

Merchant gets 2 years for bribery over Jockey Club membership

22.05.09

A merchant, charged by the ICAC, was today (Friday) sentenced to two years' imprisonment at the District Court for offering \$250,000 in bribes in relation to his application for membership of the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC).

Wong Tak-kin, 44, was earlier found guilty of two counts of offering an advantage to an agent, contrary to Section 9(2)(a) of the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance.

In sentencing, Deputy Judge Garry Tallentire said the bribery offences committed by the defendant were serious, and the community as well as the HKJC would not tolerate such offences.

The court heard that in June 2006, a friend of the defendant offered to help the defendant apply for membership of the HKJC in return for \$250,000.

The defendant was aware that the \$250,000 would be shared by his friend and a steward of the HKJC, though he did not know how it would be distributed and to whom the payment was paid.

After paying \$50,000 to his friend, the defendant was provided the phone number of a middleman.

The court heard that the defendant contacted the middleman and asked him to handle his application for racing membership of the HKJC. The middleman offered to do so in return for \$200,000.

In September 2006, the defendant obtained an application form from the middleman and paid him \$200,000 in cash.

The middleman then arranged for the defendant to meet a Voting Member of the HKJC at a hotel on November 20, 2006.

During the meeting, the middleman told the defendant to give the Voting Member his application form himself.

The Voting Member suggested to the defendant that he should declare in his application form that they had known each other for four years, while in fact it was the first time the defendant met him.

The defendant believed that the Voting Member would share the \$200,000 payment for assisting or having assisted him in his application.

On December 1, 2006, the defendant and the Voting Member were arrested by ICAC officers separately. The defendant's application form was found in the Voting Member's briefcase, while name cards of the Voting Member and the middleman were found on the defendant, the court was told.

The HKJC had rendered full assistance to the ICAC during its investigation.

The prosecution was today represented by Senior Public Prosecutor Ada Chan, assisted by ICAC officer Phoebe Saesam.