

20TH BANGLADESH BUSINESS AWARDS



SM Khaled, 2nd from left, managing director of Snowtex, and Abdul Mukhtadir, 3rd from right, managing director and chairman of Incepta, pose for photographs with others at the 20th Bangladesh Business Awards at the capital's Radisson Blu Dhaka Water Garden on September 2. Snowtex Group had won the Enterprise of the Year award while Abdul Mukhtadir was named Business Person of the Year at the 19th Bangladesh Business Awards live-streamed on Facebook on December 12, 2020.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Taking education to marginalised digitally

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

It is crucial to provide opportunities to the people who are left behind so that they can flourish and play a role in developing the country, according to Ayman Sadiq, founder and CEO of 10 Minute School.

He was speaking at the 20th Bangladesh Business Awards ceremony at the capital's Radisson Blu Water Garden Hotel.

Sadiq shared stories about how 10 Minute School and its largely free educational contents are changing the lives of students, including the underprivileged, from across the country by helping them get into the best universities in Bangladesh.

"Recently, I attended an event at a school. After delivering my speech, a student took the microphone and said he knows me despite being blind. He can recognise my voice since he had listened to my lectures posted at 10 Minute School platforms," he said.

Sadiq then spoke of a student he had a conversation with recently. The student had no access to good learning materials as he lived in a remote village. Now, he is admitted to the University of Dhaka and according to him, it is because of 10 Minute School's lectures. Moreover, he was the only student in his village to get admitted to a university.

"Such words from youths tremendously encourage me but, most importantly, these stories give a testament that if anyone gets an opportunity, they can prosper," he added.

With a mission to democratise education for all in Bangladesh, 10 Minute School was jointly founded by Sadiq and Abdullah Abyad Raied in 2015.

At the end of last year, 10 Minute School had raised \$2 million in seed funding from Surge, Sequoia Capital, a rapid scale-up programme in India, to increase investment in product and technology.

It had experienced an unprecedented twelfold business growth in its platform in 2021 during the pandemic. And the number of its employees stands at 300 as of 2021, up from 60 by the end of 2020.

The year 2021 marked a significant year of growth for 10 Minute School, with more than 9 million new learners joining the platform, 8 million learning hours delivered and over 17,000 new videos added to its learning ecosystem.



Ready businesses for global market

Says DHL's top official

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Business leaders, entrepreneurs, industry experts and legislators must make a concerted effort to build the right environment for local businesses so that they can succeed globally, said RS Subramanian, senior vice-president of DHL Express for South Asia and managing director of DHL Express India.

"And countries that can implement regulatory reforms more quickly, and create favourable policies that encourage cross-border trade will stand to gain the most," he said.

He made the comments while speaking at the Bangladesh Business Awards 2022 at the Radisson Blu Water Garden Hotel in Dhaka on September 2.

Subramanian praised Bangladesh's commendable growth history.

The country aspires to become an upper-middle-income nation by 2031 and is expected to graduate from the UN's list of least-developed nations in 2026.

"You all have overcome many obstacles and crossed many bridges to get Bangladesh where it is today," said Subramanian.

He elaborated on the collaboration across geographical borders and emphasised the need to be aware of the megatrends that are dominating the world economy.

Megatrends like e-commerce, digitalisation, globalisation, and sustainability are changing how people lead lives, interact with each other, and how global trade will shape the future.

E-commerce, for instance, has changed the game for retail completely, he said.

"At the click of a button, you can reach the world. You need not be restricted to one physical storefront, one city, or even one country."

According to Subramanian, the biggest roadblock in the past used to be the inability to find a customer.

"You had to go through various forms of middlemen, agents and forums. But today you can reach your target consumer directly – at his home, his place of comfort. With e-commerce, you are rightfully moving up the value chain."

Subramanian, who has more than 30 years of experience, thinks the risk to reward now has certainly improved.

"We have seen so many stories, even within our global network, of one-off store owners, home entrepreneurs, small to medium entrepreneurs creating a whole new revenue stream by going online."

DHL has invested 750 million euros in the Asia Pacific region into training its

employees and enhancing the network infrastructure. A large part of this push is because of the e-commerce surge that was greatly influenced by the coronavirus pandemic.

The DHL senior official also talked about the changing behaviour of consumers.

"Consumers are mostly on mobile now, and are no longer asking, but expecting you to be able to reach them at their place of operations."

Business-to-business e-commerce, or B2B, is no longer considered the underdog of e-commerce, said Subramanian.

In fact, corporate customers prioritise suppliers and partners that allow them to trade online without first speaking with a sales representative.

By 2025, 80 per cent of all B2B sales interactions between suppliers and professional buyers would occur online, according to the B2B E-commerce White Paper of DHL for 2021.



PAST WINNERS OF BANGLADESH BUSINESS AWARDS

YEAR	ENTERPRISE OF THE YEAR	BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR	OUTSTANDING WOMAN IN BUSINESS	SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT	BEST JOINT VENTURE	BEST FINANCIAL INSTITUTION	LIFELONG ACHIEVEMENT	LIFETIME CONTRIBUTION AWARD
1st	Concord Engineers and Construction Ltd, SM Kamaluddin, Managing Director Rahimafrooz (Bangladesh) Ltd, Feroz Rahim, Managing Director	Samson H Chowdhury Chairman, Square Group	Salina Akhter, Proprietor, Aakor					
2nd	Otobi Ltd, Nitin Kundu, Chairman	Anisur Rahman Sinha, Chairman, Opex Group	Rehana Kashem, Proprietor, Satraang					
3rd	Micro Electronics Ltd, Hasina Doula, Managing Director	Syed Manzur Elahi, Chairman, Apex Group	Geeteara Safiya Choudhury, Chairman, Adcomm Ltd		Ola Ree, Managing Director, Grameenphone Ltd			
4th	M M Ispahani Ltd, Mirza Ali Behrouze Ispahani, Chairman	Mohammad Mizanur Rahman, Chairman, PHP Group	Monjulika Chakma, Proprietor, Bain Textiles		Shafiq Uz Zaman, Managing Director, Coats Bangladesh Ltd			
5th	Incepta Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Abdul Mukhtadir, Managing Director	Kazi Zaheedul Hasan, Managing Director, Kazi Farms Group	Selina Quader, Proprietor, Agroconcern	Sanjiv Mehta, Chairman & Managing Director, Unilever Bangladesh Ltd				
6th	BRB Cables Industries Ltd, Md Mozibar Rahman, Chairman	Fazlur Rahman, Chairman, City Group of Industries	Hasina Newaaz, Proprietor, Orchid Printers	Kihak Sung, Chairman, Youngone Group Bangladesh				
7th	ACME Laboratories Ltd, Mizanur Rahman Sinha, Managing Director	Md Nasir Uddin, Chairman, Pacific Jeans Ltd	Jinet Fatema, Proprietor, Jahan Metals Ltd			Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd, Md Yeasin Ali, Managing Director		
8th	Bengal Plastic Industries Ltd, Morshed Alam, Chairman	KM Rezaul Hasanat, Chairman & Managing Director, Viyellatex Group	Nilufar Farooq, Proprietor, Ikebana					
9th	Meghna Group, Mizanur Rahman Bhuiyan, Chairman	Abdul Monem, Chairman & Managing Director, Abdul Monem Ltd	Sabrina Islam, CEO, Reflections			Brac Bank Ltd, Muhammad A (Rumee) Ali, Chairman		
10th	Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Tapan Chowdhury, Managing Director	Md Saiful Islam, Chairman, Western Marine Shipyard Ltd	Kaniz Almas Khan, Managing Director, Persona Hair and Beauty Ltd			Pubali Bank Ltd, Helal Ahmed Chowdhury, Managing Director	Nasir A Choudhury, Managing Director, Green Delta Insurance Company	
11th	BSRM Group, Alihussain Akberali, FCA, Chairman	Major General (Retd) Amjad Khan Chowdhury, CEO, PRAN-RFL Group	Tanya Tazeen Karim, Architect & Co-founder, Tanya Karim NR Khan & Associates			Eastern Bank Ltd, Ali Reza Iftekhar, CEO & Managing Director	Md Matiul Islam, Chairman, IIDFC	
12th	Advanced Chemical Industries Ltd, M Anis Ud Dowla, Chairman	Anwar Hossain, Chairman, Anwar Group of Industries	Sharmin Hossain, Chairman, Fresh and Safe Agro Ltd			Prime Bank Ltd, Md Ehsan Khasru, Managing Director	Mahbubur Rahman, President of International Chamber of Commerce, Bangladesh	Late MA Samad, Bangladesh General Insurance Company
13th	DBL Group, Abdul Wahed, Chairman	Nasir Uddin Biswas, Chairman, Nasir Group of Industries	Masuda Islam, Chairman, Protina Home Made Foods			IDLC Finance Ltd, Selim RF Hussain Managing Director & CEO		
14th	Habib Group, Yasin Ali, Managing Director		Tania Wahab, Managing Partner, Karigar			Delta Brac Housing Finance Corporation, Quazi M Shariful Ala, Managing Director		Laila Rahman Kabir, Kedarpur Tea Co
15th	Walton Group, SM Mahbubul Alam, Director	Muhammed Aziz Khan, Chairman, Summit Group	Rubana Huq, Managing Director, Mohammadi Group			Mutual Trust Bank, Anis A Khan, Managing Director		
16th	Meghna Group, Mostafa Kamal, Chairman	Engineer Kutubuddin Ahmed, Chairperson, Envoy Group	Luna Shamsuddoha, Founder & Chairman, Dohatech New Media			The City Bank Ltd, Mohammed Shueb, Chairman	Harunar Rashid Khan, Chairman, Monno Group	
17th	Renata Limited, Kaiser Kabir, Managing Director	M Anis Ud Dowla, Chairman, ACI Group	Afsana Asif Shoma, Managing Partner, Asix			Pioneer Insurance Company Ltd, Tapan Chowdhury, Chairman		
18th	Runner Group, Hafizur Rahman Khan, Chairman	Azam J Chowdhury Chariman, East Coast Group	Quamrun Nahar Zahir Ananta Apparels Limited			IPDC Finance Limited Mominul Islam - Managing Director & CEO		
19th	Snowtex Group, SM Khaled, Managing Director	Abdul Mukhtadir, MD and Chairman of Incepta	Rupali Chowdhury, Managing Director of Berger Paints Bangladesh			Dutch-Bangla Bank, Abul Kashem Md Shirin, managing director		