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MP set on fire, man caught

MP FOR Yio Chu Kang Seng Han Thong is being treated at Singapore General Hospital (SGH) for burns after a man poured thinner on him and set him alight.

The Straits Times understands that Mr Seng was burnt on his face, neck and back.

The suspect, an elderly resident of the area, is believed to have poured the liquid on Mr Seng, 58, while he was at a grassroots event at Yio Chu Kang community club at about 11.45 am.

Another man, Mr Aw Swee Seng, the chairman of the nearby Chu Sheng Temple on Ang Mo Kio Street 61, was also burnt and sent to SGH.

More than 200 residents and senior citizens, who were having lunch at the community event, watched in horror as the suspect rushed up to Mr Seng with a bottle of liquid, said to be petrol, and poured it on the MP's back. He then lit it with a lighter, setting the MP's back on fire.

The fire also caught Mr Seng's hair. The temple chairman, who was standing next to the MP, quickly pushed the assailant away and was burnt on the neck and back.

The suspect tried to flee but was pinned down by several people and handed over to the police.

Mr Seng had just given out bursaries to students and financial handouts to needy elderly and was joining the gathering for lunch when he was attacked by the man, who is said to be in his late 60s.

Temple devotees said he was upset for not being eligible for the handout and carried out the act against the MP as 'a revenge'.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Senior Minister of State Sadasivan Balaji later visited Mr Seng at the hospital.

Mr Seng had been attacked before in July 2006 when he was punched in the face by an irate former cabby.

That previous incident took place during a Meet-the-People session at a PAP Community Foundation kindergarten at Block 644, Ang Mo Kio Avenue 4. Mr Seng was assaulted by a 74-year-old man who was angry with the MP for not helping him to get his revoked taxi licence reinstated.