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Siti Hasmah: Youths must seek excellence

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Malaysian youths must strive for excellence and forge strong social relations among themselves, the patron of the Association of Former Maktab Rendah Sains Mara Students (Ansara) Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali said today.

By doing so, she said, the country's future would be secured.

"Our youths should realise that one day they will take over the country's leadership to steer the nation to greater heights," she said at the Ansara Carnival in Dataran Merdeka today.

She was accompanied by former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad and son Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir, who is Ansara president.

Dr Siti Hasmah was confident Malaysia's youngsters would achieve success if they worked hard.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah witnessed a three-minute performance of festive drums by seven students of Sekolah Sri Cempaka.

Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah were also approached by members of the public to have their pictures taken with them while others were happy to shake hands with them.

Visitors and children had a great time at the carnival.

For Daniel Kalam, 10, it was fun beating his younger brother Muhamad Dayan, eight, in chess.

Daniel's mother Nurina Van Oostrum, praised Ansara for organising the games for the children.

Siti Norhajar Megat Ahmad Roslan and Ainul Anuar Adam from the Malaysian Armed Forces Academy had a good time playing netball and street soccer.

Ansara members Rafidah Alias, 25, and Adzman Shah Mohd Ariffin, 36, were happy with the public's response to their programmes.

Rafidah said: "It is a great place to reunite with your old schoolmates and make new friends too. I am looking forward to be one of the volunteers should this event be held annually."

Adzman Shah said more people were expected to arrive later in the afternoon.

Meanwhile, Mukhriz said Ansara was confident of raising RM1 million under the National Telethon for Education 2004 by March 1.

"So far, we have collected about RM900,000."