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Student agitations won't help anyone

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I AM a university student, currently studying in the United Kingdom. I have to admit that, at first, I was very sceptical of governance in our country, particularly in relation to the transparency and accountability in the administration and in handling of issues surrounding former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's case due partly to reporting of the media abroad.

However, after returning to Malaysia for the past few weeks, I began to realise things were not as bad as portrayed by the foreign media.

I know for a fact that university students both locally and overseas are actively involved to embarrass the Government. But why?

Why do we want to embarrass a Government led by one of the best leaders of the decade, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, whose vision and leadership have brought Malaysia to heights that could have only been dreamt of before?

We need a strong leader like Dr Mahathir, to take the country out of the economic slump we are facing.

Of course, with rapid development come many ills of society - money politics, corruption and abuse of power.

This is bound to happen as evidenced in other countries going through a similar phase of development.

This does not mean we must be complacent and accept these ills as a way of life. As we move into the next millennium, our political system must be revamped to be responsive.

Our university students strongly believe a new political culture is needed to bring justice to our society.

However, they do not have a platform to express their views - so they demonstrate to express their dissatisfaction.

Of course, demonstration is not the way to achieve students' goals. I strongly believe the Government must engage the student leaders in a constructive dialogue with a view to secure their support for a common national cause.

Demonstrations only hamper economic recovery and scare off potential investors who are key to the process.

I urge all university students, both local and overseas, to think in the best interests of the nation and fulfil our duties as students first.

If students think changes are needed to be made, then do it democratically and through proper channels.

In order for the public and the students to know that the country is governed properly and efficiently, the Government must be committed to implement a new political culture that gives priority to accountability and transparency which are hallmarks of a good government.