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Sports-Channel

MALIK'S ATTEMPT IS NO RECREATION

By: Asan Ahmad

KUALA LUMPUR, June 13 (Bernama) -- The preception by certain groups that the attempt to swim across the English Channel by national marathon swimmer Abdul Malik Mydin is merely for recreation is nonsensical.

Although it is not categorised as a sports event, what the 28-year-old swimmer wants put across is that Malaysians now have the capability to overcome whatever challenge that can hinder their progress.

It also gives the picture that the capability of Malaysians can no longer be belittled because they have improved their competitiveness.

If there are still groups who feel that Abdul Malik's attempt is futile, then they are not far-sighted and also irresponsible.

Those who feel this way should be ashamed of themselves because the individual who is making the attempt to cross the channel is a local who will bring glory to the country.

The world outside, on the contrary, is proud and happy over the attempt by Malik as they feel that it is something exceptional in view of Malaysia's capability in sports at the international level.

In fact, what Malik wants to prove by swimming across the English Channel is very obvious.

Besides creating history in this extraordinary activity, Malik hopes the feat would instil resilience among Malaysians and that all strata of society would emulate his determination.

In fact this message had already been explained by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad himself when launching the swim by Malik from Kuala Perlis to Langkawi on May 24.

Dr Mahathir, who is also patron of the English Channel Challenge, looks at Malik's attempt to swim across the Channel as an avenue to prove the capability of Malaysians.

In fact, at the launching, Dr Mahathir had challenged youths to emulate Malik because, according to him, it proves one's bravery in facing all forms of challenges.

Malik, when met recently, had explained that he was not bothered by what was being said by some groups about his programme.

"It is normal...but like what the Prime Minister said about the attempt, it is to inspire the future generation to have fighting spirit...furthermore, whatever it is that we do, it always carries a particular message, it's just that some people do not understand the way we convey this message," Malik said.

The spirit is not necessarily confined to one particular field only, on the contrary, it covers all...because if the future generation emulate, appreciate and possess the spirit shown by individuals who have succeeded in overcoming extraordinary challenges, then the country's future and stability would be ensured, explained Malik.

If Malik succeeds in swimming across the English Channel next month, he will be the fifth Malaysian to have overcome obstacles in extraordinary activities.

In the past, Malaysia took pride in the success of the Mount Everest climbing team who had climbed the highest peak in the world which was later followed by the parachute jump by Malaysians over the North Pole.

Then there was the attempt by Malaysian mariner Datuk Azhar Mansor who sailed solo around the world on the yacht "Jalur Gemilang" and the last was the feat by Hassan Nawawi who cycled around the world.

If Malik succeeds in his attempt, Malaysians would then have overcome all forms of challenges and it should inspire the future generation to build up

their self-confidence.

Malik, a former cycling athlete, is expected to embark on the English Channel attempt on July 18. He will swim a distance of 33 kilometres across the channel which has the coldest water in the world.

He is now in Melbourne for his final phase training before the actual swim.

Last month, he created history when he swam 48 kilometres across the Melaka Straits from Kuala Perlis to Langkawi in 14 hours.

-- BERNAMA

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