

# The Straits Times INTERACTIVE

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NPARKS' APPROVAL NOT SOUGHT

## Firm in court over felled tree

PROPERTY management company DTZ Debenham Tie Leung has been charged with felling a rare tree in a gazetted conservation area.

Under the Parks and Trees Act, it is a crime to fell a tree with a girth of more than one metre without the permission of the National Parks Board (NParks).

The Hopea sangal tree, which was chopped down on Nov 20 last year, was one such tree.

In addition, the 150-year-old tree was thought to have been the last of its species in Singapore.

The tree was growing on a piece of state land behind 46 Halton Road, bounded by Upper Changi Road North and Changi Village.

The Hopea sangal, commonly known as the Chengal Pasir or Chengal Mata Kuching, is believed to have given the Changi area its name.

DTZ is expected to plead guilty next month for flouting the Parks and Trees Act. If convicted, it can be fined up to \$10,000.

It had said that the 35 m-tall tree was infested with termites and posed a great danger to public safety.

The tree had also been struck by lightning and was leaning towards some of DTZ's occupied houses, the company said.

Notwithstanding, in a letter published in The Straits Times' Forum Page, DTZ said it accepted full responsibility for felling the tree without NParks' approval.

Seedlings collected from the tree before it was cut down are growing at the NParks nursery and will be planted at suitable sites in the next couple of years.



According to DTZ, the Hopea sangal tree was infested with termites and posed a great danger to public safety.

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