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Malaysians should unite behind Dr M

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IT irks me when I read or see slanderous articles on Malaysia and its leaders in foreign magazines and news media.

Being a Malaysian medical houseman currently doing my internship in India, I have access to all these, but I am not convinced that they are telling the truth about Malaysia and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Dr Mahathir is a highly misunderstood figure in and outside the country but I stand firmly behind him because I believe that he knows best and that he will only do the best for Malaysia.

I met and spoke to the Prime Minister in New Delhi a couple of years ago when we were having some problems with our medical seats in India.

I was supposed to lead a student delegation to meet the PM and many discouraged me and said that Dr Mahathir was a "Malay ultra" and that he would not meet me and other 20-year-olds because he had better things to do.

But when I made arrangements to meet him in the midst of the G-15 summit and when he agreed to meet us at the Malaysian High Commission in India, many were surprised.

Dr Mahathir was deeply concerned regarding our woes and brought up the matter with his Indian counterpart.

He and Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi took us out for dinner and lunch on two separate occasions.

I was really shocked at the Prime Minister's warm hospitality contrary to all that I had heard about him ... he truly is a kind-hearted gentleman!

More than reformasi, I think the need of the hour is toleransi (tolerance).

Dr Mahathir still enjoys popular support within Malaysia. He has made Malaysians proud to be Malaysians.

It's unfair to forget all his good deeds done to uplift the image of our country worldwide. Malaysia is what it is today primarily because of this man. His achievements are for all to see.

I, for one, believe that all Malaysians should appreciate a man while he is still alive and not build monuments and name roads after him once he is dead, especially if he has done more good than harm for his people.

Barisan Nasional has always been responsible enough to give the country able and responsible leaders.

The Malaysians in Manipal are solidly behind Dr Mahathir. I urge the rest of you to unite behind the man who made Malaysia what it is today.