



From Ruin to Resilience: Akhiruzzaman's Journey of Reinvention

Akhiruzzaman, a small entrepreneur from Faridpur, turned adversity into opportunity through determination and resilience. After losing his clothing business due to an eviction drive and later suffering heavy losses during the COVID-19 pandemic, he faced significant financial challenges. With support from SDC and the RAISE Project, he rebuilt his business and adapted to changing circumstances. Today, he successfully runs a stationery business while maintaining additional sources of income. His journey reflects the power of perseverance, entrepreneurship, and timely support.

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The Main Story:

Akhiruzzaman (42), a resident of the small village of Kabirpur in Faridpur Sadar, is the second of six children of farmer Abdul Majid Molla (70). Although he was a bright student, financial hardship forced him to discontinue his education after completing Higher Secondary School in 1998. With limited income from farming, his father struggled to support the education of six children, prompting Akhiruzzaman to seek ways to improve his family's financial condition.

Unable to find suitable employment, he started a small clothing business in Faridpur's Heliport Market around **2000 with BDT 20,000** provided by his father. The business gradually helped improve the family's economic situation. In **2005**, he married and started a separate household with his wife and parents. By **2011**, he had become the father of a son and a daughter, and life appeared to be moving according to plan.



Photo: A real hero Mr. Akhiruzzaman



Photo: Engaging himself with customers

However, in 2012, disaster struck when the government evicted structures built on public land, forcing the closure of his rented clothing shop. Losing both his business and inventory left him on the verge of financial collapse. Searching for a way forward, he **approached SDC's Faridpur Sadar Branch**. Following the advice of the branch manager, he combined **BDT 20,000** of his savings with a **BDT 20,000** loan from SDC and launched "**Bhai Bhai Library & Stationery**" in a small rented shop near Heliport Market.

His decision was driven by local demand. After nearby stationery shops were also removed, students of the Faridpur Technical Training Center had to travel nearly two kilometers to purchase educational materials. Recognizing this market gap, Akhiruzzaman built his business around books, notebooks, pens, and stationery products. Over time, he expanded his services to include mobile banking, mobile recharge, computer composing, and printing. His dedication and hard work steadily increased the size of his business, generating a monthly income of **BDT 30,000–35,000** and enabling him to move into his own shop premises.

Just as the business was flourishing, the **COVID-19** pandemic brought new challenges. Prolonged lockdowns and the closure of educational institutions severely affected demand for stationery products. Despite attempts to keep the business alive, including selling products door-to-door by bicycle, he suffered losses of nearly **BDT 400,000** during the pandemic period and struggled to support his family.



Photo: Working with his computer

Following the pandemic, Akhiruzzaman sought support from **SDC** to revive his business. He invested **BDT 200,000** from the sale of family land and received a **BDT 51,000** loan through the **RAISE Project**, supported by **PKSF** and the **World Bank**. He also completed training on **Risk Management and Business Continuity**, which helped him better prepare for future business challenges. Today, he earns around **BDT 20,000–25,000** per month from his shop and supplements his income through livestock farming. He now raises cows, goats, and native chickens, generating additional monthly earnings. Akhiruzzaman credits the **RAISE Project** for helping him rebuild his business and regain financial stability.