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Record-Teeth

"RAJA GIGI" BREAKS WORLD RECORD BY PULLING 260.8 TONNES

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 18 (Bernama) -- V. Rathakrishnan, who has the glorious moniker "Raja Gigi" (Tooth King), today lived up to his nickname by pulling a 260.8-tonne railway car with his teeth for 4.2 metres.

The man with the iron gnashers not only recorded his name in the Malaysia Book of Records again, but also surpassed the world record held by Belgian Walter Arfeuille who pulled a 200.8-tonne weight for three metres.

The 37-year-old's feat, via a project called "Semangat Malaysia Perkasa" (Strong Malaysia Spirit) at the Railway Station here, was witnessed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and an unexpected royal guest, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, of Brunei.

When met afterwards, Rathakrishnan, who was understandably proud of his accomplishment, said he had been motivated by the shouts of "Malaysia Boleh" and the presence of Dr Mahathir.

"All this time my concentration has been focused on the train, but today I concentrated on Datuk Seri's (Dr Mahathir) face and then I pulled. That is why although we only planned to pull for 3.5m, I managed to do 4.2m," he said.

On receiving the Malaysia Book of Records certificate and congratulations from Dr Mahathir, Rathakrishnan said the Prime Minister had also given him encouragement when he professed a desire to break five more world records.

Asked about the secret of his strength, Rathakrishnan said apart from dental check-ups every three months, he practised a diet comprising 90 per cent vegetables and the balance of fish and poultry, reduced spicy food and stayed off iced drinks.

However, the Kuala Lumpur-born man who grew up in Negeri Sembilan, said that true strength came from within the body through controlled breathing.

Rathakrishnan, who only tops 1.68m and weighs 82kg, first tested his mettle 10 years ago by pulling a 10.8-tonne bus at the Tampin Railway Station.

In January 2001, he was mentioned in the Malaysia Book of Records for pulling a 37.35-tonne railway car and a month later, he again made it in the record book by lifting a 130kg weight 12.1cm off the floor with his teeth.

He had this piece of advice for youths: "My advice to the younger generation is, don't say you are tired, don't say you cannot, you should never use these two."

Meanwhile, Malaysia Book of Records managing director Datuk Danny Ooi said all documents and video recordings of today's feat would be sent to London next week to be acknowledged in the Guinness Book of World Records.

"We expect it will take a month to get the recognition," he said.

Since its inception in 1995, the Malaysia Book of Records has 2,300 local records and more than 20 of them are also recorded in the Guinness Book of World Records.

The "Semangat Malaysia Perkasa" project was jointly organised by Bumiputera company YZ Alliance Group Sdn Bhd and Keretapi Tanah Melayu Berhad.

-- BERNAMA

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