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Vice-chairman of Peng Chau Rural Committee sentenced for misleading ICAC officer

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A vice-chairman of the Peng Chau Rural Committee (RC), charged by the ICAC, was today (Thursday) sentenced to three months' imprisonment, suspended for 12 months, at Eastern Magistracy for knowingly misleading an ICAC officer by giving false information in relation to the rental receipts of a property of the Peng Chau RC.

Wong Hoi-yue, 83, was found guilty of one count of knowingly misleading an ICAC officer, contrary to Section 13(B)(b) of the ICAC Ordinance.

In sentencing, Magistrate Mr Jason Wan Siu-ming said the defendant was convicted because the testimony given by all prosecution witnesses in the trial was credible.

The magistrate added that a suspended sentence was imposed on the defendant, taking into account various factors, including his old age as well as his background.

The court heard that in 2009, the ICAC conducted an investigation into a district councillor accused of having defrauded the Islands District Council (IDC) of the allowances by using false rental receipts in respect of a property of the Peng Chau RC in Peng Chau Wing On Street.

Enquiries revealed that there were 49 applications submitted to IDC by the district councillor between March 2003 and March 2007 for reimbursement of the rentals in respect of the property as his ward office. Each of the applications was supported by a rental receipt signed by the defendant as an executive member of the Peng Chau RC.

The court heard that on November 26, 2009, the defendant was approached by ICAC officers for verifying the receipts and was shown photocopies of 47 receipts in question. Subsequently, the defendant signed a witness statement to state that he had never signed on those rental receipts.

ICAC enquiries, however, revealed that three witnesses, including the then secretary of Peng Chau RC and two councillor assistants, had on different occasions witnessed the defendant signing on the rental receipts.

The forensic examination by the Government Laboratory concluded that 48 out of the 49 signatures on the receipts in question were signed by the defendant, the court was told.

The prosecution was today represented by Senior Public Prosecutor Richard Ma, assisted by ICAC officer Patrick Tang.

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