

Jail for man who attacked taxi driver

By **ELENA CHONG**
COURT CORRESPONDENT

A SALES executive who punched a cabby in the face for refusing to take him in his taxi was jailed for four weeks yesterday.

Goh Yong Hock, 23, had a bunch of keys in his clenched fist when he hit 37-year-old cabby Bernard Chan Yew Luin a few times – leaving him with permanent scarring.

He and co-accused Tiong Hin Yang, 22, had flagged Mr Chan's taxi on River Valley Road at about 2.50am on Aug 8 last year.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Chee Ee Ling said Mr Chan declined to take them because he was changing shifts and going a different way.

The duo kicked his rear passenger door as he drove off and banged on the boot of the taxi.

Mr Chan stopped and got out to confront the duo. Tiong suddenly punched him on the right cheek while Goh hit him in the head and face with the keys held exposed in his right hand. The victim tried to block off the attacks, to no avail.

Tiong was about to use a torchlight to hit the victim when a passer-by stopped him. He then got into a fight with the stranger, who pinned him to the ground until the police arrived.

Mr Chan suffered cuts to his face and head.

Tiong, also a sales executive, has been jailed for six months for the attack and other charges.

Goh's lawyer Raphael Louis said his client suffered injuries after he was punched in the face and body many times.

He said the cabby had a chokehold on his client up to the time when the police arrived. Goh had made compensation amounting to \$3,686 to the victim for his medical expenses.

District Judge Ng Peng Hong said a jail sentence was warranted to send a message that the courts take a harsh stance on such conduct in Singapore.

Goh could have been jailed for up to two years and/or fined up to \$5,000 for voluntarily causing hurt.

✉ elena@sph.com.sg