

Ex-manager of wine distributor guilty of accepting \$380,000 bribes

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A former senior marketing manager of a wine distributor, charged by the ICAC, was today (Tuesday) convicted at the District Court of accepting over \$380,000 in bribes for awarding renovation works to a contractor.

Ronald Cheung Tak-shing, 42, formerly employed by Riche Monde Limited, now known as Moet Hennessy Diageo Hong Kong Limited (MHD), was found guilty of 11 counts of agent accepting an advantage, contrary to Section 9(1)(a) of the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance (POBO).

Judge Eddie Yip Chor-man adjourned the case until November 15 for sentence, pending a background report. The defendant was remanded in the custody of the Correctional Services Department.

The court heard that at the time of the offences, the defendant was responsible for promoting various brands of wines and spirits distributed by MHD.

The defendant was tasked to negotiate with operators of various entertainment spots, such as karaoke lounges, bars and exhibition venues, so as to allow MHD to specially decorate designated areas to advertise the brands.

While renovation works needed to be done on those designated areas, the defendant was authorised by MHD to select renovation contractors.

The court heard that Pun Shing-tak, sole proprietor of Stardust Design & Contracting Company Limited, came to know the defendant in around 2002. Since 2004, Pun had been a renovation contractor of MHD.

Between July 2004 and August 2007, the defendant awarded over 20 renovation works worth over \$2.1 million to Pun.

Upon the defendant's suggestion, Pun marked up the invoices in relation to 11 of the renovation works, and paid the differences as bribes to the defendant.

The bribes accepted by the defendant amounted to \$388,000 in total, the court was told.

Pun, 44, was also charged by the ICAC for his role in the case. He earlier pleaded guilty at Eastern Magistracy to three counts of offering a total of \$160,000 in bribes to Cheung, contrary to Section 9(2)(a) of the POBO, while the prosecution offered no evidence to three similar offences against him. Pun has been granted bail until October 29 for sentence.

MHD had rendered full assistance to the ICAC in its investigation.

The prosecution was today represented by Senior Public Prosecutor Vinci Lam, assisted by ICAC officer Ron Kiong.