

# HOME.



It was not the first time Mr Kalastree, 61, who will receive an award tomorrow, had caught a thief. He caught one in 1983 when he was 36 years old. ST PHOTO: LIM WUI LIANG

## **ACTION:** Fast-thinking hero to get award

LIKE a scene from an action movie, it began with a car chase and ended in a headlock.

In the process, Mr Ponso Kalastree, 61, managing director of Mainguard Security Services, nabbed a young, athletic snatch thief.

For his public spiritedness, he will be presented with an award tomorrow by the Security Association of Singapore (SAS) at its 32nd anniversary dinner at the Orchid Country Club.

Mr Kalastree was driving home at 9.30pm on July 6 when he saw a snatch theft in progress along Haig Road.

He heard a woman scream, then saw a man running away with her handbag.

Without hesitating, he hit the accelerator and drove after the thief. A short distance later, he stopped the car, hopped out, and ran after the thief.

"The thief may have thought no one would come to the victim's aid in time but I wanted to prove him wrong," said the father of two.

When the thief climbed into a house in Thiam Siew Avenue, Mr Kalastree followed, hoisting his 87kg frame over the 2m-high main gate and pursuing him to

the back of the house.

As the thief tried to climb over the fence into a neighbouring garden, Mr Kalastree grabbed him by the leg.

He recalled: "There was a chopper in the garden. The thief could have reached for it and caused me great harm."

But he finally overpowered the thief and got him in a headlock.

He then asked another motorist, who had driven up to help, to remove the thief's belt and tie his legs with it.

After that he called the police. The thief has since been jailed for two years.

Back in 1983, aged 36, Mr Kalastree had jumped out of his car and pinned down a snatch thief in Scotts Road. That act also led to the thief's arrest and conviction. For that, Mr Kalastree was commended by the police commissioner.

In all, about 20 security officers, managers and security agencies will receive SAS awards for outstanding performance tomorrow. The guest of honour will be Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Manpower Hawazi Daipi.

**KHUSHWANT SINGH**