

Director of Pembroke restaurant company banned for seven years

Abul Kalam, 48, from Birmingham, has been disqualified as a company director for seven years after being unable to explain over £400,000 of his restaurant's income and expenditure after his business folded, including £35,000 he claimed through the Bounce Back Loan (BBL) scheme during the Covid pandemic.

Abul Kalam was the sole director of Choose Chilli Ltd which ran Mehfil's restaurant in Pembroke's Main Street shopping arcade until 2021.

During the Covid lockdown in 2020, Choose Chilli Ltd applied for and received a £25,000 Bounce Back Loan. These were government-backed loans introduced to support businesses impacted by the pandemic. The company received a further £10,000 top-up BBL in March 2021 but ceased trading and went into voluntary liquidation in July 2021, owing almost £70,000.

Investigators at the Insolvency Service discovered that both the £25,000 BBL payment and the £10,000 top-up loan had been transferred into a bank account in Kalam's name the day after the money had arrived in Choose Chilli's bank account.

Under the rules of the BBL scheme, money borrowed had to be used for the economic benefit of the business but Kalam provided no evidence that any of the £35,000 had been used to support Choose Chilli, and the amount remained outstanding when the restaurant went into liquidation.

On further investigation, the company's bank account showed that more than £178,000 – in addition to the BBL money – was paid into the restaurant and more than £241,000 was separately paid out between December 2019 and July 2021 – a period that included extended Covid lockdowns and restrictions.

Kalam was unable to prove that the transactions were legitimate sales and business expenditure, as he had failed to retain adequate invoices or records to verify the amounts.

The restaurant-owner's inadequate book-keeping meant investigators were also unable to establish how much money was owed to HMRC in tax and national insurance.

The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy accepted a disqualification undertaking from Abul Kalam, after he didn't dispute that he had caused Choose Chilli Ltd to obtain a Bounce Bank Loan and a BBL top-up loan totalling £35,000 and failed to ensure the funds were used for the economic benefit of Choose Chilli's business, which was a breach of the terms of the BBL.

He also didn't dispute he had failed to ensure Choose Chilli kept adequate accounting records – a legal duty of company directors.

His disqualification is effective from 30 September 2022 and will last for seven years.

The disqualification undertaking prevents Kalam from directly, or indirectly, becoming involved in the promotion, formation or management of a company, without the permission of the court.

Lawrence Zussman, Deputy Head of Company Investigations at the Insolvency Service, said:

Abul Kalam has justifiably been removed from the business environment for a significant period and his disqualification should serve as a reminder to others that the Insolvency Service will not hesitate in taking appropriate action.

Notes to editors

Abul Kalam's date of birth is July 1974.

Choose Chilli Ltd (Company Reg no. 09903418). The Company traded as Choose Chilli.

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service administers the insolvency regime, investigating all compulsory liquidations and individual insolvencies (bankruptcies) through the Official Receiver to establish why they became insolvent. It may also use powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK. In addition, the agency authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, deals with disqualification of directors in corporate failures, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7674 6910 or 020 7596 6187

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[Independent review provides recommendations to improve support for tenant farmers](#)

A new independent review has published its recommendations on how landlords, tenants and government can work together to deliver a resilient and productive agricultural tenanted sector.

The [Rock Review](#) was commissioned by Defra in January to look at how to provide better support to tenant farmers and tenancies as the government seeks to drive growth and sustainability across the farming sector and rural communities. The Tenancy Working Group, who produced the report, consisted of stakeholders from all parts of the tenanted sector including tenants, landlords and agents.

Published today, the review is clear on the essential role of tenant farmers in delivering our environmental targets, food security, and a growing rural economy. With tenant farmers being stewards on holdings that cover more than half of farmable land in England, this group of farmers need to have access to government schemes.

The review makes a series of recommendations to government to enable the tenanted sector to deliver sustainable food production, meet the challenges of climate change, and improve and enhance biodiversity. The recommendations cover a range of areas, including public schemes, landlord-tenant relationships and new entrants.

Environment Secretary Ranil Jayawardena said:

I would like to thank Baroness Rock and her team for providing their analysis of the issues and opportunities facing tenant farmers in England.

The review is right to set out the importance of having a thriving tenanted sector if we are to deliver growth in our rural economy and unlock farmers' potential to improve the environment. We will be looking closely at its recommendations.

As we look at how we best deliver our environmental schemes, we will make sure that the needs of tenant farmers remain central to our plans.

Baroness Kate Rock said:

This review provides a clear vision for the agricultural tenanted sector in England that Defra can and should adopt. The recommendations, when taken together, actively move the sector towards a position where tenant farmers operate resilient, successful, and thriving businesses.

Some recommendations can be more immediately delivered by Defra such as changes to scheme design that would expand the opportunities for tenant farmers to access support for improving the environment alongside producing food.

Other recommendations are more structural. These will put the tenanted sector on a more resilient footing as we move through the agricultural transition. They will encourage tenant farmers and landlords to collaborate and invest in productivity, improve the environment and drive growth in the rural economy.

The Tenancy Working Group was formed to provide tenant farmers and associated stakeholders a further opportunity to make sure the new environmental schemes work within agricultural tenancies.

The government will publish a formal response to the review in due course.

[Requirement for submission slots extended](#)

News story

Submission opportunities available to applicants of veterinary product marketing authorisations.



The requirement for submission slots to be obtained for new and extension variation applications for biological and bio-pharm products, as described in [our announcement on 7 May 2021](#), has been extended indefinitely.

There is currently no requirement for submission slots for Pharmaceutical applications. However, applicants are now required to provide the VMD with a minimum 6-month forewarning of any new MA Pharmaceutical applications intended to be submitted under Article 12(3) (full) or 13a (well-established use/bibliographic).

Full details can be found in the guidance for [Submission of an application for an animal medicine authorisation](#).

Please contact us at submissionslot@vmd.gov.uk to arrange a meeting.

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[Huawei legal notices issued](#)

Huawei technology must be removed from the UK's 5G public networks by the end of 2027 under legal documents handed to broadband and mobile operators today.

The document – called a [designated vendor direction](#) – has been sent to 35 UK telecoms network operators. It puts the government's [previous](#) position to remove Huawei kit from UK 5G networks on a legal footing.

The ban on Huawei in 5G follows guidance from the world leading National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) that the security of the company's products – such as equipment used at phone mast sites and telephone exchanges – can no longer be managed due to the impact of US sanctions on its supply chain. The sanctions, imposed by the US Government in 2020, stop Huawei accessing US semiconductor technology on which it previously relied.

Huawei has been issued a separate document – a [designation notice](#) – which categorises the company as a high-risk vendor of 5G network equipment and

services. The designation notice sets out all of the reasons for which the government considers Huawei to pose a national security risk, including the impact of the sanctions.

The direction sets out the controls to be placed on operators' use of Huawei, following consultation with Huawei and telecoms operators, including:

- an immediate ban on the installation of new Huawei equipment in 5G networks;
- a requirement to remove Huawei equipment from 5G networks by the end of 2027;
- a requirement to remove Huawei equipment from the network core by 31 December 2023;
- a requirement to limit Huawei to 35 per cent of the full fibre access network by 31 October 2023;
- a requirement to remove Huawei equipment from sites significant to national security by 28 January 2023; and
- a requirement not to install any Huawei equipment that has been affected by US sanctions in full fibre networks.

These decisions have been reached following technical security analysis from the National Cyber Security Centre which takes into account our specific national circumstances and how the risks from the US sanctions are manifested in the UK. The decisions will not cause any delays to the government's digital infrastructure roll out targets.

Having fully considered consultation responses, the key deadline to remove all Huawei equipment in the UK's 5G network by 2027 remains unchanged, as do eight of the other interim deadlines to guide operators in meeting the 2027 deadline.

For a small number of operators, the two interim deadlines for the core and 35 per cent of the full fibre access network could have led to network outages and disruption for customers, due to delays caused by the pandemic and global supply chain issues.

Having considered comments raised by industry in the consultation, the government has formally set interim deadlines that balance the need to remove Huawei as swiftly as possible while avoiding unnecessary instability in networks. The UK's world-leading cyber security experts at the NCSC have agreed this is a sensible balance.

Providers should meet the original target dates for the removal of Huawei from network cores and capping Huawei at 35 per cent in the access network (January and July 2023 respectively) wherever possible, and the government expects most of them will do so.

Digital Secretary Michelle Donelan said:

"We must have confidence in the security of our phone and internet networks which underpin so much about our economy and everyday lives.

"Thanks to this government's tough new laws we can drive up the security of

telecoms infrastructure and control the use of high-risk equipment.

“Today I’m using these powers and making it a legal requirement for Huawei to be removed from 5G networks by 2027.”

NCSC Technical Director Dr Ian Levy said:

“Society increasingly relies on telecoms and the NCSC, government and industry partners work closely to help ensure that these networks are secure and resilient in the long term.

“The Telecoms Security Act ensures we can be confident in the resilience of the everyday services on which we rely, and the legal requirements in this Designated Vendor Direction are a key part of the security journey.”

The decision comes as the government publishes its [response](#) to a targeted consultation on a proposed ban held earlier this year with Huawei and other telecoms companies under the provisions of the [Telecommunications \(Security\) Act 2021](#).

The Act came into force in November last year and gives the government new powers to control the presence of high risk vendors in UK public telecoms networks where necessary in the interests of national security.

Separately, last month the government [introduced](#) tough new security rules broadband and mobile companies will have to follow to better protect UK networks from potential cyber attacks under the Telecommunications (Security) Act.

The new regulations and code of practice are among the strongest in the world and provide much tougher protections for the UK from cyber threats which could cause network failure or the theft of sensitive data.

Ofcom will oversee, monitor and enforce the new regulations and code and have the power to carry out inspections of telecoms firms’ premises and systems to ensure they’re meeting their obligations. If companies fail to meet their duties, the regulator will be able to issue fines of up to 10 per cent of turnover or, in the case of a continuing contravention, £100,000 per day.

ENDS

Notes to editors

In 2020 the NCSC published updated guidance in relation to Huawei. It has also published a number of other documents:

- A [summary](#) of the NCSC’s analysis of the May 2020 US sanction of Huawei
- A [blog](#): ‘A different future for telecoms in the UK’
- An [explainer](#): Why has the NCSC’s advice on the use of Huawei technology changed?
- An [explainer](#): What is 5G, and how will it affect you

Russia's needless war has inflicted suffering on too many: UK statement to the OSCE

Thank you Mr Chair. The Special Permanent Council on Tuesday 11 October denounced Russia's ongoing and indefensible attacks against civilians across Ukraine. Later that day, G7 leaders "condemned these attacks in the strongest possible terms".

Again – yesterday, we heard reports of further Russian missile attacks, including on a market in Avdiivka, killing at least seven people and injuring eight.

We mourn with Ukraine for all those impacted by these unspeakable acts across Ukraine. We will not allow these individuals to be forgotten. Individuals such as Dr Oksana Leontieva. On Monday morning, Oksana woke up, got her five year old son ready for school, then drove to her job at one of Kyiv's children's hospitals. She took the same short route as every week – but on this day, she unknowingly drove straight into the worst missile attack on her country in months – where she was sadly killed. Oksana specialised in treating childhood cancer. Her hospital described her as "a true professional and supporter of her patients and colleagues". Her son is now an orphan.

Mr Chair, Oksana and her son are but two innocent victims of Russia's continued intense barrage of missile attacks on Kyiv and across Ukraine. More civilian infrastructure has been severely impacted in the latest attacks. There have continued to be multiple power blackouts, with areas cut off from water supply and communications. Let us recall: deliberate attacks on innocent civilian populations constitute a war crime. Russia must end its invasion and withdraw all of its forces from Ukraine now.

We condemn Russia's continued actions at Ukraine's Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant and the pressure exerted on the personnel of the facility. This is a further irresponsible escalation and we will hold Russia responsible for any incident caused by their actions. The safety, security and safeguards of the nuclear facility are paramount and we support the International Atomic Energy Agency's efforts in this regard.

Mr Chair, as the [latest Moscow Mechanism report](#) made clear – internal repression and external aggression are two sides of the same coin. I want to spotlight the incredible bravery of those who have stood up in defence of human rights and democracy – many of whom have been detained or 'disappeared', notably in Russia and Belarus. We commend the Center for Civil Liberties in Ukraine, Ales Bialiatski in Belarus and Memorial in Russia for being awarded the Nobel Prize – three of the seven recipients of the OSCE Democracy Defenders Award are now Nobel Peace Prize laureates. We are proud

to have spearheaded the OSCE award with a group of States championing democracy and supporting human rights defenders at the OSCE. The role of these human rights defenders is as important as it ever has been in our region.

The UK also commends Vladimir Kara-Murza for being awarded the Vaclav Havel Human Rights Prize. He has continued to champion human rights and freedom in the face of Russian state aggression. Vladimir Kara-Murza remains in detention on politically-motivated charges; he should be released without delay. But he is not alone. During the Warsaw Human Dimension Conference earlier this month, we heard directly from the courageous wives, mothers and sisters of Ukrainian political prisoners, detained civilians, and those forcibly disappeared. Many remain detained and missing to this day, their families resolutely searching for scraps of information on their whereabouts. We urge Russia to engage with and provide access to international humanitarian organisations. These families deserve answers. We will continue to raise cases until political prisoners are free and the whereabouts of those forcibly disappeared are revealed.

Mr Chair, [143 countries stand united in condemnation of Putin's illegal attempts to annex four regions of Ukraine, as reflected by the UNGA vote yesterday](#). The UK calls on Russia to cease all hostilities and “immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its troops and military equipment from Ukraine”. [As the G7 leaders have said](#) “we are undeterred and steadfast in our commitment to providing the support Ukraine needs to uphold its sovereignty and territorial integrity. We will continue to provide financial, humanitarian, military, diplomatic and legal support and will stand firmly with Ukraine for as long as it takes”. This needless war has inflicted suffering on too many. Those responsible will be held to account and will serve justice. We are committed. We are in this for the long run. We will not forget.