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Ex-sailor wins praise from Dr Mahathir

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday paid tribute to the effort by a Malaysian to circumnavigate the world alone in the Malaysia Ocean Cross 1998 attempt.

Dr Mahathir also spoke highly of the Malaysian Challenge, which is the Grand Prix of International Sailing.

In his speech at the opening of the fourth Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition, Dr Mahathir said: "The Malaysian Challenge will be a world event which should attract some of the best sailors. A round-the-world solo sailing attempt by a Malaysian is also in the offing as is a round-the-world speed attempt in a catamaran.

"Clearly, exciting things are happening which a currency problem is not going to dampen too much. And all these things will generate a lot of business for those in the aerospace and maritime industries."

The solo attempt is by former merchant navy sailor, 39-year old Azhar Mansor, who plans to sail from Langkawi back to Langkawi in February next year.

Azhar left yesterday for Kangar to attend his mother's funeral.

Azhar will return to the Tanjung Malai maritime exhibition centre to raise funds for his attempt to break the current solo round-the-world record. The present record is 105 days.

The executive chairman of le Proton Lima Sdn Bhd, Datuk Radzi Manan, also commended Azhar's pioneering spirit.

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