

Subway to compensate man over injury

A man left paralyzed after being crushed by fellow passengers on a Beijing subway train has been awarded 260,000 yuan (\$37,700) in compensation, a court said on Wednesday.

The Changping District People's Court ruled that Beijing Subway, which operates the line, was 20 percent responsible for the accident that left the plaintiff, identified only as Liu, in need of 24-hour care.

Liu attempted to board a subway train on Line 5 at Tiantongyuan North Station at about 7 p.m. on Jan. 15, 2014, when he was crushed in a surge of passengers.

The then-56-year-old fell unconscious on the train, "but the rush hour crowd did not pay any attention to him, let alone help him", according to his lawyer, Liu Yongfei.

"My client was not sent to hospital until the train arrived at Lishuiqiao, three stations later, which is when subway workers spotted him on surveillance cameras," he said. Although similar cases caused by overcrowding at Chinese subway stations are not rare, the attorney said, "the injury suffered by my client can be said to be the most serious and tragic."

The victim, who worked at an advertising company and had previously complained of neck problems, was hospitalized for 765 days after the accident, "and even now he cannot stand up and have a meal by himself", Liu said. "He cannot live by himself."

Considering the seriousness of the injury, the man's family appealed to the court in early 2015, requesting the metro company pay 1.9 million yuan in compensation, including medical fees and loss of income for the man's absence from work, according to Liu.

In February 2015, the court accepted the case. It made the judgment at the end of last year and disclosed the verdict online to receive public supervision on March 30.

In the judgment, the court said the subway company, as the regulator of the system, should take more security measures to protect passengers during rush hour.

"Although the litigant's injuries were not directly caused by the metro operator, the case highlighted a lack of protection and security measures for passengers, and the company did not provide enough evidence to prove it had fulfilled its responsibility at the time," said Huang Ying, the judge in charge of the case.

Therefore, the court decided to ask the company to claim 20 percent of the responsibility in the case and pay compensation to the victim, Huang said.

The court said the 260,000 yuan was to cover three years of medical fees and that the plaintiff can ask for further compensation in line with the law if he needs to in the future, the attorney added.

The litigant and his family were satisfied with the result and said they would not appeal to a higher court, Liu said.