

Asia Pacific

Maldives incoming president says talks started with India on troop removal - Bloomberg News

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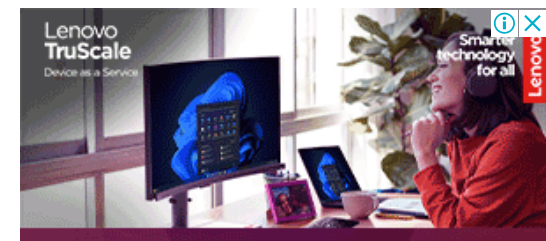


Mohamed Muizzu, Maldives presidential candidate of the opposition party, People's National Congress speaks with the media personnel during the second round of a presidential election in Male, Maldives September 30, 2023. REUTERS/Dhahau Naseem/File Photo [Acquire Licensing Rights](#)

COLOMBO, Oct 27 (Reuters) - Maldives has started negotiations with India to remove its military presence, President-elect Mohamed Muizzu said in an interview published by Bloomberg News on Friday, as New Delhi and Beijing both vie for influence in the region.

Removing Indian troops was a key campaign pledge by Muizzu, who ousted President Ibrahim Solih last month.

Around 70 Indian military personnel maintain New Delhi-sponsored radar stations and surveillance aircraft. Indian warships help patrol Maldives' exclusive economic zone.



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Muizzu said in the [interview](#) he had already begun negotiations with the Indian government on removing its military presence, calling those talks “very successful already.”

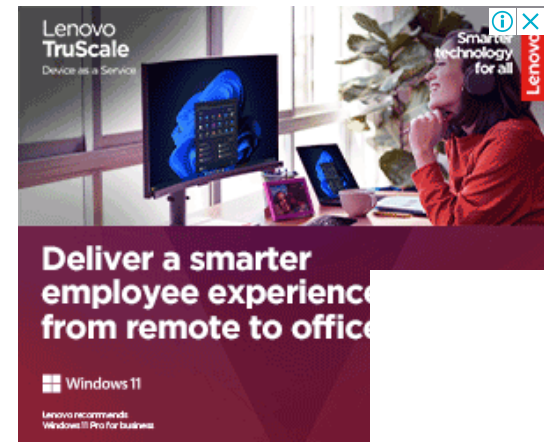
“We want a bilateral relationship that’s mutually beneficial,” Muizzu told Bloomberg, adding that Indian soldiers would not be replaced by troops from other countries.

Asking India to remove military personnel in no way indicated “that I’m going to allow China or any other country to bring their military troops here,” he said.

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