

Intel gets new chairman with Bangladeshi origin

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

AMERICAN tech giant Intel on Tuesday announced its board has elected with immediate effect a new chairman who had grown up in Bangladesh.

Omar Ishrak joined the Santa Clara, California-based company's board as an independent director in March 2017. Board chairpersons typically serve a maximum of two to three years.

The 64-year-old replaces Andy Bryant, an Intel veteran whose career at the American chip maker spanned well over three decades serving in a variety of senior executive roles.

Bryant, who started as board chairman in May 2012, told the board last March he wouldn't run for re-election in 2020.

"I have full confidence in Omar leading the board, which is fortunate to have his expertise at leading an innovative, global company," said Bryant, who will step down in May.

Ishrak comes at a time when the chip maker is trying to resolve supply shortages and protect its dominant market position from growing competition by rival Advanced Micro Devices Inc.

Intel has been facing some pressure and lagged behind its peers in recent times. Shares of Intel rose 29 per cent over the past 12 months while the semiconductor ETF, SMH, jumped 66 per cent in the same time period.

Ishrak is concurrently serving as the chairman and chief executive officer of Medtronic, a medical technology company headquartered in the US, since June 2011.

He joined Medtronic from General Electric Company, where he spent 16 years, most recently as president and CEO of GE Healthcare Systems, a \$12 billion division of GE Healthcare.



Omar Ishrak

He also served as an officer and a senior vice-president of GE.

Ishrak amassed 13 years of technology development and business management experience, holding leadership positions at Diasonics/Vingmed and various product development and engineering positions at Philips Ultrasound.

He earned a Bachelor of Science degree and PhD in electrical engineering from the University of London, King's College.

Ishrak is also a member of the Board of Trustees of Asia Society, an educational organisation promoting mutual understanding and strengthening partnerships among peoples, leaders and institutions of Asia and the US.

The US embassy in Dhaka congratulated Ishrak on his new role.

"Congratulations to the new Chairman of Intel Dr. Omar Ishrak. We are proud to see a Bangladeshi-American lead one of the world's most innovative companies, and hope his appointment will further

strengthen ties between the people of the United States and Bangladesh," it posted on its official Facebook page last night.

Founded in 1968, Intel is the world's second largest and second highest valued semiconductor chip manufacturer based on revenue after being overtaken by Samsung Electronics, and is the inventor of the x86 series of microprocessors, the processors found in most personal computers (PCs).

Intel, which also announced Square Inc. seller lead Alyssa Henry as an independent director, ranked No. 46 in the 2018 Fortune 500 list of the largest US corporations by total revenue.

Oracle firmly puts down roots in Bangladesh

Opens a full-fledged office in Dhaka

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Oracle, one of the world's leading providers of business software, yesterday opened an office in Bangladesh, where it had started operations 20 years back.

"The speed at which our customers in Bangladesh are innovating and digitising their businesses exceeds what we are experiencing in other parts of the Asean region," said Cheria Varghese, regional managing director for Oracle Asean, at the launch ceremony.

Oracle, which was founded in 1977 in California's Santa Clara, is said to be experiencing a strong demand for its cloud solutions in Bangladesh from both public and private-sector enterprises.

US tech companies in Bangladesh

ORACLE

MICROSOFT

CISCO TECHNOLOGY

The Oracle Cloud offers a complete suite of integrated applications for sales, service, marketing, human resources, finance, supply chain and manufacturing.

Bangladeshi firms are leveraging Oracle Cloud to fulfil a variety of business requirements including to manage and retain talent, deliver better customer experiences, launch new services faster or reduce costs. The organisations include Ananta Group, Bangladesh Bank, Bangladesh Bridge Authority, Bangladesh Computer Council, Bangladesh Election Commission, bKash, Brac Bank, DBL Group, the Department of Immigration and Passport, the Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges and the National Board of Revenue.

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Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal, State Minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak and US Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl R Miller attend the opening of Oracle's Bangladesh office at a hotel in Dhaka yesterday.

Social stigma puts women entrepreneurs off

Rural markets not gender inclusive yet

NILIMA JAHAN

FEMALE agro-producers in rural areas play a vital role in the agricultural sector. However, the majority struggle to market their products at local and regional markets and are deprived of fair prices in the process.

Since rural markets are largely

is a hub for countless agro-based traders. However, only seven female entrepreneurs were found selling their products on a regular 'haat day'.

However, the seven women in question were only there to sell their products and make a living since their husbands were either deceased or disabled.

Due to her spouse's illness,

Asma does all the work aside from selling her goods in the market due to social and religious restrictions.

The women also need to depend on men for help to transport their goods to the market. As a result, many women prefer to sell their products to wholesalers at lower prices since it's less of a hassle. "Most of the time, wholesalers

Hossain, leaseholder of Fulchhari bazar.

In Satbaria bazar, one of the biggest rural markets of Pabna, 12 shops are reserved for female traders, however, there are no women on the market committee.

Rezaul Karim Siddique, an eminent agriculture researcher and anchor of state-run BTV's longest-

running agricultural show 'Mati O Manush', says it is very difficult to involve rural women farmers as well as agro-based women entrepreneurs in the traditional market.

"In the peri-urban areas, women are coming forward, especially those who are involved in small businesses like garment products or tailoring. But in terms of agricultural products,

they are not coming forward due to the social restrictions they face. It needs huge awareness and local representatives need to be vocal about it," he added.

Female farmers also face discrimination when trying to acquire any kind of support from the state, such as credit facilities, fertilizers or seeds.

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Women prepare freshly harvested onions for sale at Fulchhari upazila in Gaibandha. Though females play a vital role in the agriculture sector, they do not get fair prices due to limited access to the market.

male-dominated, women are discouraged from participating in the market system, according to a few female agro-producers. At the same time, embracing traditional gender roles, such as women having to stay at home to take care of the household, prevent their involvement in market-place activities.

To find out why women are not more inclined to participate in the market, The Daily Star interviewed a number of female agro-based entrepreneurs from seven districts -- Patuakhali, Gazipur, Sherpur, Mymensingh, Pabna, Rangpur and Gaibandha.

Their responses were almost identical: rural markets are not gender inclusive because society is not ready to see women market, sell or bargain their goods with or alongside men. Making matters worse, there are no designated sections to separate the male and female salesmen, they said.

Fulchhari bazar, found in Gaibandha's Fulchhari upazila,

28-year-old Asma Begum of Pipulia village in Fulchhari collects vegetables from a neighbouring village to sell them at the market and make ends meet.

"I can't stay here long and have to return home before sunset because I am anxious about my safety. Dirty gestures and verbal harassments have become commonplace in my everyday life," she said.

45-year-old Rashida Begum, a member of the Galachipa upazila Union Parishad of Patuakhali, shared a similar experience.

"When I take my moong daal [lentils] to the market, people try to make fun. Behind my back, men say that when a woman regular comes to the bazaar, she becomes a 'bazaarer meye' [woman with loose morals]," said Rashida, whose husband currently lives abroad.

Asma Khatun, a farmer of Tarabaria village in Satbaria union of Pabna's Sujanagar upazila, said that she ends up with low returns from the onions cultivated on her land. From production to packaging,

visit our house to buy onions but this way we don't get proper prices of our crop. Sometimes our husbands and other male members go to the market to sell the crops but the control over the money we earn through our day-to-day toil goes to them," the 35-year-old said.

Although male producers do acknowledge that women are a driving force of the agricultural sector with their numbers increasing by the day, female workers are mostly restricted to tending the crops.

"At markets, women can't compete with men in occupying positions and men usually don't cooperate with them," said Md Jashim Uddin, an agro-based entrepreneur of Mawna Bazar in Gazipur.

Another sad thing is that women have next to no presence in market management committees.

"Women should have separate spaces and it should be run by women. But that doesn't seem to be possible right now," said Muktar

NEXT STEP

Making a DIFFERENCE

Bangladesh is rapidly moving towards middle income status by 2021. Our businesses definitely offer immense opportunities for the growing economy and this diversity needs a stage for the stories untold. See Bangladesh make its mark on the global map as Making a Difference brings you our proudest success stories from across the country.

Creating a high performance culture

ASK, DON'T TELL

People love it when they are given agency. That extra freedom goes a long way to boost their performance. Research shows that employees who are given more control, try harder to bring in results. When implementing this in business scenarios, it's important to ensure that supervisors allow their subordinates to have the freedom to choose - this means consulting them before assigning them and establishing a bottom-up flow of information so that their opinions and preferences are valued. This increases ownership within the employees, which motivates them to put in extra work to bring about positive results.

REWARD UNEXPECTEDLY

While traditional incentive structures involving performance bonuses must stay in place, adding a somewhat inconsistent layer to it, in addition to routine quarterly or annual bonuses, is very effective. Surprises are pleasant, and surprising rewards even more so. These unexpected rewards positively affect the morale of employees, which in turn positively contributes to improving their mental health. This ultimately increases the productivity of the employees. These rewards don't always need to pop up in the form of monetary



benefits; sometimes they could be as simple and inexpensive as being appreciated in front of the bosses.

REDUCE FEEDBACK CYCLES

There's a lot to be proud of when employees are thorough in completing whatever task they've been assigned, however, it's not always a good idea to give feedback only after the task is already completed. That makes it difficult for employees to rethink the whole thing and start over, specifically because of the time and energy invested on it to make

it perfect. Smart companies today optimise feedback cycles to create a culture where the feedback model is iterative and incremental. Which means, the bigger project is divided into shorter actionable deliverables. In this way, ideas and progress can be validated and de-validated as early as possible and hence, vetted and improved significantly before completion.

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