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`Do not be influenced by groups our to create unrest'

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - The Indian community was today cautioned against falling under the influence of groups out to create undue tension and racial unrest among Malaysians.

MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said the country's unity was the envy of many and these groups would go to any extent to disrupt the peace and harmony enjoyed here.

"I urge the community not to let themselves be influenced by these groups and be used as agents to disseminate lies and rumours," he said after presenting certificates and souvenirs to volunteers and organisations involved in programmes organised by Yayasan Strategik Sosial, the social arm of the MIC.

Samy Vellu was responding to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's warning yesterday to the Chinese community against supporting racial extremism as this may only force the Malays to turn to another form of extremism.

This, said the Prime Minister, would eventually lead to trouble among the races.

"Dr Mahathir's reminder was timely considering the country is progressing at such a rapid pace and there are groups, including extremists, who are trying to jeopardise this."

Also present were MIC vice-president Datuk S. Veerasingam and YSS executive director Dr Denison Jayasooria.

Earlier in his speech, Samy Vellu said in the last 14 months, YSS had organised 551 activities in 40 selected neighbourhoods.

YSS had recruited and trained more than 200 volunteers for these activities and also worked closely with 31 Indian-based organisations in the country.

"Most people are busy with their own careers and lives.

"Taking time off will bring a blessing, not only to the person in need but will also be therapeutic to us personally."