

Ex-Singapore Drug Enforcement Head Face Corruption Charge

By Andrea Tan and Sharon Chen

Former Singapore Central Narcotics Bureau director Ng Boon Gay was charged with four counts of corruption for obtaining sexual favors from a female information technology executive seeking contracts from the agency.

Ng, 46, obtained “sexual gratification” from the woman between June to November last year, when she worked at Hitachi Data Systems Pte, and in December, when she was at Oracle Corp. in Singapore, according to charge sheets filed at the city’s subordinate court today.

The charges come less than a week after former Singapore Civil Defence Force commissioner Peter Benedict Lim Sin Pang faced similar charges involving three women seeking contracts for their companies. Singapore reviewed its public sector financial procedures after uncovering a S\$12.5 million (\$9.7 million) fraud in September 2010 by two former land authority workers in an incident prosecutors said severely shook public confidence in the internal controls at government agencies.

“The cases have taken some shine off Singapore’s reputation for being relatively corruption-free,” said Eugene Tan, a Singapore Management University law professor who’s also a member of Parliament with limited voting rights. “But one could also look at the two cases and say that the fact that these have been uncovered and that they are being prosecuted shows the robustness in the system.”

Contesting Charges

Ng will contest the charges and will seek more information on how he had allegedly helped in furthering the interest of Oracle and Hitachi Data, his lawyer Tan Chee Meng said. The next court hearing for Ng, who’s out on S\$10,000 bail, is on June 26, he said.

“Personal indiscretions aside, Boon Gay firmly believes he is not a corrupt officer,” Tan said.

Ng’s wife, who was in court with him, has “never doubted” his professional integrity and will stand by him, Tan said, citing her statement.



Hitachi Data said in an e-mailed statement “any alleged inappropriate behavior attributed to our former employee during her time at HDS, was undertaken without the knowledge of, or being condoned by, anyone at HDS.”

Charlotte Sam, a spokeswoman at Oracle in Singapore, declined to comment in an e-mailed response.

Ng faces a fine of as much as S\$100,000 and a jail term of as long as five years for each charge.

No Locations

The court documents didn’t list the locations where the encounters took place. Lim’s case involved locations ranging from parking lots in the city to a Paris hotel, the court sheets showed. Lim didn’t enter a plea, according to the Straits Times.

Lim and Ng was investigated in December on allegations of “serious personal misconduct,” the government said earlier this year.

Glenn Knight, a former director of the Commercial Affairs Department was sentenced to a day’s jail in 1998 and suspended from legal practice on corruption charges in 1991. The Straits Times said the investigations this year rank among the highest- level probes of civil servants since Knight’s case.

“It certainly suggests that corruption still remains a key source of concern,” Tan at Singapore Management University said. “These two high-profile cases point to the need for continued vigilance.”