

# Family sues over HK tourist's death

Man died after structure erected for festival fell on him

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THE family of a Hong Kong tourist who died after a marquee structure fell on him last year is suing those allegedly responsible for more than \$1.5 million.

Bank manager Andy Chui, 34, was taking photographs and walking along Raffles Avenue in May last year, when the structure toppled and landed on him.

He suffered severe brain damage and other injuries, was certified brain dead and taken off life support five days later.

The 5m-high structure erected in Raffles Avenue, near the junction of Raffles and Temasek avenues, had an aluminium frame with plywood signboards displaying an advertisement for the Audi Fashion Festival to be held in the area.

Investigations showed that the structure which fell on Mr Chui was put up just before the event. But no inspection of it was done by a professional engineer, unlike the five initial structures that had been certified safe.

The additional structure was completed on May 13 at about 5am. Within two hours, plywood cladding in the form of signboards were attached to it by subcontractor Right-Space.

The cladding was 6m high and 11m wide, with an opening of about 5m high and 10m wide.

Right-Space had been hired by event organiser Mercury Events to work on structures like wooden hoardings and a catwalk.

A coroner's inquiry last December found that the structure had not been properly erected and was unstable at the time of the incident.

The dead man's father, Mr Chui Hin Sum, 63, is suing Mercury Events, as well as its subcon-



This 5m-high structure toppled and landed on bank manager Andy Chui last year as he was walking along Raffles Avenue. His family is suing those allegedly responsible for more than \$1.5 million. PHOTO: ANDY CHUI'S FAMILY

tractors Lian Yick Metal Tents and Right-Space for alleged negligence which caused the death.

A High Court pre-trial conference was held on Thursday.

At issue is which of the three parties are liable, if at all, and how the court will apportion blame before damages are assessed.

Lian Yick was hired by Mercury to build the marquee structure while Right-Space installed the plywood cladding on the structure.

Mr Chui is seeking aggravated and exemplary damages of \$1 million, in addition to dependency claims as well as other costs.

His lawyer Cosmas Gomez claims the parents have lost their means of support following the son's death, among other things.

Mercury's lawyer K. Anparas-an argues that the firm took rea-

sonable care in appointing competent and independent subcontractors.

Lian Yick, defended by lawyer M. P. Rai, counters that the structure would not have toppled if it had not been materially interfered with, in court documents filed.

They said the marquee structure was handed to Mercury, after which Right-Space wrapped plywood claddings around it.

In defence papers filed, Lian Yick argued that the fixations to secure the structure had been released and re-fixed by the third party and they were not informed or requested to review its safety.

Right-Space, through lawyer Montague Choy, has filed notice to state their case and is expected to file their defence by next month.

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