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Swimming-Malik  
THINGS GO SWIMMINGLY FOR CHANNEL SWIMMER

By: Wan A.Hulaimi

LONDON, May 14 (Bernama) -- After six training sessions totalling more than two-and-a-half hours in the cold water of the English Channel, aspiring cross-channel swimmer Abdul Malik Mydin, 27, will now continue his training in Australia to perfect his technique for the final crossing.

Malik, in buoyant mood after good reports from his trainer, Allison Streeter, said he was now planning his progress in stages, aiming to do another swim in Langkawi in October before coming back here for further training in Dover on the southeast coast.

Last Sunday he met the patron of his Cross Channel Project, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on his stopover here en route to a meeting with President George W.Bush in Washington.

Malik said he asked Dr Mahathir to pray for his success, to which the prime minister replied: "You do the training, I'll do the praying."

Trainer Allison Streeter, hailed as the Queen of the Channel for her 40 cross-channel swims, said that she was very happy with Abdul Malik's progress and was confident of his success.

"What he needs to do now is to continue improving his strokes to make the crossing more efficiently. If he can make each stroke carry him that little bit further he will be able to make the crossing more efficiently, bearing in mind that there are some 60,000 swimming strokes in the cross-channel swim," she said.

"I'd also like him to take part in the Lake Zurich Swim in August. This will give him more experience for the channel besides making him the first Southeast Asian to do so," she added.

Abdul Malik will now have to continue his training in warmer waters to prepare for the Langkawi swim, and then return to England for the August finale in the English Channel.

He said that Streeter had found him a trainer in Australia who is also a cycling enthusiast so that they would have something to share in common in between the rigorous training sessions.

Also in Abdul Malik's English training team is Streeter's mother, Frida, a formidable woman who puts great emphasis on mental training.

"I believe in TBC -- Total Body Confusion -- for the swimmer in training because you do not know what you will experience in the swim. I tell the swimmers not to expect anything but to be prepared for everything. I do not tell them what we're going to do in the daily practice, but they must learn to take anything," she said.

In between moments of seriousness and laughter over a meal of satay and rice and other Malaysian dishes at the Holiday Villa hotel restaurant here Abdul Malik said that he would like to form a Langkawi swimmer's association and link it with the Channel Swimmers' Association.

"Yes, we are a worldwide family and we help each other. That is a very good idea," said Allison Streeter, who, in her daily life is a currency dealer with the Standard Chartered Bank.

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