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Supporters unfazed

Teacher Thum Ping Tjin's planned attempt to become the first Singaporean to swim solo across the English Channel yesterday was postponed until tomorrow due to bad weather.

But that did not stop about 300 supporters from taking turns to plunge into Farrer Park Swimming Complex yesterday to cheer on the 26-year-old Rhodes scholar and former national swimmer.

Organised by the Methodist Schools' Foundation, the mass swim was supposed to take place at the same time as Mr Thum's Channel crossing and last up to 12 hours - the time he is expected to take to complete the 32km swim from Dover in England to Calais in France.

The event here took place as planned, but was shortened to seven hours and three minutes, the record time taken to swim across the Channel.

Tampines GRC MP Ong Kian Min, former national swimmer Ang Peng Siong and paralympic swimmer Theresa Goh were among those who joined the swim.

Speaking from England, Mr Thum called the support 'fantastic' and was upbeat despite the delay to his attempt.

'That's the nature of it. You really have to be patient and wait for the right conditions to come.

'I'm pretty confident and I believe I can do it,' he said.