



Obaidul Karim venture inflicts huge loss on Sonargaon Hotel

Highly overpriced renovation work left abandoned since January

MD HASAN

Revenue earnings of Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel have nose dived due to a mess created by now absconding Obaidul Karim's company Accom Engineering Ltd, which recently abandoned the hotel's astronomically overpriced renovation work.

The immediate past four-party alliance government's favourite Orion Group's sister concern Accom Engineering Ltd was awarded the contract of the hotel's renovation work in October 2005 although the company should not have qualified for the job.

Since Obaidul Karim had gone into hiding in January to avoid arrest in connection with embezzlement of Tk 600 crore from Oriental Bank, the poorly progressing renovation

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The boarders of Sonargaon Pan Pacific Hotel in Dhaka are denied swimming facility as development work of the lone swimming pool there has remained suspended halfway.

Jamaat loyalty taken in writing from aspiring CU teacher

CU CORRESPONDENT

A Chittagong University teacher yesterday alleged that a few Jamaat-e-Islami backed teachers took an undertaking assuring to make him a teacher of the university two years back.

The teacher, Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman, who later became a lecturer of Anthropology department on the basis of merit, approached to a visiting team of the University Grants Commission with the allegation.

He tried to submit a formal allegation but failed to get an appointment from the team, sources said.

According to Ashrafuzzaman, the undertaking given on a Tk 50 stamp (no Pha-2094964) on June 7, 2005, read, "I, Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman, hereby vow that

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TK 1CR EXTORTION

Charges pressed against Tarique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

night raid on March 8 and is now in Dhaka Central Jail while Apu is still at large.

Earlier during a four-day remand, the Joint Interrogation Cell (JIC) extensively grilled Tarique about the extortion case and other allegations of graft and extortion allegedly carried out by him, his friends and sidekicks at the BNP chairperson's party office Hawa Bhaban at Banani, sources said.

The charges of extortion brought against Tarique and Apu were primarily proved and they should be tried under the Speedy Trial (Law and Order Disruption) Act, the investigation officer (IO) of the case said in the charge sheet.

IO

Sub-Inspector Mahbub

Morshed submitted the charge sheet to the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM), Dhaka yesterday afternoon, showing 12 people as prosecution witnesses. The investigation had been completed in seven workdays as per provision of the Speedy Trial Act.

The IO said he had visited the

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Wife, brother meet Tarique in jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tarique Rahman's wife Zobaida Rahman, his younger brother Arafat Rahman and a cousin met him at the jail yesterday.

The three went to the jail around 4:15pm with a home ministry order for the jail authority to allow them to meet with Tarique, Deputy Inspector General (Prisons) Maj Shamsul Haider Siddique told The Daily Star last night.

No one can meet a detained person without such order.

Tarique's relatives stayed for around 25 minutes and talked to him in a room adjacent to the jail superintendent's office. While leaving, they gave Tarique a flask, jail sources said.

Earlier on March 13, Zobaida, Arafat and another person met him at the jail.

Tarique did not make any complaint to them about the jail authority's services, Maj Shamsul said, adding that Tarique has

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ICC WORLD CUP 07 Of joy and pain

MOHAMMAD ISAM

Two countries woke up on Sunday in contrasting moods that replicated in their tremendous emotional outburst. After Bangladesh crushed their gigantic neighbour India by five wickets in the World Cup far away at Trinidad and Tobago, the reaction from the win-

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England, Australia stay on track

SPORTS REPORTER

World champions Australia and England stayed on course for victory in their second matches of the Cricket World Cup in the Caribbean yesterday.

Defending a huge 358 for five built around a 204-run partnership between Brad Hodge (123) and Michael Clarke (93 not out) for the fourth wicket, Australia reduced Holland to 113-8 after 23 overs in their Group A match in St Kitts.

Glen McGrath scalped his 50th World Cup victim for Australia, who beat Scotland in their opener by 203 runs.

Smarting from a six-wicket defeat to New Zealand, England were closing in on their first win in Group C against Canada, who reached 110-4 in 26 over while chasing 280 to win at the Beausejour Cricket Ground in St Lucia. Ashif Mulla (18) and Abdool Samad (26), who added 45 runs for the unbroken fifth wicket, were the creators.

Australia looked unsettled for a brief period when they lost openers

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BID TO HIKE GOVT REVENUE Body to review deals with mobile operators

SHARIER KHAN

The government yesterday formed a five-member committee to see if the agreements with mobile phone service operators could be amended to increase the government's take in their revenues to 15 percent from the existing 5.5 percent.

The committee, headed by Director of Signal Corps Division of the Bangladesh Army Brig Gen Rafiqul Islam, will also review performances of the mobile phone operators with a view to helping them increase job opportunities for citizens.

The committee, which includes a system analyst from the office of the chief adviser to the caretaker government, will also look into financial aspects and market mechanisms for the operators to float shares in the local securities market.

Meeting sources said the government is unhappy in general with the mobile phone operators' level of contribution to the direct job market.

At the meeting, a representative of the mobile phone operators' association gave a picture of

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crore a year if the revenue sharing is increased to 15 percent.

The committee will file its report on April 2, the sources said.

Other members of the committee are high officials from Bangladesh Telecom Regulatory Authority (BTRA), the telecom ministry, and Securities Exchange Commission.

The committee was formed following an inter-ministerial meeting at the telecom ministry to discuss how Bangladesh can address some national interest issues in the mobile phone sector. The meeting was attended among others by representatives from the Association of Mobile Phone Operators.

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ACC won't rush in netting next graft suspects

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) does not wish to rush in without adequate appreciation of the situation while netting graft suspects.

"We shall have to proceed with a moderate pace, because there are issues of public predicament and proper investigation," ACC

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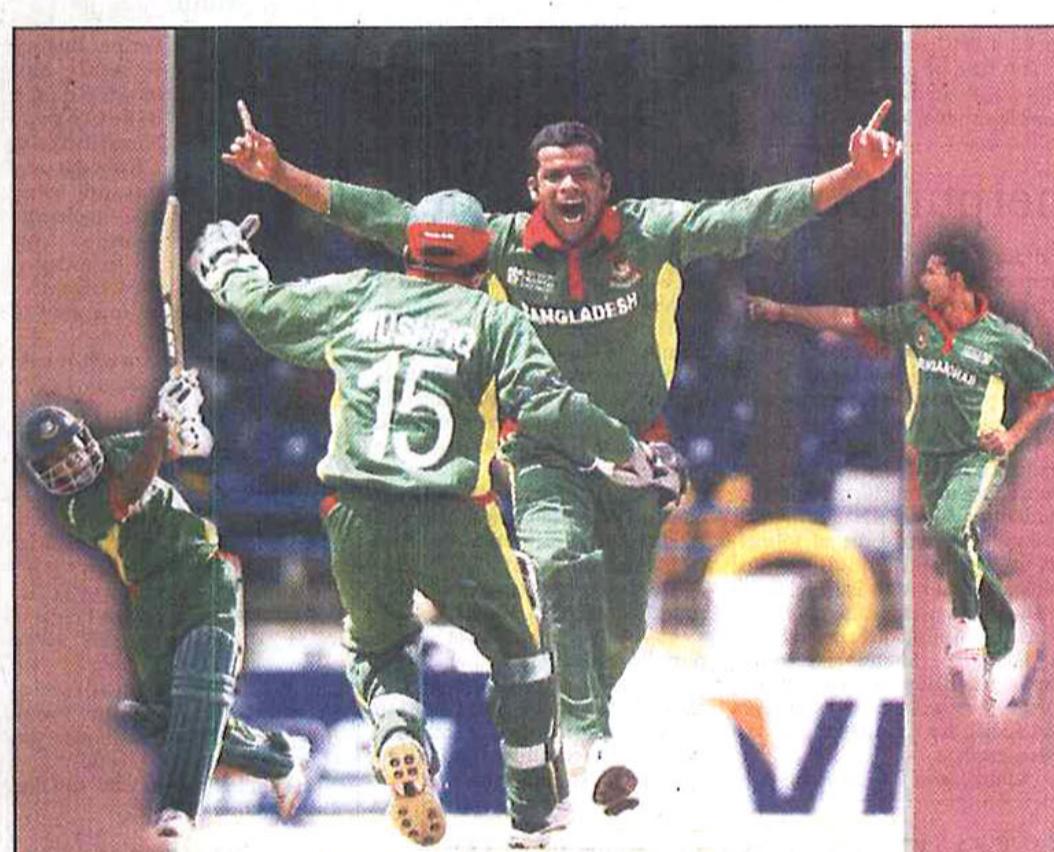
Ex-BNP MP of Sherpur, Dulu's close aide held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The army-led joint forces arrested ex-BNP lawmaker from Sherpur-3 constituency Mahmudul Haq Rubel from his West Kafrul residence in the capital yesterday morning.

The crack forces also arrested Rubel's younger brother Mahbubul Alam Rupam, a contractor, during

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AND
THE HEAVYWEIGHTS CAME TUMBLING DOWN

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The government expects to hear a response from the United States by Tuesday regarding the deportation of AKM Mohiuddin Ahmed, who is condemned to death for the killings of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family.

The US government will inform

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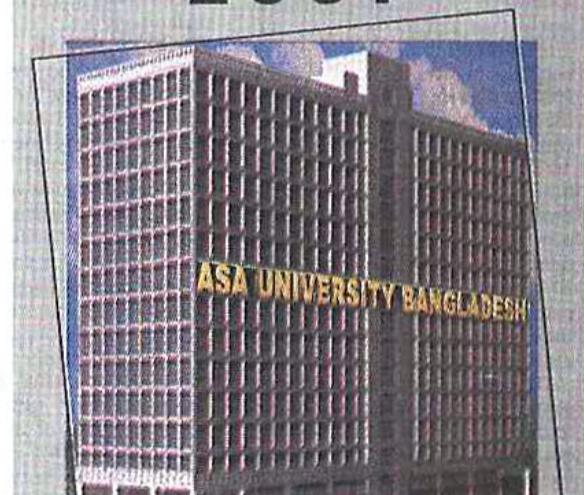
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