

CASE INVOLVING MP'S MOTHER-IN-LAW TO END TODAY

Questions raised over alleged oral agreement in S\$1m suit

SINGAPORE – One lawyer was not present for part of a mediation session where an oral agreement was allegedly made forbidding Ms Wendy Chan from publicly speaking of her stepmother Eleanor Tan and her family, and could not confirm the existence of such an agreement. Another lawyer testified

that he had observed that Ms Chan, 49, was exhorted not to upset her stepmother, but said the open exchange had been parting words between lawyers and he was not at liberty to decide if it had a binding effect.

These details emerged under questioning from defence lawyer Wendell

Wong yesterday on the second day of a High Court civil hearing, as he sought to show that Ms Chan did not breach the alleged oral agreement when she commented about West Coast GRC Member of Parliament Foo Mee Har — the daughter-in-law of Madam Tan — on a 2012 Channel NewsAsia forum.

Case background

● The dispute stems from Ms Wendy Chan's breach of a S\$1 million agreement with her stepmother Eleanor Tan in 2011, which forbade her to speak publicly of Madam Tan and her family. A second agreement, a result of the mediation, was later signed, such that Ms Chan was only not allowed to publish any defamatory or scandalous remarks against Mdm Tan and her family on the Internet. However, Ms Chan's comments on the Channel NewsAsia forum in October 2012 on a parliamentary question by Member of Parliament, Foo Mee Har, Mdm Tan's daughter-in-law, led Mdm Tan to file an injunction to set aside the second agreement, claiming that she had breached an oral agreement not to publicly talk about her family.

Lawyer Soo Lup Soon testified that he had not been present after the mediation session in September that year broke for lunch and that there were also instances he was not privy to as the lead solicitors of Mdm Tan, 79, and Ms Chan negotiated the terms among themselves. Mr Soo had been part of the legal team representing Mdm Tan at the mediation session. His absence, and the fact that there were discussions he did not hear, were not declared in his affidavit, prompting Mr Wong to suggest that Mr Soo had been "a little casual" in his sworn statement, to which Mr Soo disagreed.

Also testifying yesterday was lawyer Philip Ling, who previously represented Ms Chan. He told the court that while he agreed that the binding terms between the parties were encapsulated in the written agreement, the lawyers present at the mediation did make "general exhortations" to Ms Chan not to "cross the line" and upset her mother.

The exchange could have given Mdm Tan's lawyers the impression that there was a side agreement, but it was clear to him that it was not along the lines of Ms Chan not being able to "go on to the computer and you can't type anything", he said.

Under cross-examination, Ms Chan defended her decision to comment on the forum, saying she had been defending Ms Foo when someone called her a bimbo and that her mention of Ms Foo's employment at Standard Chartered was public knowledge.

The hearing is expected to end today. **ASHLEY CHIA**



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Public asked to watch out for fake S\$1,000 notes

SINGAPORE – The police have issued an alert to the public after three cases of counterfeit S\$1,000 notes were reported in the past year.

The reports were made from March last year, the police said in a statement yesterday. Two counterfeit notes were received by a member of the public outside Singapore and another two were received by two businesses.

Each of the four counterfeit notes bears a nine-character alphanumeric identification reference, "2AB6585xx", and has simulated security features, including a watermark, kinegram and security thread.

Unlike genuine notes, the surface of the counterfeit notes is waxy.

Members of the public who suspect that they have received a counterfeit currency note should call the police immediately and delay the person who presented the suspected fake note, if possible. They should also limit the handling of the suspected note and place it in a protective covering, such as an envelope, to prevent any tampering, and hand it over to the police.

● **Anyone with information on the reported counterfeit cases** can call the police hotline at 1800 255 0000 or submit the information online at www.spf.gov.sg/CrimeStopper. All information received will be kept strictly confidential.

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