

Shell heist: Second mastermind gets more than 25 years' jail for siphoning \$100m of fuel

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SINGAPORE – One of the two masterminds of a long-running scheme to misappropriate marine gas oil out of Shell's Pulau Bukom facility was sentenced to a jail term of 25 years and two months on July 7.

Abdul Latif Ibrahim, 67, admitted he led a group of rogue employees that siphoned \$100 million worth of fuel between

August 2014 and January 2018, which was then sold to local and foreign vessels.

Latif, whose salary was \$3,700, received at least \$7 million in illicit gains, which he spent on luxury watches, expensive cars and property.

The authorities have seized nearly \$7.7 million in assets from him, including \$4.7 million in cash from a safe that was moved around various locations.

He pleaded guilty to 20 charges of criminal breach of trust and 10 charges of money laundering. Another 34 charges were considered by the High Court during sentencing.

The other mastermind, Juandi Pungot, who was then 45 years old, [was sentenced to 29 years' jail in 2022](#) for his role in the largest marine fuel heist in Singapore's history.

Juandi had pleaded guilty to 20 charges of criminal breach of trust, 10 money laundering charges and six corruption charges.

Latif and Juandi both admitted that they began misappropriating fuel in 2007, when they were working in the same team.

The stolen oil was loaded onto a bunker ship, in deals brokered through a middleman.

The two men went on to expand the criminal enterprise by recruiting other members for their team.

In early 2013, Latif left the team after a falling-out with the other syndicate members.

That year, Latif accepted Shell's offer of re-employment, and was transferred to another team.

Latif then started a new syndicate by recruiting Richard Goh Chee Keong, who planned the illegal loadings with him.

Goh then recruited Ng Chee Seng. Ng later decided to stop the criminal activities, and was replaced in May 2015 by Mohd Ibrahim K. Abdul Majid.

Latif continued his illegal operations, separate from Juandi, until their arrests in 2018.

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Each illegal loading began with the brokering of a deal to sell misappropriated fuel.

The vessels that received the stolen oil included those owned by Singapore companies Sentek Marine & Trading and Sirius Marine, and Vietnamese entity Prime Shipping Corporation.

Using various methods to evade detection, the rogue employees worked together to route the gas oil from tanks onto the vessels.

They carefully planned routes in the pipelines to bypass meters, and activated pumps at the same time to mask the theft.

Where the meters could not be avoided, they temporarily tampered with them so that the illegal outflow would not be recorded.

Team members not involved in the illicit activities were encouraged to take longer breaks, and bribes were paid to bunker surveyors to not accurately report the amount of cargo loaded onto the vessels.

In early 2015, Shell began observing significant unidentified oil loss at Pulau Bukom.

After investigations, the company made a police report on Aug 1, 2017.

Between 2014 and 2018, Juandi's syndicate siphoned 203,403 tonnes of gas oil worth nearly \$128 million.

Latif's group misappropriated 153,996 tonnes of gas oil, valued at about \$100 million.

He spent his ill-gotten gains on a condominium unit in Braddell Road and two properties in Indonesia.

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Latif bought at least three cars: a Mercedes-Benz E63 AMG S sedan, a Mercedes-Benz AMG E43M and a BMW 435i Gran Coupe M Sport.

He also invested money in a few businesses and funded the education for his two nephews in Australia.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Ben Tan proposed a sentence of 25 to 27 years' jail for Latif, arguing that his culpability was similar to that of Juandi.

Latif's lawyer, Mr Justin Ng, sought 22 years' jail, arguing that the scale of the scheme carried out by his client was significantly smaller than that carried out by Juandi.

The lawyer added that his client will be consenting to the forfeiture of his seized properties to the state.

Latif was allowed to defer the start of his sentence to Sept 30.

Goh's and Ibrahim's cases are pending.

The other rogue employees have been sentenced to jail terms ranging from one year and four months to 26½ years.

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