

NEW YORK HIT-AND-RUN

Facebook fund raises \$13k for injured cyclist

Friends, schoolmates hope to raise more money for his medical expenses

By PEARL LEE

MORE than \$13,000 has been raised for the Singaporean cyclist left hospitalised after being hit by a getaway car in New York City earlier this month.

About 10 of Mr Al-Matin Mohamed's friends set up a Facebook group to raise funds for him and set up a special bank account.

The accident left 24-year-old Mr Al-Matin with serious injuries including head trauma, two broken legs, a fractured pelvis and a broken arm, reports said.

One of them, Mr Yang Sheng Chuan, 24, has been posting regular updates on the amount raised. As of yesterday morning, the total was \$13,440.99.

The Singapore Management University student told The Straits Times: "We started this fundraiser mainly to reach out to Matin's friends and schoolmates, but we have also received anonymous donations. Some of them just deposit the money into the bank account without contacting us to leave their names."

An aspiring pastry chef, Mr Al-Matin had moved to New York City about a month ago to train at leading seafood restaurant Le Bernardin.

He was cycling on East 29th Street on the morning of June 8 when a getaway car travelling in the wrong direction crashed into him.

Reports said the driver was escaping from the police following a violent robbery.

According to New York Daily News, the driver crashed the car into a building in Lexington Avenue but managed to escape and remains at large.

Mr Yang, who went to Commonwealth Secondary School and Anglo-Chinese Junior College with

Mr Al-Matin, told The Straits Times he had already met his father to hand him a portion of the money raised and will be meeting him again soon.

Mr Al-Matin's sister, Ms Nadiah Karina, 26, said in a Facebook posting that her brother has been "running a fever for a week now".

"All surgeries (will be) postponed until he is healthy again. He's been sedated since last week so I only saw him open his eyes once last Friday. He's also on a ventilator," said Ms Nadiah.

In a separate Facebook note on Wednesday, Mr Yang also rallied friends to donate to Mr Al-Matin.

"The medical expenses in New York are really expensive and the insurance coverage isn't a large amount.

"Let's aim to raise as much as \$20,000 if we can. The amount would really help Matin and his family cope with the expenses," he said.

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Mr Al-Matin, who is on a ventilator, has been running a fever for a week, said his sister, and all surgical operations have been postponed.

PHOTO: FACEBOOK