

# India-out campaign' in Maldives

July 10, 2021

**In news**

## **What is it?**

The India out campaign was launched by the opposition coalition Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM) and People's National Congress(PNC) both on the street as well as on social media demanding the expulsion of Indian military personnel present in the country.

## **More about the campaign**

- **The aim of the India out campaign is** to garner people's support to its demand for the release of President Yameen by putting the ruling Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) and India in a bad light.
- The opposition coalition organised a protest demonstration in Male in August 2020.
- The 'India Out' campaign started sometime last year as on-ground protests in the Maldives, and later widely spread across social media platforms using the phrase with a related hashtag.
- In January 2021, another protest with "India Out"slogan was organised in front of the residence of the Indian High Commissioner, demanding the removal of Indian military personnel from the Maldives.
- Since January this year the opposition coalition has been organising protest demonstrations every Friday.
- India Out campaign is also going on on social media.
- The most active person in the #India Out campaign in social media Ahmed Azaan is the co-founder of Dhiyares and its sister newspaper The Maldives Journal (TMJ), which carry news and reports since December 2020.

- The two online media mostly carry anti-India and anti-government news and reports.

### **What are the allegations of the campaign?**

- The organizers of the campaign claim to have access to several classified agreements signed by India and the Maldives which are allegedly harmful to the Maldives including the agreement on the hydrographic survey, and the agreement on setting up of Coast Guard dockyard at Uthuru Thila Falhu (UTF) funded by India.
- It is argued that the Solih administration is “selling off Maldives” by entering into these agreements with India in the field of defence and security, and infrastructure development.
- The agreement between India and the Maldives on the hydrographic survey was criticised arguing that the agreement allows India to access underwater information and sell the information to others.
- None of these assumptions are based on any fact. Both India and the Maldivian government have responded against these allegations.

### **India's reaction**

The Indian High Commission in the Maldives has sought government action and greater security following what it calls “recurring articles and social media posts attacking the dignity of the High Commission” and diplomats posted in the country.

A letter written by the **High Commission cited the Preamble of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961)** and stated that these “attacks are motivated, malicious and increasingly personal” and indicated that they could potentially “damage the time-tested and mutually beneficial bilateral relations between India and the Maldives”.