

Ex-RWS director jailed for graft

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Court Correspondent

A former assistant director of Resorts World Sentosa (RWS), who was convicted of taking bribes totalling \$39,000 from a subcontractor, was sentenced to 22 weeks' jail yesterday.

Alex Ong Boon Chuan, 45, was also ordered to pay a penalty of \$39,000.

He is filing an appeal and is out on \$80,000 bail.

He was convicted of corruptly obtaining bribes of \$1,000 to \$16,000 on each of five occasions from Mr Kenneth Ng Soon Yong, 49, then a director of Mecflou, in return for not delaying progress payments to the company, which specialises in mechanical and electrical engineering installations for process engineering.

At the time of the offences between July 2010 and May 2011, Ong was the zone manager in charge of the construction and installation of the Transformers theme ride at Universal Studios Singapore (USS). His job scope included approving progress payments for work done.

Cyclelect Electrical Engineering was the mechanical and electrical engineering contractor of the project. Its subcontractor for mechanical engineering works was Mecflou, whose director was Mr Ng.

It was not in dispute that Ong obtained loans from Mr Ng. The sole issue was whether Ong acted corruptly.

In his closing submissions, Deputy Public Prosecutor Jiang Ke-Yue said that Ong acted with guilty knowledge.

Ong, he said, was in a position to delay progress payments for the project.

The loans coincided with the progress claims, and as some payments were in fact delayed, there was incentive for Mr Ng to make the loans to ensure timely payouts.

Ong knew that obtaining loans from a subcontractor of the project was a conflict of interest, in breach of RWS' code of conduct. Yet, he proceeded to get the loans.

The prosecutor said Mr Ng, who had been given 18 weeks for his offences in October 2015, gave the loans corruptly as an inducement for Ong not to delay progress payments.

He even falsified documents to make false expense claims for the loans, and to conceal the corrupt loans.

DPP Jiang argued that Ong's key defence that he had acted under a "moral obligation" to repay the joint account that he shared with his wife was illogical and could not be believed.

He said evidence showed Ong was motivated by greed. He sought a total sentence of 24 weeks' jail but did not push for a penalty.

In imposing the penalty, District Judge Jasvender Kaur said that based on the evidence, she made the finding that there had been no repayment to Mr Ng.

Ong, defended by Mr Chua Eng Hui, could have been jailed for up to five years and/or fined up to \$100,000 on each corruption charge.

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