

Keeping the environment clean

By **IBRAHIM FAZUL RASHEED**

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IBRAHIM FAZUL RASHEED holds a Masters of Business Administration from Edith Cowen University, Western Australia. He began his government service in 2001 serving most recently as Head of Administration at the Maldives' Parliament, the Peoples Majlis' Secretariat from 2010 to 2015. His tenure encompassed overseeing the administration, human resources, information technology and finance divisions. Previously he worked in the Ministry of Human Resources, Youth and Sports as an Assistant Director from 2007 to 2010 and was responsible for implementing key programs for the development of the youth of the Maldives.

The Malé Water and Sewerage Company (MWSC), was set up in 1995 by the Government of Maldives to provide potable water and sewerage services to the Greater Malé Region. Since then, the company has worked diligently towards expanding its services to the outer islands, including Hulhumalé, Villimale, Thilafushi, Gulhifalhu, Maafushi, Kulhudhuffushi, and Dhuvaaafaru. Its services extend to approximately 40 per cent of the entire population of the Maldives' islands.

Through the experience and knowledge accumulated over time and as part of its business diversification strategy, MWSC has gone on to further expand by providing engineering solutions. With its proficiency in the field, MWSC now provides water and waste-water solutions to the market under its registered brand Fen, including Fen Engineering Solutions and Fen Borehole drilling services. With the diversification into engineering services, today, MWSC is the largest contractor of water and sewerage projects undertaken in the Maldives. MWSC offers a full range of potable water services for households, industry, and the islands' hotels and restaurants, from installing meters to servicing and repairing pipes and connections. The company is also responsible for installing new sewerage connections to MWSC's sewer network, and maintains catch pits and undertakes deblocking work. The endowed engineering competency in civil, mechanical and electrical engineering disciplines has allowed MWSC to become a multi-disciplinary engineering company.

With the focus on expanding and developing sustainable water and sewerage utility services in the outer islands, MWSC now provides utility services within the Integrated Utility Services model designed for small populations under which water, sewerage, electricity and waste management services are being provided by a single service provider. The model was successfully implemented in Dhuvaaafaru in 2013.

MWSC's Water Quality Assurance state-of-the-art laboratory in Malé is first of its kind in the Maldives. Specialised chemists and microbiologists conduct more than 100,000 separate water quality tests every year, looking for organic and inorganic compounds in the water in quantities as small as parts per billion.

Our experts examine water samples that are carefully shipped to the lab from sampling stations throughout the

country to ensure that your water meets and surpasses strict water quality standards set by the regulator.

We strive to provide safe water for everyone, always. Water quality standards are maintained by continuous monitoring of production parameters on-site and by daily monitoring of the quality of water by our own laboratory. Maldives' water quality is also checked by the National Health Laboratory (NHL). For this purpose, dedicated sampling points are assigned in each island where MWSC produces drinking water. MWSC policy on quality is to maintain a higher quality of drinking water than the minimum Standards of World Health Organisation, while complying with the standards set by EPA (our regulator).

While expanding its capacity and developing in the water and sewerage services, MWSC has ventured into large-scale manufacturing operations, including bottled Taza mineralised water through its subsidiary, Island Beverages Maldives (IBM), in 2004. Since when the company has met the highest standards for its quality production. IBM is also the only bottled water brand produced in the Maldives that applies standard laboratory testing for quality assurance throughout the production process.

In 2010, Hitachi Plant Technologies bought a 20 per cent stake in MWSC. The company's involvement in the operation of MWSC has led to further upgrading of the water supply and sewage services of the Maldives.

In 2013, MWSC launched a plastic bottle-recycling programme for its Taza mineralised water brand, targeted at the domestic market in and around Malé region. Bottles are shredded in Malé and exported for recycling purposes.

While recycling is an ongoing process undertaken by MWSC in conjunction with its resort customers since 2005, the programme is mainly intended for collecting empty bottles from households to ensure best practices of disposal of PET bottles by local residents.

The 21st century is often referred to as "the century of water", because incidents of water shortages and water pollution are becoming increasingly widespread as a result of the growing world population and the development of emerging economies. With this in mind, MWSC will continue to work toward meeting the needs of the Maldivian people and to contribute toward the development of the islands.