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## Bid to break cross channel model plane flight record

LANGKAWI, Fri. - The invaluable experience gained during a trial run today to break the cross channel world record for a radio-controlled model plane has encouraged enthusiast Mohamad Yusuf Hassan to try and achieve the feat during the real attempt on Sunday.

Yusuf set off in a speedboat on the 90-km journey together with Guinness Book of Records officials from the esplanade in Penang this morning, but technical problems foiled his bid.

Had he piloted the model aircraft to the island resort, it would have been considered a record which is currently the 17km English Channel crossing.

The event is being held as a prelude to the inaugural five-day Langkawi Oshkosh East Fly In convention and exhibition which starts on Monday.

Yusuf said the drag winds and the boat's slow speed hampered his efforts to guide the model aircraft.

"Anyway, as it was a trial, I was gauging the various options for Sunday," said Yusuf who is the Malaysian and Asian record holder.

The actual crossing will be flagged off from Penang by Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon and Yusof is scheduled to arrive at the Dataran Lang after a few hours.

While waiting for him to arrive, aero modelling enthusiasts, including some from overseas, will take part in a display.

The Oshkosh East is being organised by Le Proton Lima Sdn Bhd and is aimed at promoting interest in aviation among youths.

Other highlights include the six-day Great Malaysia Air Rally Challenge. About 30 light airplanes ranging from micro-lights to single- and twin-propeller engine aircraft are timed to arrive when Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad officially opens the Oshkosh on Monday.

With the island resort and many parts of the country enveloped in haze caused by fires in Sumatra, the rally pilots are expected to face a challenge.

Le Proton senior manager Megat Nawawi said the bigger aircraft should have little problems coping with the haze, but the micro-lights may not be allowed to fly for safety reasons.

He said should this happen, the micro-lights already here would take to the skies together with the other participants.

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