

'He said he'd give me everything he had'

Corporal Abdul Hakim Abdul Razak vividly recalls the first time he was offered a bribe.

It was December 2013, he was aged 23 and working as an Immigration and Checkpoints Authority officer.

A man who stopped his car at the Woodlands Checkpoint did not have his passport. The standard protocol in such a situation was to search him and his vehicle.

Cpl Hakim found a sachet of a white powdery substance and the man offered him RM500 (S\$170) to not detain him.

"He sounded really desperate. He said he would give me everything he had if I dropped the case," said Cpl Hakim, who turns 26 this year. "But I warned him that it was wrong to bribe an officer on duty."

He referred the man to Sergeant Tan Jian Bao from the Central Narcotics Bureau, who was also on duty at the checkpoint.

The man then offered Sgt Tan RM800 to close an eye to what was clearly a drug offence. Said Sgt Tan: "It was only later that I found out the man had offered both Hakim and me a bribe."



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Sgt Tan (at far left) and Cpl Hakim yesterday received commendation plaques. They refused bribes from a man at Woodlands Checkpoint who was later found guilty of drug charges. ST PHOTO: MARK CHEONG

He added: "In the course of my work, it is quite common for people to offer me and my fellow officers bribes. We have to warn them that doing it is against the law."

Yesterday, both men were commended for refusing bribes. They received commendation plaques from Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong.

The man who offered the bribes was found guilty of corruption and drug charges, and was jailed for 13 months in 2013.

Pearl Lee