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Malik begins 48km swim from Kuala Perlis to Langkawi

KUALA PERLIS, Sat. - Amid shouts of "Malaysia Boleh", Abdul Malik Mydin began his 48km swim from Kuala Perlis to Langkawi tonight.

He was given a grand send-off by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the Malaysian Fisheries Development Board jetty here at 9.40pm.

Present were Rural Development Minister Datuk Azmi Khalid, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim, Azhar and John Van Wisse, Malik's coach.

A 10-minute fireworks display preceded his swim.

Malik, 28, a businessman from Kampung Gajah, Butterworth, is expected to come ashore at Eagle Square, Langkawi at about 5pm tomorrow. The swim is part of his final phase of training to swim across the 38km-English Channel from France to England in August.

Three English Channel Federation officials are monitoring his 18 to 20-hour feat at sea.

Likening Malik to national mariner Datuk Azhar Mansor, who sailed solo round the world, Dr Mahathir praised the swimmer for his determination in wanting to be the first Malaysian to swim across the English Channel.

His swim tonight is also to raise funds for the National Cancer Council. To date RM120,000 has been raised. "I appeal to the public to donate for children suffering from cancer," he said.