

Charged with forgery after 30 years on the run

A former Housing Board officer evaded the law for 30 years, fleeing Singapore after allegedly committing forgery here in 1987.

But the law finally caught up with him last Thursday in Seremban, Negeri Sembilan, and he was sent back to Singapore.

Malaysian Hew Chong Wai, now 53, who was a housing-and-maintenance inspector, was charged in court here yesterday with 128 counts of forgery.

He allegedly committed the offences at the Clementi West Area Office between Feb 9 and March 11, 1987.

He is accused of forging HDB Works Orders by signing on the "checked by" and "approved by" columns of the documents.

This led the HDB to believe that the jobs stated in the orders had been checked and approved by two of its other officers—then-senior housing and maintenance inspector Chan Sin Chan and then-senior estates officer Ching

Toong Hon.

According to a media release by the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB), Hew fled Singapore before he could be charged with his offences.

The Malaysian authorities arrested him last Thursday after their officers located him in Seremban. He was handed over to CPIB officers in Kuala Lumpur the next day.

CPIB said it takes a serious view of any corrupt and criminal practices and will not hesitate to take action against offenders involved in such acts.

It added: "Singapore adopts a zero-tolerance approach towards corruption and criminal activities."

No bail was offered to Hew and he will be back in court on May 26.

For each count of forgery, he can be jailed up to seven years and fined.

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