

07 AUG 2003

Sports-Channel

ABDUL MALIK TO ARRIVE IN KLIA TOMORROW

By: Asan Ahmad

LONDON, Aug 7 (Bernama) -- Malaysian marathon swimmer Abdul Malik Mydin is leaving for home tonight by Malaysia Airlines flight MH01.

The 28-year-old swimmer, who did Malaysia proud after his successful crossing of the English Channel, will leave Heathrow at 10pm local time and is expected to arrive at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) at 6pm tomorrow (Friday).

The Penangite, who has put himself in the Malaysia Book of Records as the first Malaysian to swim the channel, said here today that he could not wait to return home.

Abdul Malik, who has been away from home for some three weeks, said he wanted to meet his family, who had been very supportive of his mission, as well as Malaysians who had prayed for his success.

He also thanked sponsors like Malaysia Electronic Coporation, Genting Highlands Berhad, Yayasan Al-Bukhary, Tenaga Nasional Berhad, Eau Claire and the media which gave coverage to his attempt.

Abdul Malik is expected to be met on arrival by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein and well wishers.

In his conquest of the channel, Abdul Malik swam for 17 hours and 35 minutes and covered a distance of 58kms, equivalent to crossing from England to France and back.

He was scheduled to swim to Cap Gris Nez in Calais but strong currents forced a change to Wissant Beach on which he landed, and whose sand he kissed, at 3am (Malaysian time) on Aug 4.

Abdul Malik said he would take a two-month break before planning his next swim.

-- BERNAMA

AHA NM EMK SRI