



MAHBUBUR RAHMAN BUSINESS INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN is a renowned business personality and current President of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Bangladesh. Born on July 10, 1942, Rahman is a pioneer in ensuring that both businesses and consumers are treated in a fair and just manner.

Today Bangladesh is on the path of economic growth with more and more national and international businesses showing interest in investing in our market. However, there was a time when the country's economy was struggling, so much so that it was declared a 'basket case' by the World Bank. The business leaders of that time, however, persevered to establish Bangladesh on a global map. Of these leaders, Mahbubur Rahman is notable for his insistence on credible, ethical business practices that cannot be compromised for profits.

As a young university graduate of Political Science, Mahbubur Rahman joined the National Bank of Pakistan in 1962. However, this was a short-lived employment as he left this job to set up Eastern Trading Company, an importer of consumer goods in 1962, which has been known as Eastern Trading Bangladesh Ltd, or ETBL Holdings, since Bangladesh's independence. The 53-year-old company now has nine associated units operating in banking, insurance, housing, international trade and cold storage.

Under his leadership, ICC Bangladesh played a proactive role in safeguarding the interests of domestic producers and businesses. Rahman has, however, always remained firm in his commitment to ensure that consumers have to bear no costs to achieve this goal.

With Mahbubur Rahman at the helm, ICC Bangladesh has played a pivotal role in the development and growth of external trade and investment of Bangladesh, as they worked closely with the government and major trade bodies of the country in reforming regulation to

modernise Bangladesh's business sector. In fact, the ICC also assisted the government to develop the Information Act, as well as modernise the Arbitration and Alternative Dispute Resolution Act – a milestone achievement, as the updated Act helps to curtail disputes among businesses through the Bangladesh International Arbitration Centre, which is also led by Rahman. Moreover, under his charge, ICC Bangladesh published a business directory for the first time in Bangladesh, which was distributed amongst important organisations of 130 countries.

Keeping his and the organisation's goal of placing Bangladesh on the world business map, the organisation continues to arrange international conferences, seminars, workshops, dialogue for professionals of banks, non-banking financial institutions, insurance companies, multinational and national companies, trade bodies, and business houses to further enhance their expertise.

He was the president of Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry for 1992-94. Before that, he led the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry as its president for two terms. He is also a member of the Business Advisory Council (BAC), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). Moreover, he represented the Government of Sri Lanka in Bangladesh from 1972-79, prior to the establishment of their Resident Diplomatic Mission in Dhaka.

Mahbubur Rahman is widely recognised as a voice of reason and moral conscience in the business world, as he spent most of his professional life in making trade bodies just and effective. Now in his 70s, the respected entrepreneur continues to promote fair entrepreneurship, paving the way for an ethical, transparent business community in Bangladesh.



MATIUR RAHMAN JOURNALISM

MATIUR RAHMAN is the Editor and Publisher of the daily *Prothom Alo* (First Light), the highest circulated newspaper of Bangladesh. *Prothom Alo* was launched in November 4, 1998 and he has been the Editor of this leading Bengali daily since then.

The newspaper's nonpartisan and uncompromising stance towards presenting the truth as well as its constructive advocacy and unsparing editorials attracted legions of readers in no time and consequently it became the most trusted and respected newspaper of the country. In its journey, *Prothom Alo* has broken all the prevalent circulation, readership and revenue records of the print media industry of Bangladesh and is relentlessly pursuing to take itself to newer heights.

Matiur Rahman has pursued a vigorous editorial policy of strengthening democracy and establishing fundamental human rights. His occasional column 'Commentary' has gained tremendous popularity among readers.

Before launching the daily *Prothom Alo*, Matiur Rahman worked as the Editor of the weekly *Ekota* from 1970 to 1991 and the daily *Bhorer Kagoj* from 1992 to 1998.

Matiur Rahman was born in January 2, 1946. He completed his Post Graduation Degree in Statistics from Dhaka University in late 60s. During his student life he was actively involved in student politics and was the Central Leader of the then largest student organisation, Bangladesh Students' Union, from 1962 to 1969. He was also the General Secretary of Dhaka University Sangskriti Sangstha, a cultural organisation of Dhaka University, from 1965 to 1968.

Matiur Rahman was active in leftist politics of Bangladesh and was one of the central leaders of the Communist

Party of Bangladesh (CPB) from 1973 to 1990. As a key person in Dhaka he helped to organise South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Election Observer Team, which was initiated by Ethnic Study Centre of Sri Lanka and funded by NORAD for the National Parliament Election of Bangladesh in 1991 and 1996. He was also a member of the non-governmental SAARC Election Observer Team for Pakistan National Election held in 1997 and 2002. He attended numerous international seminars and conferences in many countries around the world.



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The Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation recognised Matiur Rahman's relentless efforts in 2005 to create mass awareness against acid violence and collect funds to help acid burnt women through *Prothom Alo* and Prothom Alo Trust in 2005. He was described as "the navigator of positive social and cultural change" in Bangladesh.

He loves to read books and is also interested in collecting paintings.