

Literary boost for language

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KUALA LUMPUR: MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu has urged Tamil writers to continue to come out with quality literary work which will help in preserving the Tamil language and culture.

"As long as there are literary works, there will be no danger of the language being forgotten," he said when launching the Tamil Writers Day here on Sunday.

More than 3,000 people including Tamil writers, poets and speakers from India attended the function, organised by the Bharathidasan Association of Malaysia for the ninth consecutive year.

Well-known South Indian actor Shivakumar and versatile comedian S.V. Sekhar were among those present.

"As long as there are people who have the interest of the language at heart, the Tamil language will continue to develop here," said Samy Vellu.

He chided certain quarters which had called for Tamil to be abolished, adding that such people were selfish.

National Land Finance Co-operative Society chairman Tan Sri K.R. Somasundram, Astro Vannavil head Dr Rajamani Chellamuthu and Sri Sruthi Mandram secretary Usha Ramakrishnan were honoured for their services to the community.

Several others - V.J. Joseph, D. Theresa and Thirukkural Manikkumar (artistes), veteran Tamil journalist P.L.K. Rajan, Dr C. Johnson, S. Revathy Jeevanathan and KJ. Narayanan (writers), K. Manithasan, Abdul

Rahman, and A. Chandran (poets) - were also honoured.

Meanwhile, in his foreword in the souvenir programme for the 2003 Tamil Writers Day, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad urged Tamil writers to play a proactive role through their writings to instil awareness among the people on the importance of preserving peace and unity.

He said the writers could also make meaningful contributions to the country's prosperity and well-being through their works.

Dr Mahathir also congratulated the association headed by Datin Seri Indrani Samy Vellu for organising the function to honour Tamil writers and poets for their contributions to society.