

Singapore

Woman dies after being trapped under fallen tree at Marsiling Park



Uniformed officers and landscape workers examining the fallen tree at Marsiling Park. (Photo: Hanidah Amin)

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SINGAPORE: A woman was killed on Thursday (Feb 18) after she was trapped under a fallen tree at Marsiling Park.

The police said they received a call for assistance at about 8.15am and found the 38-year-old woman “lying motionless” at the scene.

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The Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF), who was also alerted at the same time, found a person trapped under a fallen tree upon arriving at 20 Woodlands Centre Road.



Part of the fallen tree was submerged in the pond. (Photo: Hanidah Amin)

SCDF officers used “cutting equipment” to extricate the trapped person, who was then pronounced dead at the scene by an SCDF paramedic.

The police are investigating the unnatural death.

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When CNA visited the site on Thursday afternoon, the fallen tree had not been removed and part of it was still submerged in the pond. The paths leading to the site were also cordoned off.

Uniformed officers and landscape workers were seen examining the fallen tree.



View of the scene of the incident at Marsiling Park on Feb 18, 2021. (Photo: Hanidah Amin)

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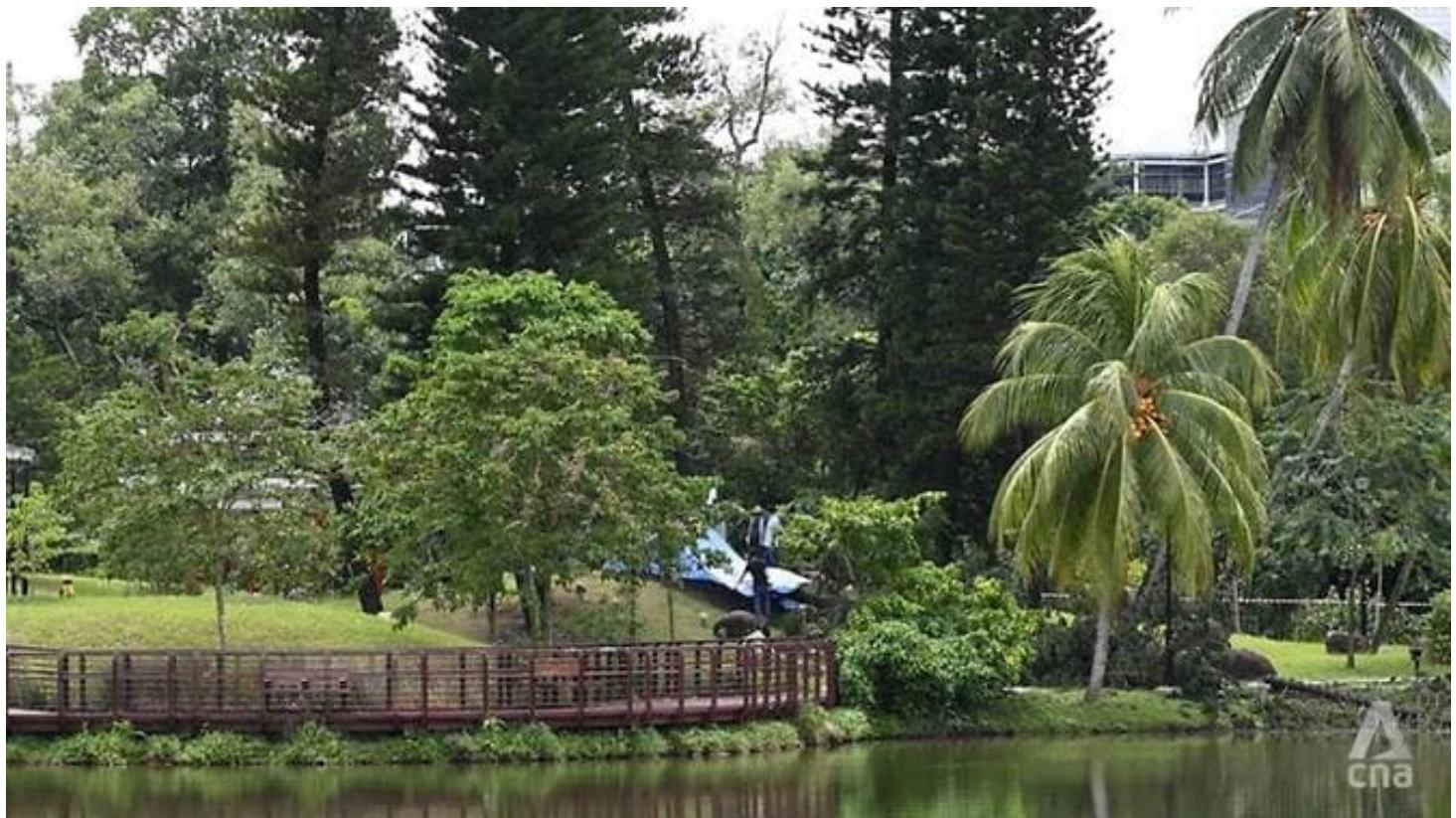


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A 15-year-old eyewitness, Kayden Teo, said he was on a nearby bridge in the morning when he heard “a very loud splash”.

H said he turned to see a fallen tree in the water that was about the same height as some of the tallest trees in the park.

A passer-by then began calling for help, said the teen, which is when he noticed a woman in exercise clothes trapped under the tree.



A cover is placed over the fallen tree at Marsiling Park, Feb 18, 2021. (Photo: Hanidah Amin)

Another eyewitness, 17-year-old Damien Chua, said 10 to 15 people tried to lift the tree, breaking off its branches in an attempt to make it lighter.

But they could not lift it high enough to pull the woman from under it, he said. "She was still conscious when I saw her ... She was gasping for air," said Damien.

Passers-by were then asked to leave the scene when emergency personnel arrived, added Kayden.

In a statement, the National Parks Board (NParks) said it is investigating the cause of the tree fall.

The 20m-tall Araucaria excelsa tree was last inspected in April 2020 and found to be healthy, it added.

"We are sad that there was one fatality," said NParks. "Our priority now is to accord assistance to the family of the deceased."

In a Facebook post on Thursday, MP Zaqy Mohamad (PAP-Marsiling-Yew Tee) said that while investigations are ongoing, he has asked NParks to check and review the conditions of the trees and the safety of the facilities in the area.

 "As a user of the park too, it is important that we do our utmost to ensure safety of all users of Marsiling Park," he said.

Mr Zaqy said he was "truly saddened by this unfortunate accident".

"Our hearts and deepest sympathies are with the family, a resident of Marsiling-Yew Tee GRC," he said, adding that he would work with MP Hany Soh (PAP-Marsiling-Yew Tee) to provide any support and assistance needed by the family.

The woman, identified as Ms Loke Xiao Li Dag, was a Mediacorp employee.

"We are deeply saddened by the passing of our colleague, Loke Xiao Li, Dag. We have reached out to her family to offer our condolences and support," said Mediacorp in a statement.

A senior technical coordinator at CNA studio, Ms Loke has worked for Mediacorp for almost six years.

"She was someone that many of her team-mates and colleagues looked up to," the company said. "We are also providing support to our staff who are affected by this tragic loss."

BOTANIC GARDENS INCIDENT

In February 2017, a woman was killed by a falling tree (</news/singapore/tembusu-tree-accident-inquiry-ends-botanic-gardens-10146002>) at the Singapore Botanic Gardens.

Ms Radhika Angara, her husband Mr Jerome Rouch-Sirech and their then-11-month-old twins were attending a public concert at the gardens when the incident occurred.

Ms Angara, 38, was pinned down by the tree and later died in hospital, with a subsequent coroner's inquiry ruling that her death was a tragic misadventure (</news/singapore/tembusu-tree-accident-death-of-woman-a-tragic-misadventure-says-10188628>).

Her husband has sued NParks for damages (</news/singapore/husband-woman-killed-tembusu-tree-botanic-gardens-sues-nparks-12594220>). In documents seen by CNA, Mr Rouch-Sirech claims that NParks' negligence led to the collapse of the Tembusu tree.

Source: CNA/zl(rw)

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