

Perfume factory owner in court for 11 deaths in Al Quoz fire

Owner of Al Quoz business pleads not guilty before Dubai court.

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Dubai: A perfume factory owner and manager has pleaded innocent and denied, in court on Sunday, the charge of being responsible for 11 deaths during a fire in August.

The 30-year-old Indian owner and manager of a perfume factory pleaded not guilty when he defended himself before the Dubai Misdemeanor Court on Sunday.

Chief Prosecutor Sami Al Shamsi, Head of Bur Dubai Prosecution, said in a media statement yesterday: "The suspect has been charged with causing the accidental death of 11 victims in the fire, which destroyed the perfume factory in Al Quoz Industrial Area. We referred him to the Misdemeanors Court for being liable for the 11 workers' death."

Illegal residents

"During primary investigations, he admitted that the workers had been residing illegally in the factory's upper floor since six months before the fire... the defendant alleged that he discovered, by chance, that the workers had been staying in the upper floor when he tried to store empty perfume bottles in that floor," Al Shamsi said.

Court appearance

Sources close to the case told Gulf News that the suspect, O.Y., will reappear in court next Sunday.

Al Shamsi said the defendant claimed [during questioning] that he discovered that the victims were staying in the upper floor, coincidentally, after he received a consignment of empty perfume bottles. "When he couldn't store the bottles in the factory's underground, he went up to the upper floor where he found the workers residing. He alleged that he asked them to leave the place but they didn't because they didn't find a cheaper rent," said Al Shamsi.