

'King of cranes' ordered to pay another \$48M to families of 2 men killed in 2008 accident

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NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

Monday, August 3, 2015, 12:46 PM

[Jefferson Siegel/for New York Daily News](#)

Donald Leo (l.), 30, and Ramadan Kurtaj, 27, died in the E. 91st St. crane collapse.

A Manhattan jury has smacked the so-called "king of cranes" [with another \\$48 million verdict](#) on Monday — bringing the total of amount of damages James Lomma has to pay for a deadly 2008 crane collapse to over \$96 million.

The six-person jury on the longest trial in the history of Manhattan Supreme Court found Lomma and his companies have to [pay \\$48 million](#) in punitive damages to the families of Donald Leo, 30, and [Ramadan Kurtaj, 27](#).

The punitive damages will be split between the crane king and his firms, NY Crane & Equipment and James F. Lomma Inc. Lomma, personally, will have to pay \$29.2 million of the punitive penalties.



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Selvi Sinanovic, the widow of Ramadan Kurtaj, leaves court after a jury awarded punitive damages to the

victims' families.

The jury got a standing ovation from the lawyers, court personnel and family members.

"You have truly gone above and beyond the call of duty in this matter," Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Mendez told them.

He said there were originally 12 jurors sitting — six regular and six alternates — when the trial started in October of 2014. Only one alternate was left by the end of the grueling 10 1/2 month trial.

Lawyers from both sides also thanked the jurors.

"You've inspired us. It's been a long seven years," Susan Karten, the lawyer for Kurtaj, told them.

"The result is perhaps not what I wanted but you exemplify what makes our system work," Glenn Fuerth, Lomma's lawyer, told them.





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**Lawyers for the victims argued "king of cranes"
James Lomma was to blame for their deaths because
he had a key piece of the crane repaired on the cheap
in China.**

Mendez agreed to sign a court order requested by the plaintiffs' lawyers to freeze the assets of Lomma personally and those corporations affected by the verdict, James F. Lomma Inc and NY Crane & Equipment.

The jury awarded the Leo and Kurtaj families \$48 million in damages last week.

Their lawyers said Lomma was to blame for E. 91st St. crane collapse because he had a key piece of the crane repaired on the cheap in China.

Lomma was previously acquitted of criminal charges stemming from the collapse.

His lawyers have said they'd appeal.