

## **Najib Launches South Pole Expedition**

**Bernama**

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PUTRAJAYA, July 7 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today launched an expedition to the South Pole which will be undertaken by national triathlete Shahrom Abdullah.

Shahrom, 36, will be skiing 1,000 kilometres to reach the South Pole.

He will start the expedition on Nov 17 from Messner in Antarctica and is scheduled to reach the pole in 50 or 60 days.

Najib when launching the "South Pole All The Way Expedition 2015" organised by the Malaysian Seven Continents Exploration Club (KE7B) here, said as one who has set foot on the South Pole, he understood very well the challenges Shahrom will be up against.

"I cannot imagine the conditions and the cold awaiting him, what more he has to bring his own food supplies, medicine and camping equipment for this expedition," he said.

As it would be no ordinary expedition, the Prime Minister advised Shahrom to be well prepared for the journey in snow and ice over a period of two months.

"The exploration cannot be considered trivial as emergency aid is difficult to get, (there is) no people except penguins and international research teams, even then only in certain places," he said.

The Prime Minister also jokingly suggested that Shahrom bring local food items including the popular Kelantan appetiser, budu, on the expedition to test the durability of these food items in extreme temperatures.

He said the government was willing to assist in bearing as much of the cost of the expedition as possible and at the same time, he hoped more companies and individuals would come forward to give aid to ensure it is a success.

Najib also said he was proud as Shahrom who would create history was from Felda Chiku Gua Musang and hoped more Felda children would follow in his footsteps.

The Prime Minister also said he hoped more young people including women would take up the challenge of joining extreme expeditions yet to be undertaken by any Malaysian.

This would include swimming across the Bering Sea, two climbers ascending Mount Everest simultaneously via two different routes - Tibet and Nepal, and trekking to the north pole, he said.

The Prime Minister said Malaysians had attained much success in various extreme

expeditions which was encouraging, such as climbing Mount Everest, swimming across the English Channel and exploring Greenland.

"I also followed closely the expedition by Muhamad Muqarabbin Mokhtarruddin or Qobin in 2007 who travelled the world by bicycle and motorcycle across 22 countries," he said.

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