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# RM138m more for loan scheme

By Nurazlina Ismail

**SHAH ALAM, Thurs:** The government has approved an addition of RM138 million for the Tekun loan scheme because of overwhelming response from small entrepreneurs.

Funding for the scheme, given to small entrepreneurs since 1999, was initially RM150 million.

A total of RM109 million has been approved as loans to 32,220 applicants to date.

Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri Aziz said

the balance of RM41 million is not enough to cater to the needs of the applicants.

He said the addition of RM138 million was approved by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad recently.

"We hope to get the extra money by the end of this year as many applications have been pouring in," Nazri said after giving out the loans to 95 recipients here last night.

The event was organised by the Shah Alam Community Development Centre under the guidance of Shah Alam MP, Datuk Mohd Zin Mohamed.

At the event, the Selangor Wives Charity Body (Balkis) also awarded scholarships to four students from institutions of higher learning and gave out financial aid to four victims of fires in Shah Alam.

Nazri said he hopes the loan scheme can help reduce the entrepreneurs' dependence on illegal money-lenders who charge high interests on loans.

"Although we can't totally eliminate illegal money lenders, what we can do is to help entrepreneurs obtain loans without any difficulties or conditions," he said.