

Press release: Cleveland director banned for seven years

The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy accepted a seven year disqualification undertaking from Mr Banaras which bans him, from 12 June 2017, from acting as a company director or from managing, or in any way controlling, a limited company until 2024.

North East Meats Limited (NEM) which traded from Boosbeck, Cleveland, went into liquidation on 20 August 2015 owing £1,128,393. An Insolvency Service investigation into NEM found that from at least 12 March 2014 Mr Banaras failed to maintain, preserve and deliver up records that were adequate to explain the financial position of NEM.

In the absence of complete records, it was not possible to determine the legitimacy of at least £195,476 of credit stated to have been granted to a connected company for the destruction of purchased livestock. Furthermore, NEM's books and records had no evidence to verify the destruction of at least 2,827 such animals. It was also not possible to determine the legitimacy of management charges paid by NEM to a connected company totalling £450,000.

Aldona O'Hara, Chief Investigator of Insolvent Investigations Midlands & West at the Insolvency Service, said:

Company Directors have a duty to ensure that their companies maintain proper accounting records and following insolvency, deliver them to the office-holder in the interests of fairness and transparency.

Without a full account of transactions it is impossible to determine whether a director has discharged their duties properly, or is using a lack of documentation as a cloak for impropriety.

This director has paid the price for failing to do that, as he cannot now carry on in business other than at his own risk.

Notes to editors

Mr Banaras' date of birth is 8 October 1973 and he resides in Middlesbrough.

North East Meats Limited (CR0 No. 08610295) was incorporated on 15 July 2013 and traded from The Abattoir, High Street, Boosbeck, Saltburn-by-the-Sea, Cleveland, TS12 3AG.

Mr Banaras was the sole director from 15 July 2013 to 20 August 2015 (the

date of liquidation).

The matter of unfitness, which Mr Banaras did not dispute in the Disqualification Undertaking, was that from at least 12 March 2014, the date upon which NEM first granted a credit note to a connected company, Mr Banaras failed to ensure that NEM maintained and/ or preserved adequate accounting records. Or in the alternative Mr Banaras failed to deliver up to the liquidator such records as were maintained.

As a consequence of the inadequate books and records it was not possible to:

- verify the legitimacy of at least £195,476 of credit granted by NEM to a connected company.
- verify the legitimacy of management charges paid by NEM to a connected company totalling £450,000.

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, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures. Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

BEIS' mission is to build a dynamic and competitive UK economy that works for all, in particular by creating the conditions for business success and promoting an open global economy. The Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions team contributes to this aim by taking action to deter fraud and to regulate the market. They investigate and prosecute a range of offences, primarily relating to personal or company insolvencies.

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

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[Press release: Water abstraction lie costs farm business £5,500](#)

Lakenheath farming business N&M Sizer lied about how much water it abstracted, fearing it would lose its licence or have its abstraction limits reduced.

In doing so, the company falsely stated that it had extracted more water than it was allowed to under the licence which resulted in an investigation by the Environment Agency.

The company had actually taken very little of the allowance as its crops at the time did not need spray irrigation, Ipswich Magistrates' Court heard today (30 May).

It fined the company £3,000 for the deception and ordered it to pay £2,531 costs.

Mrs Megan Selves, prosecuting for the Environment Agency, told the court the company had been worried that as it had not taken much water it would lose the right the following year to take what the licence allowed.

However, she said that any reduction in future abstraction or any revocation of licence would not be done without looking at about 10 years of records and without discussion with the licence holder.

Any assessment would only be carried out when the licence came up for renewal or if there was evidence that the licence is causing environmental damage. The licence for N&M Sizer Ltd expires on 31 March 2027.

Mrs Selves said that water meters at the company's site, Bedford Fen in Sedgfen, had been re-calibrated to corroborate the figures submitted to the Environment Agency in a 'determined effort to mislead'.

She said the company's actions had been deliberate and a 'flagrant disregard for the law' and although there had been no environmental impact, the company had falsified its figures giving a false impression of how much water had been taken from the environment.

Mrs Selves said the company had shown remorse and co-operated with the investigation.

N&M Sizer Ltd pleaded guilty to:

Charge: On or before 30 November 2015 you furnished information to the Environment Agency pursuant to section 201 of the Water Resources Act 1991, namely the water abstraction return for 2014 to 2015 for licence 6/33/39/*S/0496/R01 for abstraction points A, C, D, E and F, and in the said

information made a statement which you knew to be false or misleading in a material particular, namely that you had abstracted 153,360 cubic metres of water.

Contrary to section 206(1) and (5) of the Water Resources Act 1991

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[Press release: Seven year ban for London restaurateur](#)

On the second day of his disqualification trial , Yingji Li, the director of Mandarin Kitchen Limited, gave an undertaking to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, which prevents him from becoming directly or indirectly involved in the promotion, formation or management of a company for seven years from 30 June 2017.

Mandarin went into liquidation on 22 April 2014 owing £394,267 to creditors.

The Insolvency Service's investigation concluded that Mr Li caused Mandarin to employ two illegal workers. He also caused the company to fail to submit returns or payments to HMRC in respect of VAT, PAYE and NIC, with at least £191,748 being owed to HMRC at the date of liquidation.

Commenting on the disqualification, Robert Clarke, Chief Investigator at the Insolvency Service, said:

The Insolvency Service will work with other government agencies to take robust action against company directors who fail to comply with the law. In this case, Mr Li disregarded both immigration and taxation legislation and has therefore been disqualified for a significant period. He will also have to meet the legal costs of the proceedings against him.

Notes to editors

Mandarin Kitchen Limited (CR0 No.08421507) was incorporated on 27 February 2013. Mandarin operated eight restaurants in London, its registered office being at 88 Kingsway, London WC2B 6AA.

Mr Li (date of birth 10 November 1988) was the sole formally appointed director between 27 February 2013 and liquidation. Mandarin went into Liquidation on 22 April 2014.

On 9 June 2017 the Secretary of State accepted a Disqualification Undertaking from Mr Li effective from 30 June 2017, for seven years.

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[Press release: Unlicensed money lending companies shut down](#)

This follows an investigation by Company Investigations of the Insolvency Service which found that of the 14 companies, only one had ever possessed a consumer credit licence permitting it to operate as a lender. That licence had been revoked in 2013, following a Tribunal finding that Mr Gopee lacked the both the integrity and the competence to operate a consumer credit

business.

The unlicensed companies lent to members of the public at high interest rates, secured against the borrowers' homes and brought numerous court cases to take possession of properties belonging to borrowers who fell behind with payments.

The paperwork provided to customers was confusing and unclear and some were required to sign a declaration waiving their rights under the Consumer Credit Act. This was described as 'distressing' by the Court who confirmed that an individual could not waive their rights under that Act.

Mr Gopee's companies regularly filed false and misleading accounts at Companies House claiming to be dormant when in fact they had substantial active loan books.

Mr Gopee was disqualified as a director on 5 May 2016 for 15 years, the maximum of disqualification available and followed the compulsory liquidation of Barons Finance Limited and subsequent Insolvency Service investigation into the company's affairs.

In his judgement; Deputy Registrar Prentice found that the companies were involved in "unauthorised lending", that they were incapable of carrying on business in a "transparent manner" and had engaged in "wholesale abuse of the company accounting system". He noted that the companies never had any employees other than Mr Gopee despite company letters signed by "Nigel Coombes" and "H Glover, manager for legal services who were Mr Gopee under another name." Another deliberate confusion that the Deputy Registrar noted was the use of the name Ghana Commercial Bank Limited "which sounds very like bank."

Welcoming the Court's decision, David Hill, a chief investigator with the Insolvency Service, commented:

I am very pleased to see that the Court has called a halt to the unscrupulous activities of these companies. They have pursued hundreds of borrowers for loans that should never have been made.

The companies have shown no regard for the law.

The companies subject to the winding up order are:

- Euro Business Finance plc
- Reddy Corporation Limited
- Ghana Commercial Finance Limited
- Barons Bridging Finance 1 Limited
- Barons Finance 1 Limited
- Moneylink Finance Limited
- Agni Investments Limited

- Ghana Commercial Investment Ltd
- Pangold Estate Limited
- Pangold Investments Limited
- Speedy Bridging Finance Limited
- Marketing Web Limited
- Agni Estates Ltd
- Euro Asset Management Limited

The Financial Conduct Authority is [currently taking criminal action against Mr Gopee](#) for acting as an unlicensed consumer credit lender.

Notes to editors

The director of all the companies is Pauline Muldowney.

All the companies have their registered office at 169 Perry Vale, London SE23 2JD.

Euro Business Finance plc was incorporated on 8 March 2002 under company number 04390102.

Reddy Corporation Limited was incorporated on 13th January 1997 under company number 3301446.

Ghana Commercial Finance Limited was incorporated on 17 December 2006 under company number 04999062.

Barons Bridging Finance 1 Limited was incorporated on 1st December 2009 under company number 7091814.

Barons Finance 1 Limited was incorporated on 31 March 2005 under company number 05409905.

Moneylink Finance Limited was incorporated on 28 July 1998 under company number 03605382.

Agni Investments Limited was incorporated on 3 September 2012 under company number 08199869.

Ghana Commercial Investment Ltd was incorporated on 14 April 2010 under company number 07223169. It changed its name from Ghana Commercial Bank Limited on 10 December 2013.

Pangold Estate Limited was incorporated on 14 April 2010 under company number 07223094.

Pangold Investments Limited was incorporated on 4 September 2006 under company number 05923542.

Speedy Bridging Finance Limited was incorporated on 31 October 2013 under company number 08756228.

Marketing Web Limited was incorporated on 23 December 1998 under company

number 03688015.

Agni Estates Ltd was incorporated on 14 February 2014 under company number 08895528.

Euro Asset Management Limited was incorporated on 23 October 2014 under company number 09277841.

The petitions were presented under s124A of the Insolvency Act 1986.

Company Investigations, part of the Insolvency Service, uses powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). Further information about live company investigations is [available](#).

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The agency also authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, 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.

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News story: Regulated adviser banned indefinitely from providing immigration advice and services

In a decision issued on 5 April 2017 the First-tier Tribunal (Immigration Services) found sixty charges brought by the OISC to be proven against Alpesh Patel of Aaryas Careers Ltd following an oral hearing between 23 January and 1 February 2017. Mr Patel had been registered by the OISC to provide immigration advice and services from 16 September 2011 until 2 June 2016 when his registration was cancelled.

Over the course of 2015 Mr Patel, operating out of offices in Hayes and Brentford located in West London, made Tier 2 visa applications for at least 16 complainants using a fake Certificate of Sponsorship. Mr Patel acted as an immigration adviser and recruitment consultant, introducing the complainants to companies that he claimed could provide them with employment and a Certificate of Sponsorship to allow them to remain in the country.

In each case Mr Patel charged between £3,300 and £13,000, usually demanding payment in cash. There was no legitimate recruiting company. There were no real jobs. There were no genuine Certificates of Sponsorship. On each occasion, the complainant's Tier 2 application was refused by the Home Office, because the purported Certificate of Sponsorship was a fake. Each complainant lost thousands of pounds.

In its decision, the Tribunal found the conduct of Mr Patel to be "reprehensible" and held that he had played a major role in this deception. It noted that Mr Patel "has sought, serially, to deceive the Commissioner, and the immigration authorities, and to abuse the material immigration procedures, and has deceived all of those clients whose immigration affairs are the subject of these proceedings and in respect of whom the aforesaid sixty charges have been upheld, and dishonestly deprived each of them of a substantial amount of money".

On 31 May 2017 the Tribunal directed Mr Patel to repay a total of £172,600 to the complainants and £7,460 by way of a penalty to the OISC. The Tribunal also directed that Mr Patel/Aaryas Careers Ltd be prohibited from providing immigration advice and/or services indefinitely.

Speaking about the decision, Deputy Immigration Services Commissioner Dr Ian Leigh said, "Alpesh Patel was entrusted to advise vulnerable people who could not handle their immigration cases on their own... they trusted him and he betrayed that trust by his reprehensible conduct. I am delighted with the outcome in this case."