

# Barred City

POLICE are taking action against Hongkong's newest nightclub complex — Bar City — for allegedly selling liquor without a valid licence.

Bar City's licensee, Mrs Mary Chan, niece of "nightclub king" Francis Tsai, is to appear in court at a later date to answer a summons.

Chief Inspector R.J. Best of the police licensing branch told The STAR the maximum penalty for such an offence is a \$100,000 fine and two years imprisonment.

And Mr Tsai hit out at what he called Hongkong's "out-dated" licensing laws, which he described as "a waste of time and money."

Mr Tsai said the 20,000-square-foot complex of seven nightspots in Tsimshatsui's New World Centre will be open as usual, despite the summons, but would

probably serve only soft drinks.

The summons was served on Mrs Chan after the Urban Services Department said Bar City's liquor licence was invalid.

A USD spokesman said Bar City was granted a liquor licence last year in an uncontested case, and also applied for a light refreshment restaurant licence.

"The liquor licence was issued on condition that it would not be valid until a restaurant licence was issued," he said.

"They have not fulfilled all the requirements for a restaurant licence, so it has not yet been issued.

"So technically speaking the liquor licence is not valid."

The Public Works Department's Building Ordinance Office also said plans for Bar City's lavatories and kitchens have not yet been approved by the Building Authority.

"Bar City has submitted plans to the PWD, and these are being processed," said a spokesman.

"These are in addition to the approved plans, and have not yet been approved by the Building Authority."

He could not say when the plans would be approved.

Mr Tsai told The STAR his liquor licence was endorsed so it would not be valid without a restaurant licence.

Since Bar City does not actually serve any kind of cooked food, applying for a restaurant licence was just part of the procedure for obtaining a liquor licence, he said.

"Why should a businessman suffer just because he has to obtain a restaurant licence for which he has no use?" he asked.

**CONTINUED Page 2**

# Barred City

CONTINUED

"I think the law in Hongkong should be updated."

"It is a waste of time and money to get a restaurant licence just to obtain a liquor licence, when the licensee does not sell cooked food."

He said Bar City applied for a restaurant licence about a year ago, and its granting has been delayed because of delays in building the New World Centre.

"Anything which affected the building also affected us as tenants."

"We have to employ over-

200 people in Bar City, who have all left their previous jobs.

"Half their income is from tips, and therefore we were sort of compelled to operate so they could earn their livelihood."

He said the Urban Services Department would send a team as soon as possible to check on the hygiene requirements for a restaurant licence.

"And as soon as those requirements are approved I will get my restaurant licence, and the liquor licence will be validated."