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Dr M, you should continue leading us and ignore critics like Asiaweek

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I AM appalled by the apparent lack of credibility of Asiaweek's writers, including its editors, in its recent focus on Malaysia and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad (Asiaweek, Jan 26).

The way the feature and the accompanying stories were slanted, it is apparent that the magazine has its own hidden agenda which, if left unchecked, would create further dissension among the various racial groups in the country.

Why is it that no one likes to see harmony in a country made up of diverse communities and blow up non-issues in an apparent bid to pit one race against another?

We had a recent scare with the Suqiu issue.

We don't need anyone, let alone outsiders, to tell us how to lead our lives.

We have had enough of colonial domination. It is time they realised they do not have carte blanche to ridicule us anymore.

Reading between the lines, I think the articles smack of sour grapes and the fact that it appeared at the beginning of the year gives me a creepy feeling that 2001 is going to be another year of Malaysia-Mahathir bashing.

Enough is enough. I think it is time we stood up as one and boycotted the magazine once and for all.

No, I am not a Mahathir groupie, but I can proudly say that to be a Malaysian during Dr Mahathir's administration is a moment that should be recorded in the history books as Malaysia's glorious years.

Of course, we hope that there are many more to come, under any Prime Minister, but Dr Mahathir's term has given a new lease of life to all Malaysians, be they Chinese, Malay or Indian and even the westerners who have uprooted themselves and made Malaysia their new haven.

Yes, the Malaysian Prime Minister is an icon in this part of the world for all things steadfast and dynamic.

He may have committed some mistakes, perhaps chosen the wrong horse to ride on at times, and even sometimes tends to run at the mouth.

But all these remind us that he is just human and not made up of the screws and bolts found in the body of Robocop! And we should be able to forgive that touch of humanity especially when we compare it to his achievements and that of his people.

I do not know why Dr Mahathir had to slam Asiaweek (NST, Feb 20) for deliberately choosing a tired-looking picture of himself. Really, there was no need to justify about the way he looks.

After all, with the age of new technology and computer graphics, anyone can look 16 or 100 with just the touch of the mouse! And even if the Prime Minister was as tired as how he looks, does anyone really blame him?

Just look at his schedule: in one day he could be speaking to reporters from Kedah and Kota Kinabalu. And tell me which leader in this world can hold a packed Press conference at 3.30 in the morning after the gruelling national elections two years ago and still keep his wits about him and answer the never-ending questions with ease and a smile, even though the ruling coalition had lost another State. All this done when he was 74 years old!

I hope that when I am 74 (if I am blessed with a long life), I would be able to perform as well as he does, and not have my statements disregarded

and distorted as that of a feeble-minded old crone.

I hope the leaders of schools and institutions that are responsible for breeding anti-government elements among their students will also learn to realise that they shouldn't have it easy.

They should be working way beyond their retirement age and they would have to harden themselves against detractors and armchair critics just waiting to take potshots and ultimately clap at your bad fall from grace.

Dr Mahathir, whether you wish to retire this year or after the next elections, you should be able to look back proudly and say: This was my Malaysia and I had a hand in turning it into a golden egg. Forget about the Asiaweek articles and just continue to lead us forward into that great day when we join the ranks of other developed countries.