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NEWS BULLETIN



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EDITORIAL

With the release of the 25th issue of The Legal Counsel News Bulletin, we are proud to mark a significant milestone in our publication's journey. What began as a humble initiative has evolved into a highly anticipated quarterly bulletin, now reaching over 2,000 recipients across more than 500 organizations. This achievement would not have been possible without the continued support, thoughtful feedback, and constructive criticism from our valued readership. We extend our sincere gratitude to all who have contributed to the growth and relevance of this publication. While we embark upon the 7th year of the publication, we are happy to introduce an interview column to publish interviews of prominent corporate personalities. We wish you a happy reading.

ON A SERIOUS NOTE:



Responsible Business Conduct: A Strategic Imperative for Bangladeshi Enterprises

What was once considered a voluntary gesture, Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) is now regarded as a fundamental expectation in the modern business world. At its core, RBC is about more than just legal compliance, it is about embedding respect for human rights, environmental sustainability, and anti-corruption principles into the very fabric of business strategy, operations, and relationships.

Whether multinational or locally rooted, businesses are increasingly expected to align with global standards that promote ethical, inclusive, and sustainable practices. These expectations now extend beyond domestic regulations, touching on voluntary international commitments that shape how businesses operate and are perceived worldwide.

RBC touches on a wide range of issues that are central to sustainable business, including:

- ▶ Respect for human rights and workers' rights
- ▶ Employment practices and industrial relations
- ▶ Environmental protection and sustainability
- ▶ Anti-bribery and anti-corruption measures
- ▶ Consumer protection
- ▶ Transparency, corporate disclosure and overall corporate governance, etc.

As global markets place growing emphasis on ethical and traceable supply chains, adherence to RBC principles is becoming crucial, particularly for export-driven economies like Bangladesh.

For Bangladeshi companies with global ambitions, there is a growing need for clear, credible frameworks to guide RBC implementation. Three key international standards form the foundation of responsible business expectations worldwide:

1. The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs)
2. The OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct
3. The ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy

Although these frameworks are not legally binding, they are globally recognized and widely adopted by regulators, trade partners, and multinational corporations. Increasingly, they serve as de facto standards for market access, shaping supply chain requirements and influencing investment decisions.



Encouragingly, sectors like Ready-Made Garments (RMG) in Bangladesh have already made notable strides in RBC, particularly in the areas of workers' rights and environmental standards. In recent years, the presence of multinational corporations has also helped drive improvements in corporate practices across industries. However, with Bangladesh on the verge of graduating from Least Developed Country (LDC) status to a developing economy, expectations are set to rise significantly. While international partners will seek stronger commitments to responsible conduct, and businesses must prove they can operate sustainably, transparently, and ethically on the global stage, similar expectations will increasingly take root locally—driven by a growing, socially-conscious Gen Z consumer base. As legal advisors, we believe that now is the time for businesses to take a proactive approach. Understanding and implementing RBC frameworks today will help ensure resilience and relevance in the markets of tomorrow.

CURRENT AFFAIRS



1. Article 116: Control Restored!

In a landmark judgment, Bangladesh's Hon'ble High Court Division has restored the Supreme Court's role in overseeing the management, postings, promotions and disciplinary matters of lower court judges under Article 116 of the Constitution of Bangladesh, which has been vested on the President. This decision reverts to the original 1972 provision affirming the judiciary's autonomy.



2. Courts Separated to Speed Up Justice:

To tackle growing case backlogs, Bangladesh has separated civil and criminal courts at the district level. Under the reform, 203 Additional Sessions Courts and 367 Joint Sessions Courts will exclusively handle criminal cases, allowing judges to focus on a single type of case. This step aims to streamline court processes and resolve cases faster. By specializing the courts, the judiciary expects improved efficiency and reduced delays, ensuring timely justice.

DID YOU KNOW



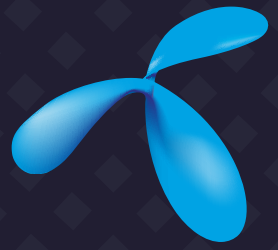
Bangladesh is leading the world in sustainable garment manufacturing, with more LEED-certified factories than any other country. The country boasts 261 certified green factories, including an impressive 109 rated 'Platinum' and 133 rated 'Gold'. Furthermore, 68 of the top 100 highest-scoring LEED-certified factories globally are located in Bangladesh! 9 out of 10 top highest-rated ones globally are in Bangladesh!

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Mr. Tanveer Mohammad

Chief Corporate Affairs Officer (CCAO) of Grameenphone Ltd

— Interview by Barrister Zayeema Khan



What is the role of the leadership of a company to promote and practice Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) in the company's operations?

As a telecom operator in Bangladesh, our mission is to empower society by providing reliable voice and data connectivity. With this role comes a responsibility to conduct our business in a way that benefits the country and supports ethical, sustainable, and inclusive growth. Our leaders play a key role in promoting Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) throughout the organization. Leaders must set the right example by making sure our actions reflect our values.

How do you ensure compliance with both local laws and international standards on human rights, labor, and the environment?

Grameenphone, as part of the Telenor Group, aligns with international best practices and European standards, alongside full compliance with Bangladesh's local laws. Despite the absence of specific domestic RBC legislation, we have established robust policies and a Code of Conduct including a Supplier Code that all suppliers, and vendors must follow.

We emphasize ethical labor practices both within our operations and across our supply chain. Our Code of Conduct is reviewed annually, with mandatory employee training and compliance assessments achieving 100% participation. Beyond compliance, we foster a positive, inclusive, and safe work environment. We conduct regular internal audits and monitoring. We strive to reflect our broader commitment to ethical business practices enhancing the trustworthiness, responsibility, and sustainability of our organization beyond financial performance.

Telecos are sometimes criticized for having a negative environmental impact. What steps do you take and can be taken to promote responsible practices to address such concern?

A significant focus of our operations is on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles, aligned with various United Nations (UN) initiatives and frameworks. You will be glad to learn that acknowledging the high energy demands of telecommunications, we are committed to reducing our carbon footprint by 50% by 2030.

In alignment with global standards, we evaluate whether our suppliers are adhering to Science-Based Targets (SBTs) as outlined by UN frameworks. We currently operate over 1,000 solar sites to reduce consumption of electricity. In addition, we are leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) to optimize energy usage across our operations, which has already resulted in a 10–15% reduction in electricity consumption. We are planning to produce renewable energy in big scale. We are also engaging our suppliers to adopt similar energy efficiency measures. We use recycled water where possible and harvest rainwater to support conservation. Grameenphone's sustainability goals are embedded in company-wide and individual KPIs, ensuring accountability and translating our vision into measurable, impactful action. This ensures accountability at every level of our organization and reinforces our long-term commitment.

Mr. Tanveer Mohammad Chief Corporate Affairs Officer (CCAO), Grameenphone Ltd

We had the privilege to have a face-to-face conversation with Mr. Tanveer Mohammad. As the leading telecom operator in Bangladesh, Grameenphone has consistently upheld strong ethical standards and Responsible Business Conduct (RBC), aiming to create long-term value through transparency, sustainability, and social empowerment. Mr. Tanveer Mohammad, a well-respected corporate leader, vividly highlighted Grameenphone's RBC initiatives and shared valuable insights drawn from his exemplary leadership experience.

“TO ENSURE BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY, COMPANIES HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO PROMPTLY PREPARE FOR THE EMERGING AREAS OF RBC”

Regulators, investors, and consumers increasingly demand transparency. How is this shaping your approach to RBC?

Transparency is integral to Grameenphone's governance. As a publicly listed entity and an integral part of the Telenor Group, we are bound to uphold rigorous standards of clarity and accountability across every step of our operations. This ensures trust with regulators, investors, and consumers, and strengthens our approach to RBC.

What emerging areas of Responsible Business Conduct should companies operating in Bangladesh prepare for in the next 5 years?

To ensure business sustainability, companies have no choice but to promptly prepare for the emerging areas of RBC, including:

- ▶ **Data Privacy and Cybersecurity** – Strengthening data governance to protect customer information and comply with evolving regulations.
- ▶ **Climate Action** – Adopting sustainable practices to reduce environmental impact and align with global climate goals.
- ▶ **Inclusivity in workplace** – Building inclusive workplaces to reflect changing societal expectations and workforce dynamics.
- ▶ **Supply Chain Due Diligence** – Ensuring ethical and transparent sourcing practices across the value chain.



IN CONVERSATION WITH

Mr. Rashedul Quayum

Legal Director and Company Secretary,
Unilever Bangladesh Limited

— Interview by
Barrister Ashique Sadman Bin Saleh

We are delighted to feature an insightful conversation with Mr. Rashedul Quayum, Barrister-at-Law a prominent figure in Bangladesh’s legal corporate landscape. Unilever Bangladesh Limited (UBL), a leading multinational and FMCG company, has consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to ethical business practices and Responsible Business Conduct (RBC). In this interview, Mr. Quayum offers a compelling overview of UBL’s initiatives in sustainability, transparency, and social responsibility, while also sharing valuable reflections from his leadership experience and vision for the future.

How does the legal department contribute to embedding Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) in an FMCG company’s operations?

At Unilever we have our own Responsible Partner Policy (RPP) and its Fundamental Principles embody our commitment to responsible, transparent and sustainable business. Our RPP describes what Unilever requires of business partners so we can do business together responsibly. The RPP covers commitment to protect human rights fighting corruption, protecting and preserving the environment.

At Unilever, Legal Team operates at the heart of the business and is involved in developing the RPP, its implementation and compliance. Our team works closely with procurement and supply chain functions to ensure that all third-party engagements reflect such commitments. Moreover, we actively support the implementation of policies aligned with global and local regulations—such as the Plastic Waste Management Rules (PWMR), labour laws, and environmental standards. We partner with HR, SHE, and sustainability teams to develop and enforce frameworks that promote fair labour practices, workplace safety, and social security benefits. The legal department also leads advocacy efforts and engages with regulatory bodies to shape responsible business policy and ensure compliance.

In essence, our role is not just to protect the business, but to enable it to grow responsibly ensuring that our operations are not only legally sound but ethically grounded.

How do you ensure compliance with both local laws and international standards on human rights, labor, and the environment?

We do this through a structured approach that combines policy development, governance, risk assessment, and continuous engagement with internal teams and external stakeholders. Legal team works closely with board and management of UBL to ensure all our activities are in full compliance with local law and international standards on human rights, labor, and the environment.

Supply chains in FMCG are vast and complex. What steps do you take and can be taken to promote responsible practices across suppliers and contractors?

In a business like ours, where the supply chain is vast and interconnected, promoting responsible practices is both a legal and ethical priority. At Unilever Bangladesh, we take a proactive approach to ensure that our suppliers and contractors operate in line with our values and legal obligations. These expectations are built into our contracts and onboarding processes, so every partner understands what responsible conduct looks like from day one. We also carry out regular checks and assessments to make sure these standards are being followed. Importantly, we encourage our suppliers to apply the same standards with their partners, helping to build a culture of responsibility throughout the supply chain.

“OUR ROLE IS NOT JUST TO PROTECT THE BUSINESS, BUT TO ENABLE IT TO GROW RESPONSIBLY ENSURING THAT OUR OPERATIONS ARE NOT ONLY LEGALLY SOUND BUT ETHICALLY GROUNDED.”

Regulators, investors, and consumers increasingly demand transparency. How is this shaping your approach to RBC?

We strongly believe it is no longer enough to simply comply with laws and internal standards—there is a clear expectation to demonstrate accountability, openness, and ethical leadership across every aspect of our operations. At Unilever we always stay ahead of the curve and set stronger standards for us to exceed expectations.

What emerging areas of Responsible Business Conduct should companies operating in Bangladesh prepare for in the next 5 years?

RBC is an evolving issue and companies operating in Bangladesh and across the globe need to continue to work to meet such expectations. Going forward, I believe the below areas will need special attention:

- ▶ Safeguarding Information & Intellectual Property
- ▶ Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining
- ▶ Reflecting equally, respect and dignity without any form of discrimination
- ▶ Protecting, preserving and regenerating the nature (including biodiversity)



Legal Counsel headed by its Managing Partner Barrister Omar H. Khan and associates, Barrister Zayeema Khan, Barrister Mohammad Moyen Uddin and Barrister Sayarah Khan conducted a two-day learning session as organized by **Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA)** for all the officials of BIDA on 29th and 30th September at BIDA conference room. The sessions covered discussions on Bangladesh labour laws, ILO conventions and International Labour standards, Bankruptcy, Intellectual Property Laws (Copyright, Trademark, Patent and Design) and dispute resolution. The trainings were aimed to enhance the knowledge of the BIDA officials in order to cater better services to the foreign investors.



Legal Counsel successfully prepared and submitted the Roadmap for 'Promoting Responsible Business Conduct and Human Rights Due Diligence in Industry Sectors' to the **Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF)**.

NEW IMPORTANT LEGISLATIONS (JULY 2025–SEPTEMBER 2025)

1. The Specification (Supplementary) Ordinance, 2025
2. The Specification Ordinance, 2025
3. The Certain Laws Relating to Finance (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025
4. The Protection and Conservation of Fish (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025
5. The Legal Aid Services (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025
6. The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025
7. The Government Service (Second Amendment) Ordinance, 2025
8. The Maheshkhali Integrated Development Authority Ordinance, 2025
9. The Voters' List (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025
10. The National Sports Council (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025
11. The Code of Criminal Procedure (Second Amendment) Ordinance, 2025
12. The Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025
13. The Local Government (City Corporation) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025
14. The Local Government (Municipality) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025
15. The Local Government (City Corporation) (Second Amendment) Ordinance, 2025
16. The Revenue Policy and Revenue Administration (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025
17. The Local Government (Union Parishad) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025
18. The Gazipur Digital University (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025
19. The Upazila Parishad (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025

PRO-BONO WORKS : PUBLICATIONS AND TV SHOWS (JULY-SEPTEMBER 2025)

PUBLICATIONS AND INTERVIEWS

- ✓ Legal and Regulatory Landscape for Investment in Bangladesh: Opportunities and Challenges | Barrister Omar H Khan, Managing Partner Legal Counsel | Apr-June issue | American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh- AmCham Journal | July 07, 2025 |
- ✓ The Business of Sustainability: Circular solutions for the plastic and water management | Barrister Omar H Khan, Managing Partner Legal Counsel | June issue | Foreign Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FICCI)'s Monthly Bulletin | June 30, 2025 |
- ✓ Discussion on Violence against women | Barrister Miti Sanjana, Partner Legal Counsel | Dainik Amader Shomoy | July 13, 2025 |
- ✓ Violence against women: An epidemic of injustice | Barrister Miti Sanjana, Partner Legal Counsel | The Business Standard | August 08, 2025 |
- ✓ Laws relating to Blackmail. | Barrister Miti Sanjana, Partner Legal Counsel | Prothom Alo | August 20, 2025 |
- ✓ Social and legal challenges faced when marrying with a significant age difference | Barrister Miti Sanjana, Partner Legal Counsel | August 27, 2025 |
- ✓ Empowering People through Digital Finance: A Legal Perspective for the investors and policymakers | Barrister Omar H Khan, Managing Partner Legal Counsel | August Issue | Foreign Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FICCI)'s Monthly Bulletin | September 22, 2025 |
- ✓ Distribution of property of childless person | Barrister Miti Sanjana, Partner Legal Counsel | Prothom Alo | September 17, 2025 |
- ✓ Women endangered by domestic violence | Barrister Miti Sanjana, Partner Legal Counsel | Dainik Amader Shomoy | September 21, 2025 |
- ✓ Societal Pressure On Mothers | Barrister Miti Sanjana, Partner Legal Counsel | The Daily Samakal | September 28, 2025 |

TV SHOWS AND INTERVIEWS

- ▶ There is an ongoing wave of female harassment cases | Barrister Miti Sanjana, Partner Legal Counsel | Channel | July 14, 2025 |
- ▶ Discussion on domestic violence | Barrister Miti Sanjana, Partner Legal Counsel | Onno Moncho | July 19, 2025 |
- ▶ Legal remedies against cyber bullying | Barrister Miti Sanjana, Partner Legal Counsel | Deepto TV | August 20, 2025 |
- ▶ Discussion on dower law | Barrister Miti Sanjana, Partner Legal Counsel | Deepto TV | August 27, 2025 |
- ▶ Mental and economic abuse under the Domestic Violence Act | Barrister Miti Sanjana, Partner Legal Counsel | Deepto TV | September 10, 2025 |
- ▶ Discussion on Violence against women | Barrister Miti Sanjana, Partner Legal Counsel | Bangla Vision | September 10, 2025 |
- ▶ How to deal with a false case? | Barrister Miti Sanjana, Partner Legal | Deepto TV | September 17, 2025 |



Wishing you and your loved ones a joyous Durga Puja! May this festival fill your life with happiness, prosperity, and new beginnings

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