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Aid for clash victims next week

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KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - The MIC will distribute the "compassionate aid" of RM265,000 which was approved by the Cabinet recently, to the four widows and 40 injured victims of the Kampung Medan clash, next week.

Its president, Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu, said the party would liaise with the National Unity and Social Development Ministry to fix a date for the disbursement.

"The aid will be given to four groups comprising the next of kin of those who died, those who cannot work as they are recuperating from their injuries whether serious or minor, and those who have already recovered from their injuries.

"The cheques are currently being prepared for the presentation ceremony next week," he said at the Ministry's excellent service award ceremony for 403 staff members today.

Widows of four Indians who died are expected to receive RM10,000 while the injured will receive between RM2,000 and RM3,000 each.

Those whose properties were damaged during the clash will also receive a specific amount.

In the Kampung Medan incident, six people including four Malaysian Indians, an Indian national and an Indonesian were killed while 40 others were injured in the clash between two groups.

Houses and other properties including motorcycles were either damaged or burnt.

Samy Vellu said the "compassionate aid" would help to reduce the financial burden of the victims and next of kin of those who had died in the clash.

"We hope they will put this dark episode behind them and continue with their lives."

The MIC president had forwarded a request for financial assistance to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in his capacity as Finance Minister.

It was subsequently approved by the Cabinet on June 27.

Samy Vellu, who is also Works Minister, said the Government had also built a proper access road to Kampung Medan and also provided street lighting and adequate water supply, for its residents.

On another note, he said the Government had completed 15 toll highways, was currently building three more highways and was in the midst of privatising 11 other new highway projects.

In addition, it is also privatising the maintenance of the Peninsular Malaysia road network to the private sector.

Samy said it was more practical to privatise the highway projects as this would guarantee a high quality of construction work and ensure they were completed on schedule.

The Government has allocated Rm18.6 billion for 627 road and highway projects under the Eighth Malaysia Plan.