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#### Simulation stint for trek across Antarctica

GENTING HIGHLANDS, Sun. - Three Malaysians who aim to trek across Antarctica next month had a foretaste of the freezing temperatures and blizzards last night - in Genting Resorts World's Snow World.

Led by Medi-link's Dr M. Kamaruddin M. Isa, the team - Polar Explorers Group International - plans to trek across the fifth largest continent in under four months.

If successful, they would be the first in the world to do so.

"We want to take up the challenge issued by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to cross the world's coldest continent on foot, as a tribute to him for his 22 years of stewardship," said Dr Kamaruddin just before entering to spend the night in Snow World yesterday.

"We have been training since 2001 and this is the last stage," he said, adding that they had initially planned the trip for 2004 but decided to bring it forward after Dr Mahathir's challenge.

They plan to set off in mid-October and complete the journey before February next year when winter sets in to shroud the continent in six months of endless nights.

The other two members are National Sports Council of Malaysia head of strategic planning unit and certified nutritionist, Suhardi Alias, and Universiti Teknologi Mara lecturer and sports psychologist cum motivator, Sharifah Mazlina Kadir.

"The route we take may perhaps be known as the 'Malaysian route' in the future," said Suhardi.

The team went into Genting's Snow World about midnight and stayed there until 9am today as part of their endurance training to acclimatise to conditions in Antarctica.

They will be "training" there every weekend from now until the expedition, which gives them time for only about five or six more sessions.

Dr Kamaruddin said the simulation exercise was a great experience - the blizzards were blowing at about 20-30 kilometres per hour all night long and the temperature dropped to below minus 10 degrees Celsius.

"The team members now have a better idea of the situation in the real journey and can better prepare," said the sole team member who has been to the continent on the "The Millennium Jump 2000" expedition at Patriot Hill.