

Widows who remarry can still get Socso pension payouts

STAR 12 NOV 2001

PETALING JAYA: Widows who remarry will be able to receive the Social Security Organisation (Socso) pension payments of their deceased partners under a review of present provisions.

Human Resources Minister Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn said this was in line with the Government's policy announced recently by the Prime Minister under the 2002 Budget.

"It (Socso) will have to follow the spirit of the Government's policy.

"We'll review the Socso Act to see if we should have to amend it, or maybe it'll only need an administrative change.

"We'll do it as soon as we can," he said after launching a quiz competition for Chinese national-type schools at the Nanyang Siang Pau Hall here on Saturday.

On Oct 19, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in his capacity as Finance Minister announced in his Budget speech that widows would continue to receive the pensions of their late husbands after they remarry, a move lauded by many of the women groups in the country.

At present, widows lose this benefit once they remarry.

Asked how much Socso would have to pay out every year for such pension payments, Dr Fong said it was still

too early to estimate the sum.

On plans to set up a retrenchment fund under Socso, Dr Fong said employers were presently not keen to establish it.

Asked if the Government would make it a requirement for employers to contribute to the fund, he said the ministry would "try gentle persuasion first."

Dr Fong also said he would arrange to meet with representatives from the National Union of Bank Employees over a memorandum containing demands that its former general secretary J. Solomon be reinstated and that an extraordinary delegates' conference be called to discuss the matter.