

# Mahathir's advice inspires top SPM achievers

**SUN** - 5 APR 2001

PUTRAJAYA, Wed. — The prime minister's advice to successful students to contribute to the society has inspired top SPM scorer Ong Jin Hock to contribute to the betterment of others.

Seated next to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad during a special lunch today for 207 top achievers in last year's SPM, he said the prime minister's call struck a chord in him.

"As the prime minister advised us, we should never forget our roots. I don't have an idea of what I can do, but I

want to make a difference in other people's lives.

"I don't want to be remembered as someone who has made a lot of money, but as one who had given money away," said Jin Hock, 18, who scored 13 1A's.

"I didn't know that SPM students are so important to the country. This meeting has certainly added a human touch to our achievements," said an elated Jin Hock, who wants to study computer science.

He and his fellow top achievers mingled with the

prime minister and other top national leaders.

After an overnight bus trip from Sungai Petani, the SM Sultan Ibrahim student was excited to meet other top scorers. "It is good to know there are other excellent students, and they deserve more recognition than me," he said.

The students also met and took photographs with other cabinet ministers including Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik and Works Minister Datuk Seri S.

Samy Vellu.

For Kalpana Sehgal Paras Ram of SMK Methodist Kampar who obtained 11 1As, Mahathir came across as a "humble and encouraging man" with a sense of humour.

Sharing her enthusiasm with Harkiren Kaur of SMK Taman Melawati, Kalpana said it was a great honour to meet the prime minister.

Lida Khalid who was also seated next to the prime minister, said she felt as though she was getting "fatherly" advice when he asked about her future plans.