

Real Estates & Apartments

The Daily Star

Special Supplement

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Real Estate and Apartment Companies Talk to The Daily Star

The Daily Star placed a set of questions before a number of esteemed real estate and apartment companies in Bangladesh

Questionnaire

1. How would you describe the present state of Real Estate and Apartments?
2. How can private Real Estate and housing companies benefit the buyers in real terms?
3. Many buyers complain that private real estate owners and builders are responsible for the 'price hike' of property of apartment. How do you justify the increased costs?
4. Does your company employ trained professionals for proper management of the different work areas like designing, construction, supervision, engineering and other technical aspects? What are the minimum qualification for these personnel?
5. Does your company follow the international standard specifications?
6. How much has the Real Estate and housing scene changed Dhaka in the last ten years and what changes do you envisage for the future with large number of companies entering this area?
7. Are you a Dhaka based company? Do you have any project anywhere else in Bangladesh specially in Chittagong — "the commercial capital"?
8. Does your company construct both the 'Residential Apartments' and the Commercial Buildings — for office spaces, shopping malls, etc? If so, please specify.
9. What problems do you face in conducting the Real Estate and property development business?
10. Please mention briefly about the activities of your esteemed firm (for the 'Buyer's Guide') including the date of inception, name and location of the projects, number of projects completed, number of actual projects in hand and the future plans for the development of 'Real Estate Industry'.
11. Does your company have any plans to build apartments for 'middle lower income group' people? If yes, kindly mention the location, size and the price range of those apartments?
12. How can people know about your project? Do you advertise? If yes, in which media and why?
13. Do you need to obtain permission/licence to construct apartment buildings, commercial building
14. Do you follow a standardized agreement with your clients?
15. What legal steps can a client take in case of breach of contract with your company?
16. How do you rate your company?

Their valued replies follow:

Rangs Properties

1. At present, there are many companies in the market. Of course, it is not a bad indication, if they can maintain the construction quality. Though the market is segmented, the demand for good quality apartments is very high. Yes, it is the age of privatization. Privatization is synonymous to competition where the quality and service get the 'most priority'.
2. You know that all over the world the common tendency is to increase the price of real estates. Land area of our capital city is not increasing, but you can realize the flow of population. So the price of apartments is not high where quality is concerned.
3. We believe that a company's standard is set by its employees. Therefore
4. We always try to employ best professionals in the respective fields. Not only we are staffed by foreign and locally skilled engineers, architects and other professionals, but also technologically well equipped. Our aim is not only to meet the international standards, but to exceed them. Of course, in the last ten years, there is a great change in the housing and commercial complexes. In future, outskirts of Dhaka city will be developed with modern and speedy communication. And people will move towards these places for comfortable and easy living. Yes, presently we are Dhaka based, but we are planning to build some projects in our commercial capital.
5. Our aim is not only to meet the international standards, but to exceed them.
6. Of course, in the last ten years, there is a great change in the housing and commercial complexes. In future, outskirts of Dhaka city will be developed with modern and speedy communication. And people will move towards these places for comfortable and easy living.
7. Yes, presently we are Dhaka based, but we are planning to build some projects in our commercial capital.

8. We have residential projects at Gulshan, Banani, Dhanmondi, Uttara, Siddeshwari, Shantinagar; commercial projects at Bijoy Sarani, and Shopping Complexes at Dhanmondi.
9. Yes, we face some sorts of legal and concerned authorities' hustles.
10. Rangs Properties Ltd

Project & Location	Size (In sft)	Price (In Tk)
Rangs Waterfront at Gulshan	3850-4100	91,30,000.00-97,05,000.00
Rangs Korobi at Gulshan	2395-2552	54,24,250.00-60,17,000.00
Rangs Lakegarden at Gulshan	3300	91,85,000.00
Rangs Uttama at Banani	1850-1967	37,90,000.00-42,09,000.00
Rangs Torunima at Dhanmondi	1470-1526	32,15,000.00-33,27,000.00
Rangs Mreegoya at Uttara	1400	24,60,000.00
Rangs Garden Palace at Siddeshwari	1800-1820	32,80,000.00-33,14,000.00
Upcoming Projects at Moghbazar, Shantinagar and Gulshan.		

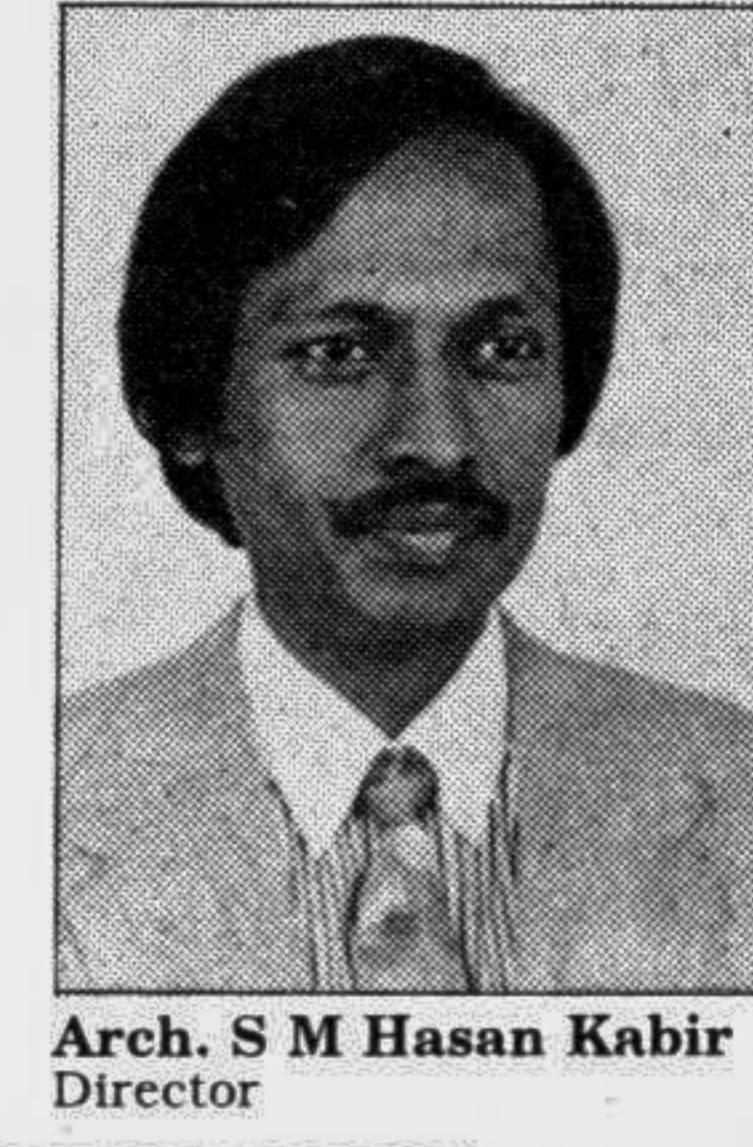
11. We are planning to take up some projects at Shantinagar, Moghbazar, and Wari for middle class people. Each apartment measuring 600sft to 1000sft will cost around
12. Tk 10 to 15 lac. Both outdoor and indoor advertisement play the role to inform people.
13. It is a must.
14. Always we make an agreement with the client which safeguards our client's interest as well as ours.

Romo Rouf Chowdhury
Director

Concord Real Estate & Building Products Ltd

1. The present state of Real Estate and Apartments is very promising. The need for housing is going high along with the increase of inhabitants in the megacity-Dhaka. The investment with the banks returns cash in liquid form, but the investment with the housing companies returns cash in the form of a ready apartment. Thereby the buyers are relieved of all the worries of construction. Fluid cash loses its real value over period of time with devaluation. In reality the buyers are responsible for the price hike. The demand for apartment is increasing so as the price is increasing too. As per the theory of Economics, price increases with the increase of demand. Yes, the company employs trained professionals. Big projects are being handled by quali-
2. fied and trained professionals. Yes, our company follows the international standard specification — basically ACI (American Standard) BS (British Standard).
3. The housing scene for the last ten years has changed the skyline of Dhaka city in a vertical progression. With many new companies entering in the housing industry nowadays, the skyline of Dhaka city will start re-shaping in horizontal progression, resulting in the expansion of the city.
4. Yes, we are a Dhaka-based company and we do not have any project in any other area in Bangladesh at this moment.
5. Yes, we construct both the residential apartments and commercial buildings for office spaces, shopping malls etc.
6. We do not face any problem in conducting the Real Estate development business except for the timely payment by the customers.
7. Yes, we are in progress with a project targeting the middle lower income group people. The project is situated at Khilkhet with apartments from 890 Sft to 1290 Sft in the price range of Tk 9,60,000/- to 15,33,000/- payable in 48 to 60 equal monthly installments.
8. Yes, we do advertise in the print media and the television.
9. Obtaining permission to construct structures is the law of the country, and we do abide by the Law of the Land.
10. No, we do not go for standardisation of agreements. We do the agreement on a project by project basis.
11. In the event of any

12. breach of contract the client mutually discusses and solves the differences.
13. We rate our company as one of the best in the industry.



Arch. S M Hasan Kabir
Director

Building Technology & Ideas Ltd

1. The present pace of progress of Real Estate and Apartments is a bit slow due to various parameters, which includes global economy, local purchasing power, saturation of supply in particular locations only, and many others. However, this is a time cycle decline and hopefully it will pick up soon.
2. In real terms, a buyer can be simply benefited by getting the value for his money. In other words the companies should
3. supply what they promised to within the budget of the buyers. The long term, affordable interest loan from financing companies is a major tool to help the buyers. The concept of hire-purchase will be one step ahead in this regard.
4. Some new developers had penetrated the housing market and made a false hike in land price. Fortunately the balloon has burst and market forces are now deciding the price. The benefit of this
5. stabilisation can be felt after a year or two when relatively apartment prices will be lower.
6. All employees are well trained professionals in their respective fields and the training process is a continuous one. Our ISO 9001 quality management system compels us to follow professionalism. As such the academic minimum qualification is not a rigid policy. The job description determines minimum qualification.

Continued on page 14

Affordable Housing for Low and Middle Income Community

by Qazi M Arif and Ishrat Islam

FOR the last few decades the housing sector in the urban areas has developed significantly in terms of the number of shelters built and under construction. They have definitely provided shelter for millions of urban city dwellers of Dhaka, one of the most crowded cities in the resulted world today. The whole process of this development into making our capital and other principal cities, places of concrete-jungle suffering from extreme traffic congestion, inadequate utility services, deterioration law & order situation air pollution creating health hazards and a lot of other inconveniences.

Moreover, the on-going private sector housing development projects are directed towards the rich community, the elites and the upper class of the city dwellers. Because:

1. Most of them are developed within or nearby the city limits where the cost of land is sky-high resulting in the dwelling units being outrageously priced.
2. There is no viable Long-term finance available for the buyers.

Apparently, these projects are serving the needs of a big section of city dwellers but in reality, the needs of the much greater section are ignored and yet to be addressed by the government agencies and the private entrepreneurs as well.

Now is the crucial time to devise sustainable urban housing and development projects, that are affordable primarily for the general mass inhabiting this

megacity in the new millennium.

Principal Guidelines for Affordable Housing

Ecological objectives and viability

- Proposed housing project should be undertaken at the outskirts of big cities (such as Savar, Manikganj or Rajendrapur near Dhaka) which will turn into satellite towns with efficient communication with the Central Business District (CBD).

These are expected to house the urban people reducing the current thrust on the housing demand in the heart of the big cities.

- Proper ecological planning of land use and development will ensure a proper balance between the natural and manmade environment.

- Energy and environment conscious architectural layout, design, selection of materials, ways and means of construction are expected to minimize the use of active energy sources (mainly electricity) resulting in conserving the finite fossil fuel reserve for the planet and contributing less to the global pollution.

- Proper utilization of the built area with efficient design and planning, together with management and organization will limit the volumetric requirement of space, thus allowing more space for community use, circulation and being preserved open and green.

- Open space planning concepts are widely used in the current world and have significant positive impact on the environment. In such projects dwellings are clustered in groups or rows sharing common facades and walls which allow preservation of existing low lands, water bodies and forest areas.

Economic objectives and feasibility

- Since the location of the projects will be situated away from the city crowd, cost of land per unit of dwelling will be much less compared to the conventional projects undertaken within the city such as in Dhanmondi, Gulshan, Banani or Uttara.

- Proper low cost building materials can be selected through adequate theoretical research and practical field experiment and tests that will certainly minimize the construction cost resulting in a lower price of individual units.

- A viable and efficient finance package and an acceptable payment mode need to be generated, which will satisfy the interest of both the developer and the middle and low income buyer community, the target group of this proposal.

Participatory Planning: Pre-requisite for Effective Development

- The overall site planning and individual unit layout and space requirements

should be set in accordance with the active community participation. The target group should be directly involved in the process of setting the design and planning parameters. These inputs can be incorporated through various surveys, workshops and other social interactions.

A proper finance package for the development and an acceptable mode of payment might be evolved through study, research and input from the community participation.

Goal for a Cultural and Regional Identity:

The ancient cultural heritage and traditional social culture and wisdom of this part of the world should be expressed in the layout of space and in designing architectural elements. Proper knowledge, design skill, management and implementation will contribute towards establishing a strong vocabulary of Architecture of this particular place, people and life, providing a distinct cultural and regional identity.

Case Study for a Practical Evaluation and Viability

- **Location:** Northern outskirts of Dhaka city. Such as Savar, Hemayatpur, Joydevpur, Rajendrapur

- **Area:** 1 Bigha (approx. 15000 sft)

- **Built area:** 1/3 of the site (about 5000 sft)

Continued on page 14

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