



IAS PARLIAMENT

Information is Empowering
A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative

India-Maldives - Dispute with Elections

What is the issue?

\n\n

\n

- Maldives Foreign Secretary has summoned Indian High Commissioner to Maldives and conveyed Male's "displeasure".
- It comes as the latest sign of a lack of trust that has developed between India and Maldives over the last few years.

\n

\n\n

What is the recent happening?

\n\n

\n

- The reason for expression of dissatisfaction was a tweet by BJP's Rajya Sabha MP Subramanian Swamy.
- He said India should invade Maldives if rigging of election takes place.
- The tweet included a link to a Maldivian news report.
- It related to the meeting between him and exiled former Maldives President Mohamed Nasheed.
- India's Ministry of External Affairs has clarified that it was his personal opinion.
- The Ministry also made it clear that it did not reflect Indian government's views.

\n

\n\n

Why was India-Maldives relationship strained?

\n\n

- \n
- Suspicion on India's role has intensified after India expressed concern over Maldives elections.
- \n
- Maldives announced of elections without allowing democratic institutions.
- \n
- The Parliament and the judiciary were kept away from working in a free and transparent manner.
- \n
- Relations are soured, especially since President Yameen declared emergency for 45 days despite Delhi's call for restraint.
- \n
- Notably, the exiled President Nasheed had sought India's military intervention to release dissidents in prison.
- \n
- He called on for India to send an envoy, backed by its military, to free the judges and political detainees.
- \n
- **Democracy** - The Maldivian election is due in September, 2018.
- \n
- India has constantly urged Maldives to restore democracy.
- \n
- It has also demanded a "credible restoration" of political process and the rule of law before the elections are conducted.
- \n
- Given this, Swamy's tweet is being viewed in Maldives as an indication of Indian strategy.
- \n

\n\n

Why is India concerned?

\n\n

- \n
- India believes it is a "responsible" power in the region.
- \n
- It also urges major powers in the world to follow "rules-based order".
- \n
- So India would not want to play an interventionist role in Maldives elections.
- \n
- But like the western community, its priority is restoration of full-fledged

democracy.

\n

- However, for India, more than this, the geopolitical stakes in the island rank high.

\n

- Notably, Maldives has emerged as a spot of geopolitical tussle between India and China.

\n

- It has been carefully using its newfound proximity to China to make India wary.

\n

- China is expanding its footprint in Maldives through the Belt and Road Initiative.

\n

- It is also involved in building massive infrastructure in and around Malé.

\n

- India also faces an economic challenge, with Maldives signing a Free Trade agreement with China.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Indian Express

\n



IAS PARLIAMENT

Information is Empowering

A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative