

10 APR 1999

Azhar-Mariner

AZHAR HAS 13,124 NAUTICAL MILES MORE TO COVER

LANGKAWI, April 10 (Bernama) -- Malaysian mariner Azhar Mansor, who is out to set two world circumnavigation records, reported that into his 67th day at sea he has logged 10,449 nautical miles with some 13,124 nautical miles remaining to be covered.

He reported his yacht's position at Latitude 54 degrees 09' 04" South, Longitude 093 degrees 21' 61" West with an average speed of 8.6 knots.

Azhar has been cruising for 1,607 hours and 15 minutes since setting off from Langkawi on Feb 2.

In his e-mail to his shore base at the Awana Porto Malai resort here today, Azhar said conditions changed and wind started to pick up early today.

"By afternoon condition was rough and got heavier later in the night. Lots of hard pounding on Jalur Gemilang so had to reduce sail and slow down for the night," he said.

Yesterday, Azhar progressed closer to Cape Horn after his spirit was bolstered by words of encouragement from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who singled him out for mention last Thursday.

Dr Mahathir, who is recovering from a lung infection at the National Heart Institute, had said that he was deeply touched by the get-well message received via Internet from the sailor and hoped that Azhar would succeed.

Dr Mahathir is the patron of the Jalur Gemilang challenge under which the record attempt is being made.

Yesterday, Azhar said he felt excited as he got closer to Cape Horn which would qualify him to join an international elite club of sailors who have single-handedly passed the Cape with their yachts.

Azhar is trying to be the first person to circumnavigate the globe non-stop solo on a new west-east route verified by the World Sailing Speed Record Council in Britain, and to do it in the fastest time for 15m/18m yachts.

-- BERNAMA

NH YBY