

# Residents' safety assured

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PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is confident that police will look after the safety of people in Kampung Medan and neighbouring areas off Old Klang Road.

Commenting on clashes in the area in the last three days, he said the situation was under control and people there should not be unduly worried.

"They (the clashes) were not planned. There were no racial clashes, but when people start spreading rumours that Indians are attacking Malays, then people come out and it (the clashes) happens.

"It will settle down. We assure the people that police will look after the situation and there will be no repeat of the incident," he told reporters after meeting the Sultan of Johor who visited the Federal Government's administrative capital here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir urged the press not to play up the matter as it was "just one incident."

Earlier, in Petaling Jaya, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi stressed that the situation "is now calm and under control."

"Police have been asked to carry out their tasks diligently

and ensure that security is maintained," Abdullah, who is also Home Minister, said after launching the Yayasan Salam Malaysia International Year of Volunteers programme.

MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu, who had two meetings with Deputy Inspector-General of Police Datuk Mohd Jamil Johari over the situation, said he was satisfied with efforts taken by police.

"Police have taken prompt and stringent steps to overcome the tense situation in the area and Jamil has promised to calm the situation," he said.

Samy Vellu added that po-

lice had been posted at "highly troubled pockets" in the area.

He also said that Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Khir Toyo had requested a meeting with residents of the areas on Thursday.

"I will be there with the menteri besar for the dialogue with the residents," he said.

Later, at the University Malaya Medical Centre's emergency ward, Samy Vellu broke into tears when confronted by family members of K. Muneirethnam, who died after being attacked in the area on his way home from work.

"Everyone is asking me

what to do. I can't do anything at the moment except to cry," said Samy Vellu.

Muneirethnam, 43, died at the medical centre yesterday.

The hotel worker was found in a pool of blood in Kampung Lindungan by ambulance workers at 4.30am.

His body had yet to be claimed by his wife and three children who were stranded in their house because police had directed residents in the area to stay indoors.

Samy Vellu said he would do everything possible to ensure the family carried out last rites for Muneirethnam.