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DR MAHATHIR FLAGS OFF AZHAR'S ROUND-THE-WORLD SOLO SAIL

LANGKAWI, Feb 2 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today flagged off the historic record attempt by Azhar Mansor to sail non-stop solo round-the-world in a wind-powered yacht.

Speaking at the official launch of the Jalur Gemilang Challenge 1999 here, he said Azhar's effort would be tough as he had to sail round the world in less than 105 days without any stop.

He said this was the third challenge made by Malaysians, after the conquest of Mount Everest and the North Pole Expedition, to bring glory to the country.

"I think he'll (Azhar) survive and God willing, Azhar will return safely," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Azhar's attempt was made possible by several companies which "have spare coins" to help sponsor the journey, although the country was facing an economic crisis.

Perlis-born Azhar, 40, is attempting to set two world records; the first non-stop solo circumnavigation of the world on a new west-east route verified by the World Sailing Speed Record Council United Kingdom and the fastest non-stop solo world circumnavigation for 15m/18m yacht.

-- BERNAMA

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