

Ex-manager of wine distributor jailed for accepting \$388,000 bribes

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A former senior marketing manager of a wine distributor, charged by the ICAC, was today (Wednesday) sentenced to 21 months' imprisonment at the District Court for accepting \$388,000 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 earlier found guilty of 11 counts of agent accepting an advantage, contrary to Section 9(1)(a) of the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance (POBO).

In sentencing, Judge Eddie Yip Chor-man said the court had to mete out a custodial sentence to the defendant in view of the serious bribery offences.

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, had been a renovation contractor of MHD since 2004.

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 advantages to Cheung, contrary to Section 9(2)(a) of the POBO. Pun was subsequently jailed for three months and one week.

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.