

**Feb 21, 2006**

**TAMPINES BICYCLE BARRIERS**

## **Paralysed man sues LTA over barrier crash**

**Claim estimates lifelong treatment to be \$700,000**

**By Selina Lum**

A 40-YEAR-OLD father of two, paralysed from the neck down after he cycled into a barrier at a pedestrian bridge in Tampines, has filed a lawsuit against the [Land Transport Authority \(LTA\)](#).

Mr Koh Liep Hang is seeking damages for, among other things, pain and suffering, loss of earnings and medical treatment costs.

In a suit filed in the High Court last week, he alleged that LTA was responsible for the accident that took place at about 6.45am last July 13.

No figure has been put to the damages he is claiming, which is to be assessed by the court. But documents filed with his claim estimated the cost of lifelong medical treatment alone to be \$700,000.

Mr Koh has two school-going children aged eight and 10. Before the accident, he was the sole breadwinner, earning about \$1,900 a month as an operations support officer at a polytechnic.

When contacted, an LTA spokesman confirmed that it had been issued a writ of summons. 'We have referred the matter to the insurers and they are looking into this. As such, it would not be appropriate for us to comment,' said the spokesman.

Mr Koh's statement of claim, filed by his lawyer, Mr Leonard Loo of Leonard Loo & Co, says the accident occurred on the bridge near Block 495F, Tampines Street 43.

Mr Koh was coming down the slope of the bridge on his bicycle when he slammed into a barrier put up by the LTA.

The barrier was erected only at one end of the bridge. There was no barrier on the other end when he went up the bridge.

Mr Koh claims that LTA's negligence caused the accident. He alleges that the barrier's design was flawed.

There were no warning signs or speed reduction devices installed, he said.

His other claims: There was inadequate lighting around the barrier. Neither was it coated with bright paint nor reflective markings.

Mr Koh claims that LTA failed to supervise the proper installation of the barrier and failed to inform the Tampines Transport Committee earlier that it was putting up the barriers.

As a result, when he went up one end of the bridge, he could not have 'reasonably foreseen' that

there was a barrier erected at the other end, it is claimed.

The barrier was later sawn off by a contractor engaged by Mr Ong Kian Min, MP for Tampines GRC.

The accident left Mr Koh a tetraplegic, for which he requires lifelong treatment.

He also faces possible complications including infection to the urinary tract and lungs, osteoporosis and fractures.

Speaking to The Straits Times through their lawyer, Mr Koh's wife, who did not want to be named, said: 'I hope that LTA can resolve the matter quickly.'

[\*\*mailto:%20selinal@sph.com.sg\*\*](mailto:%20selinal@sph.com.sg)