

UiTM students inspired by Dr M

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SHAH ALAM: It was the spirit of *Malaysia Boleh*, initiated by former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, which motivated two Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UiTM) students to climb and conquer Mount Everest.

Students Ahmad Reduan Rozali and Muhamad Muqharabbin Mokhtarruddin, who became the youngest Malaysians to scale the world's highest peak, said they owed their achievement to Dr Mahathir's inspiring messages.

"Our former PM always encouraged Malaysians to strive for excellence. Both of us have emulated Dr Mahathir's fighting spir-

it to further improve ourselves.

"His words gave us the extra push to reach the summit and carve a name for the country," Reduan, 22, told UiTM vice-chancellor Datuk Seri Prof Dr Ibrahim Abu Shah over a satellite phone at the university's Science and Technology Centre here yesterday.

He said scaling Everest from Nepal's side was challenging. "But if given another opportunity, we plan to scale the mountain from Tibet where only one climber can go through at a time at certain points.

"Muqharabbin and I have climbed Mount Everest. It is an experience that every Malaysian youth must strive for. After climbing Everest, you will

realise that all challenges in life, no matter how difficult, can be overcome," he said.

"Both of us are craving for Malaysian food," Redzuan told Dr Ibrahim.

As part of their training, they scaled several other mountains around the world, including Pakistan's Annapurna and K2, New Zealand's Mount Aspiring and Nepal's Gyoko Ri.

Their expedition, which cost RM1.5mil, was jointly organised by UiTM and the Youth and Sports Ministry.

The two climbers are expected to return here on May 31.

On May 23, 1997 M. Magendran and N. Mohandas became the first Malaysians to reach the Everest summit.