

Ex-Customs officer sought bribe in form of intimate acts

He gets 3 months' jail for offering to reduce woman's fine if she agreed to his request

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As an investigation officer (IO) with Singapore Customs, it was his duty to uphold the law.

But Jonathan Sasayiah, now 31, abused his position on July 15, 2014, when he attempted to obtain a bribe from a woman in the form of intimate acts.

The former IO was sentenced to

three months' jail yesterday after a district court found him guilty of the offence, following a 10-day trial. The court heard that it happened after the woman, who cannot be named owing to a gag order, was caught with two sticks of contraband cigarettes and fined \$500. She was facing serious financial difficulties at that time.

In his submissions, Deputy Public Prosecutor Navin Naidu said

Jonathan called the woman on July 2, 2014, to ask her out on a date. The woman testified that he called her again 13 days later to ask how she was going to settle the fine. He said he could help reduce it.

According to the mother-of-four, Jonathan asked what he would receive in return for his assistance. The woman suggested they have dinner but he rejected the idea.

She said he then asked if they could "make out". DPP Navin said the woman understood that "make out" meant to have sex, and she made a police report the next day on July 16.



Jonathan Sasayiah tried to obtain the bribe in July 2014.

Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau officers arrested Jonathan on Aug 13.

DPP Navin said that in one of the conversations, Jonathan suggested to the woman that they go to Johor Baru to club and consume alcohol.

DPP Navin urged District Judge

Michelle Yap to sentence Jonathan to at least five months' jail.

Stressing that the former IO had abused his position, he said: "The accused knew that the complainant was a young single mother... who was in dire financial straits and his corrupt conduct served to exploit this."

Defence lawyer Patrick Fernandez asked the judge to sentence Jonathan to a fine of \$10,000 instead. He said: "From (July 15, 2014) to the date he was arrested... Jonathan did not make any arrangements to meet the victim."

Before handing out the sentence, the judge noted that Jonathan did not receive the gratification he had sought from the woman. He is now out on bail of \$15,000 to settle some personal matters, and will surrender to the court on May 29.

For attempting to obtain the bribe, he could have been jailed for up to five years and fined up to \$100,000.

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