

## Shock across social media as lawyer Imtiaz Mahmood emerges as sexual predator



Bangladesh's social media was rattled yesterday as allegations of sexual harassment and exploitation surfaced against a lawyer, Mr. Imtiaz Mahmood, 60. Mr. Mahmood who represents one of the law firms in the country, namely Abdul Jabbar and Associates, is also a familiar name amongst feminist writers, media personalities, online activists and the like. He is also a regular contributor in social media outlets, known for his uncensored coverage of topics such as woman's rights.

On 23rd January several screenshots of a private conversation Mr Imtiaz Mahmood held with Bangladesh Microsoft's brand ambassador Ms Jannatul Naim Prity, were uploaded on to FaceBook. The contents of screenshots revealed Mr Mahmood, who is married and the father of two no less, having a lewd and inappropriate conversation with Ms Prity. Ms Prity who has claimed that Mr Mahmood is a sexual predator by character and that he preys on women by claiming to love them. He would achieve this feat by lying to women that he is unhappy in his marriage, by belittling his wife and also by stating that he is 'alone and helpless'. Ms Prity took to Facebook on the 23rd January and uploaded a short post detailing her relationship with Mr Mahmood.

She stated that she admits it was 'her fault', as she led herself be oblivious to the fact that Mr Mahmood was married. She also stated that all he had done is 'deceive' her and that she just wants to 'identify' this man for what he is, in hope that no one else falls victim to him like she did.

Meanwhile social media channels were rife with discussion and debate as details of the allegations of sexual exploitation emerged against Mr Mahmood. Activists and writers who update their social media pages regularly, know Mr Mahmood as a sagacious and adept writer and activist, particularly because of his work on women's rights. As such were left befuddled and embarrassed by these charges against him. It is understood that Mr Mahmood wrote most of his posts and articles from Dhaka.

We contacted a few people for comments and response on the allegations made againts Mr Mahmood including his current wife Mrs Jennifa Jabbar but were unable to reach her on her cell. We also contacted Mr Mahmood's employers, Abdul Jobbar, and Associates, but they squarely declined to make any comments on this matter. It was later revealed that the firm is actually under the ownership of Mr Mahmood's father-in-law. Mr Mahmood actually claims on his Facebook profile that he works as an advocate on this law firm.

Mr Mahmud was recently the subject of a lawsuit filed against him in accordance S.57 of ICT Act. He was accused of spreading 'fake news' and generate unrest, on issues affecting the hilly regions of Chittagong. The lawsuit in question is still in effect and is making routine progress.