



MALDIVES MARKETING AND PR CORPORATION
REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

The Maldives reaffirms their withdrawal from the New 7 Wonders of Nature competition
25th May 2011:

We have noted that despite our emails and answer phone messages to Mr Eamonn Fitzgerald, the New 7 Wonders have refused to respond to our communications. We have also noted that their office premises appear to be empty and their colleagues that we previously had regular communications with are no longer available.

In light of the press statement titled "Maldives remains in the New & Wonders of Nature campaign" (17th May 2011) and the recent "Comment and opinion" in Minivannews.com we feel that this statement and press release is necessary to halt any further misrepresentation by the NOWC regarding our involvement of the Maldives in their competition. The Maldives Marketing and PR Corporation (MMPRC) have consulted their lawyers regarding many concerns, including:

- 1) The NOWC originally sought acceptance and involvement of the Maldives in the competition with a government signature and payment. Your original contract was signed by the then Minister of Tourism of the democratically elected government that represents the people of the Maldives. We note that the democratically elected Government of the Maldives is the only legitimate authority to act in the name of the Maldives and its people. The government Cabinet (not the MMPRC whom you attacked in your article) has made the final decision to withdraw from your competition due to their findings.
- 2) Continued use of the name "the Maldives" in spite of our strong objection to the same, would leave us with little choice but to consider possible avenues for legal recourse.
- 3) As the only country and entire destination in the final 28 of your competition, we find your claim "that the authority to withdraw a participant from the campaign is a decision for New7Wonders alone, [not for any government agency](#)" somewhat perplexing? The sovereign right of the country belongs to the people of the Maldives which is represented by their democratically elected government.
- 4) In clauses 4 and 5 of the signed contract, it is stated that the obligation to pay is determined and decided by its own (ie the Government of The Maldives) abilities and resources and that the NOWC will respect this. In light of our recent economic riots and financial crisis which was broadcast to the world, we feel that the NOWC have totally disregarded our situation. The contract is written to ensure that it is a judgment call to be made by the Government of the Maldives, not NOWC.
- 5) After the many attempts by the MMPRC to negotiate and explain our financial situation requesting a reduction of the price to meaningfully compete and stay in the competition, we are again perplexed to learn that the NOWC are considering taking a smaller sum of money from a third party in order to keep the Maldives in the competition?
- 6) The MMPRC does not agree with the business arguments as quoted in the article for Minivannews.com. To imply that you can guarantee a positive response of an advertising campaign or PR stunt that is yet to happen is wholly unethical. The NOWC "commissioned" reports and "estimates" cannot guarantee and secure a positive outcome for the Maldives. There are so many variable factors as to why marketing activities are successes or failures - but no two scenarios are identical and so generalisations and assumptions should not be made when spending huge sums of the country's money.

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- 7) The description of the voting system by NOWC as being “fair”, “democratic”, “the people’s choice” and such language is highly questionable as votes can evidentially be paid for and also, multiple votes can theoretically be placed by any individual. The MMPRC is also unconvinced that the competition has the “1 billion votes” as claimed. The NOWC totally avoids any verification or proof of this incredible statistic.

We feel that the continued participation of the Maldives in the NOWC competition is a matter entirely up to the democratically elected Government of the country. Any infringement of this sovereign right, including your continued disregard for our position on the matter, will leave us with no alternative but to seek legal recourse. We take this opportunity to ask NOWC to consider the position of the Government of Maldives in light of the above, and respect the sovereign rights of the country and its people.

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