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Azhar-Mariner

AZHAR PRAYS FOR DR MAHATHIR'S FAST RECOVERY

LANGKAWI, April 7 (Bernama) -- Malaysian mariner Azhar Mansor today hoped that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is in good health after treatment for a lung infection.

"I got news that our Prime Minister is hospitalised. I pray for his good health and fast recovery", Azhar said in his e-mail to his shore base at the Awana Porto Malai resort here.

Dr Mahathir has been advised by his regular doctors at the National Heart Institute to rest and undergo full treatment and was admitted to the institute on April 2.

On his progress, Azhar said finally the front had caught up and gave him a good push into this leg.

"It has been raining a lot with wind blowing up to 45 knots and of course the hard beating on the boat starts again", he said.

Azhar said for wind speed, he had to go back to basics by feel and hearing as his wind instrument right on the top of the mast was damaged from the knockdown.

On March 30, Azhar's RM2 million ocean racer "Jalur Gemilang" almost capsized due to gusts of wind up to 65 knots and lost his wind indicator which functioned as a guide on wind direction.

Yesterday, Azhar reported that he had to use the radar onboard "Jalur Gemilang" as he headed for Cape Horn in poor visibility caused by thick fog.

Meanwhile, Noel Belman, the project's adviser and communications officer at the Awana Porto Malai here said he was sending e-mail reports to the World Sailing Speed Record Council in Britain on every turning point made by Azhar.

"We also register all his movements in a logbook and the council's representatives will arrive around a week before Azhar's arrival at Langkawi to ensure that the historic attempt will get the necessary recognition", he said.

Belman said the representatives would check all entries in the logbook and they were expected to greet Azhar once he arrived here.

Going by the current rate of sailing, he said Azhar would take an estimated 132 days to complete his attempt to become the first Malaysian to sail solo non-stop on a new west-east route.

Into his 64th day at sea, Azhar has logged 9,872 nautical miles with some 13,690 nautical miles to go.

He reported his yacht's position at Latitude 52 degrees 10' 80" South, Longitude 109 degrees 02' 21" West after recording one of the fastest distance of 249 nautical miles in 24 hours today with an average speed of 10.4 knots.

Azhar has been cruising for 1,535 hours and 15 minutes since setting off from Langkawi on Feb 2.

Azhar is out to set the world circumnavigation of non-stop solo circumnavigation of the world on a new west-east route verified by the WSSRC and the fastest non-stop solo circumnavigation for 15m/18m yacht.

Azhar's voyage is the first attempt to circle the globe beginning from the Indian Ocean with Langkawi as the starting point as previous attempts by Westerners began from the Atlantic Ocean.

Frenchman Christophe Auguin holds the current world circumnavigation record of 105 days, 20 hours, 31 minutes and 23 seconds on the yacht

"Geodis".

To accomplish his feat, Azhar would have to sail along Cape Leeuwin of Australia, South Cape of Newh America, Fernando de Noronha Island in the Atlantic Ocean, the Cape of Good Hope and back to Langkawi next month.

-- BERNAMA

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