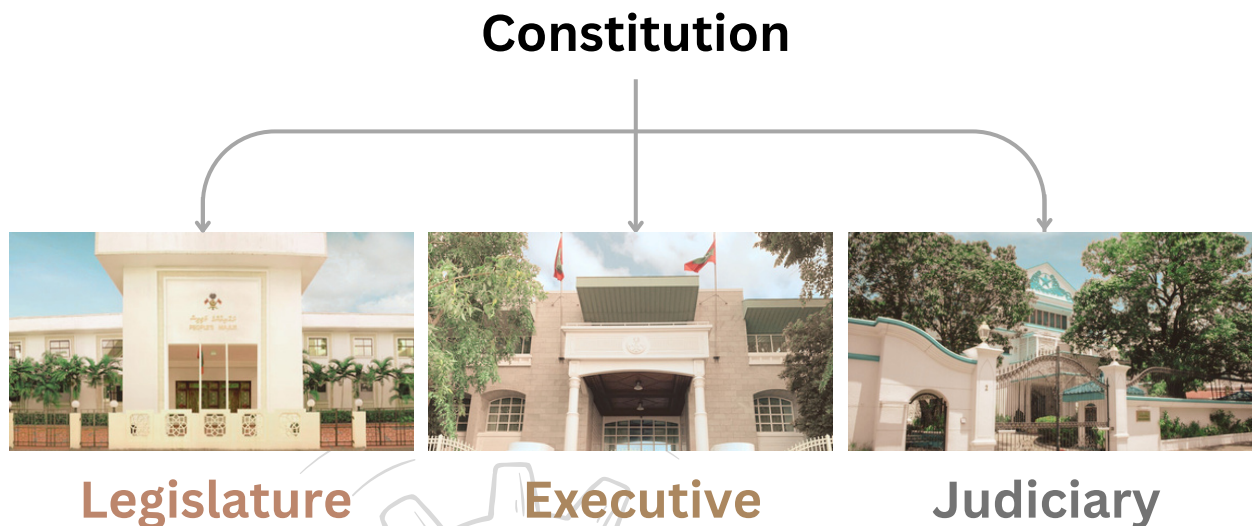
- It means to divide the state into three branches: **Executive, Legislature and Judiciary.**
- Each branch has the power to fulfill its responsibilities. Each branch can check the powers of other branches or check what they are doing.

WHY IS SEPARATION OF POWERS IMPORTANT?

Separation of powers into three branches is important because it helps keep everything balanced. Each branch keeps an eye on the others to make sure they're not doing anything wrong. This stops any one branch from having too much power and misusing it.

SEPARATION OF POWER IN MALDIVES

The constitution of Maldives lays down the powers and responsibilities of three branches. That is:



UNDERSTAND OUR PARLIAMENT

WHAT IS THE PEOPLE'S MAJLIS?

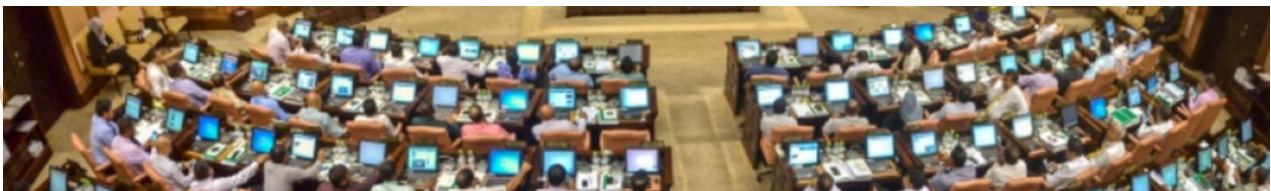
In most countries, the group of people who make the laws is usually called the parliament. In the Maldives, the parliament is called **The People's Majlis**. It's the place where all the elected representatives, chosen by the people, meet to discuss important topics and make the necessary rules and plans to make the country a better and fairer place for everyone in it.



WHO IS A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT OR MP?

A person who has been chosen by the people to represent them in the Parliament is known as a Member of Parliament (MP). Each Member of Parliament represents a group of people of a specific area called a **constituency** or **Dhaairaa**.

The 19th Parliament sworn in 2019 had 87 members elected according to the constituencies. However, with the increase in population, the 20th Parliament would comprise 93 members. The election for 20th Parliament will take place in 2024.



HOW DOES THE PARLIAMENT WORK?

Parliament members have meetings called 'sittings', where all the MPs debate and discuss important topics put forward to the Parliament. Parliament members also work in specific Committees, where they investigate matters in detail before they make decisions.



Preliminary sittings



Committee Meetings

Parliament follows 2 main documents that tell it how to work. They are;

CONSTITUTION OF MALDIVES

STANDING ORDER
(OR THE RULES THAT DEFINE THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE PARLIAMENT)



FUNCTIONS OF PARLIAMENT

MAKING LAWS:

- MPs discuss and create or amend laws that affect the entire country. They propose ideas, debate them, and vote on whether it is the best way forward for the country.
- It is a place where important issues are debated. Representatives express different opinions, and discussions help make informed decisions.

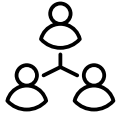


OVERSEEING THE EXECUTIVE:

- Parliament also keeps an eye on the Executive's actions. MPs question government officials to make sure they are doing their job well.
- Parliament approves the national budget, deciding how public money should be spent on things like education, healthcare, and infrastructure.
- Parliament ensures that the Executive is accountable for its decisions and actions. It acts as a check to prevent misuse of power.

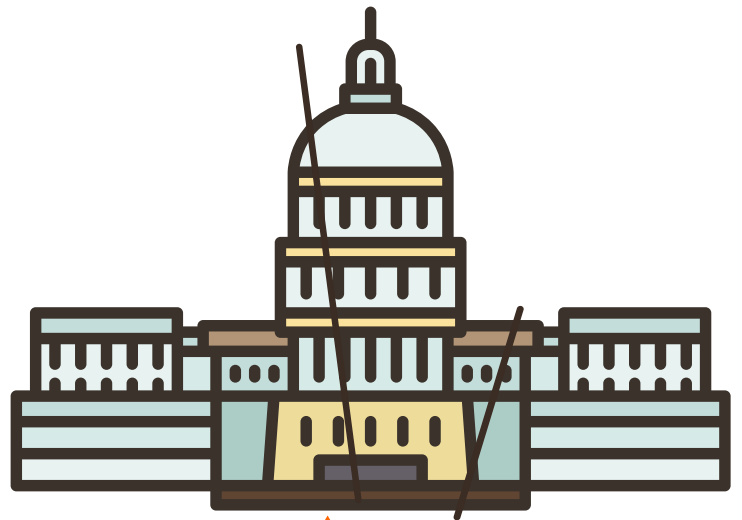


REPRESENTING THE PEOPLE:



- People elect representatives (Members of Parliament or MPs) to speak for them in the Parliament.
- MPs listen to the concerns and ideas of the people they represent and bring those issues to the attention of the parliament.

Parliament



Parliament Member



Public



RULES AND LAWS

WHAT IS A RULE?

Rules tell us what we should and should not do. We have different rules everywhere; in our families, schools, parks, roads, restaurants, offices, hospitals, etc.

We need rules in our daily lives so people do the right things, like:

- showing respect and treating everyone fairly
- taking care of yourself, others and the surroundings
- staying safe and organised



WHAT IS A LAW?

A law is like a special rule or group of rules that a country or community makes. The government makes sure everyone follows these rules. Laws help everyone know how to behave, what they can do, and what they should not do. They are important to make sure our community is fair and organized.



WHY DO WE NEED RULES AND LAWS?

- **Order and Peace:** Laws help everyone know how to behave, so things don't get messy or confusing in our community.
- **Rights and Freedom:** Laws make sure that each person has their own rights and freedom, and they keep those rights safe.
- **Problem solving:** Laws tell us what's okay and not okay to do, so we can avoid arguments and fights. They help us solve problems in a peaceful way.
- **Being Fair:** Laws make sure everyone is treated the same and that nobody is treated unfairly.

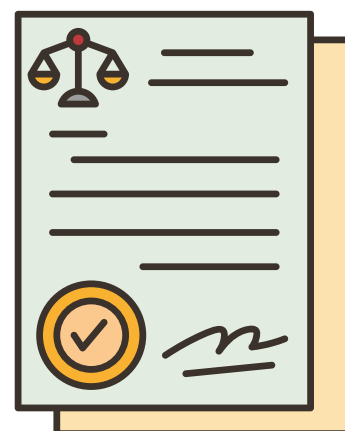
- **Leadership and Rules:** Laws also tell leaders and people who work for the government how to do their jobs. They make sure that leaders follow the rules too.
- **Taking Care of Nature:** Laws give us rules to protect the environment and keep our world safe and healthy.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RULES AND LAWS

RULES	LAWS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules can be made in different situations by different people • Rules have to be followed only by the group of people involved in the situation • Consequences are made differently by those who make the rules for that situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laws are made by the Leaders of a country • Laws have to be followed by everyone in the country • Consequences are made by the lawmakers and are written down so everyone knows the consequences and everyone gets the same consequences.

WHAT IS A BILL?

A bill is an idea for a new law. Members of Parliament discuss it and decide if it's a good idea after researching it and giving it a lot of thought. If they agree, it is sent to the President to see if he agrees too. If he accepts it, then it becomes a law and gets written down for everyone to see in a special government newspaper.



PATH OF A BILL

The following flowchart represents the stages a Bill goes through to become a Law.



1. DRAFTING

Someone or a group of people come up with a 'BILL' or an idea for a new law.

The member of Parliament who presents this idea to the Parliament is called the "Sponsor of the Bill."

2. FIRST READING

The Bill is introduced to the Parliament.

3. SECOND READING

All the members discuss the main ideas of the law. And vote whether they will accept the Bill to continue working on it or not.

If the Bill is accepted into the Parliament, a small group of selected members called a Committee, investigates the idea further. They get advice from experts and make suggestions to improve it. The Committee then shares a report with all the members of the Parliament.

4. THIRD READING

Parliament discusses the Bill one last time. Members can suggest changes.

Then, everyone votes on whether to make it a law or not. If the majority say yes, it goes on to the next step to become a law. If not, they can send it back to discuss more changes or cancel the idea.

5. PRESIDENTIAL AGREEMENT

Once the Parliament agrees, the President needs to say it's okay too. The President can agree and make it a law, suggest changes, or send it back to the Parliament for more discussion.

6. Publishing and Following the Law

Publishing and Following the Law

If the President agrees, the Bill becomes a law. They publish it in the National Gazette, and everyone must start following the new law on a specific day.



BUDGET PROCESS



WHAT IS A NATIONAL BUDGET?

The national budget, or government budget, is like a big money plan of the country for a specific time, usually a year. It shows how much money the government thinks it will get, how much it plans to spend, and if it needs to borrow any money. It's like a detailed map that guides the government on how to use money for different things like schools, health, and other important services.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL BUDGET?

- How much money the government expects to get and how much it plans to spend during the year ahead.
- Data of how much money the government really got and spent in the previous year.
- Predictions about the future, like how much the country's economy will grow and how prices might change.
- How the government plans to divide the money among different areas, like schools, health, and other important things they want to focus on.

WHERE DOES THE GOVERNMENT USUALLY SPEND ITS MONEY ON (EXPENDITURE)?

- **Health:** Taking care of people's well-being, hospitals, and healthcare.
- **Economic Affairs:** Dealing with money matters, businesses, and the economy.
- **Education:** Schools, teachers, and everything related to learning.
- **Housing and Community Amenities:** Making sure people have good places to live and community facilities.



- **Social Protection:** Helping and supporting people who might need it.
- **Environmental Protection:** Taking care of the environment and nature.
- **Defense and Public Order and Safety:** Keeping the country safe and maintaining law and order.
- **General Public Services:** Providing basic services that everyone needs.
- **Recreation, Culture, and Religion:** Supporting activities for fun, cultural events, and religious practices.

WHAT ARE WAYS THE COUNTRY GETS MONEY (REVENUE):

Taxes:



- **Tourism Tax:** When tourists visit, they pay a tax.
- **Business and Property Tax:** Companies and landowners pay taxes too.
- **Goods & Services Tax:** Everyone pays a bit of tax when they buy things and services.

Other Money Sources:



- **Fees:** Sometimes, people pay fees for certain services from government.
- **Fines:** If someone breaks a rule, they might pay a fine.
- **Rent for Resorts:** If resorts are on government land, they pay rent.

Help from Others:



- **Foreign Aid:** Other countries might give money to help.
- **Grants:** Special funds or aid from other places.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENT IN THE NATIONAL BUDGET?

One of the main responsibilities of the Parliament is to check and approve the National Budget. The flowchart below details how this is done:

