

# Dr M: Give back to society

By JANE RITIKOS

PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has a message for the country's high achievers — the Government will not blame them for taking highly paid jobs overseas but they must remember to give back to society and the country.

Addressing 207 top SPM scorers at a lunch hosted by his deputy Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi yesterday, Dr Mahathir said the high achievers might get their achievements recognised by other countries.

"You may get job offers with salaries 10 times higher than here. Some of you may be tempted and may go while others may not. I don't blame you if you want to go," he said.

In jest, Dr Mahathir added: "Make all the money you want in other countries and bring it here. It is a small request, not a big one."

In a more serious tone, the Prime Minister told the students to gain experience in other countries but to remember that Malaysia was ~~their~~ home and to feel duty-bound to help others who were not as fortunate as them.

He said the students must not be self-centered but remember that society made them what they are today.

"It is no use if we are highly educated or have Einstein's brain but we are only interested in ourselves. It will not benefit ourselves or others.

"You are here because around you is a society which provided you with many opportunities and facilities. Therefore, you owe your gratitude to society.

"This society lives in a country. If

the country is not peaceful and does not give you the opportunities, you will not enjoy what you are enjoying now," he said.

He also said the Government was not worried about "brain power" as it had produced several excellent students but was worried about "the quality of the brain."

Dr Mahathir also called on Malaysians to acquire knowledge relevant to the present needs and situation.

The 207 students at the lunch were the cream of the crop from last year's SPM examinations, scoring at least nine 1As.

Among them was Ong Jin Hock

from Sungai Petani, who obtained 13 1As, a record.

Abdullah later posed for photographs with the students at the Prime Minister's Department.

The students, from all over the country, were also taken on a tour around Putrajaya, Cyberjaya and the Multimedia University.