

# Global motorcyclist aims to return



**WORLD TRAVELLER ...** Benka discussing her motorcycle problems with mechanic Zulfizam Zohdi in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

By FARIDAH BEGUM

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysia is the first place that Bernarda Benka Pulko will visit after her five-year trip over seven continents ends in 2002.

The 33-year-old Slovenian professor of biology has been to many places since June 1997 when she embarked on the longest trip round the world by a woman.

For her, heaven is a place on earth called Malaysia.

"I like the people, the food and colour of this place. I first thought I could just stand in a corner and drink in the colourful multiracial atmosphere you have here but, after a week, I know I have to come back and stay longer to enjoy all that this country has to offer," she said.

She said that Malaysia was too progressive to be known as a developing country.

At first, Malaysia was only an antipart — one of two points she has to reach if her trip is to be considered for entry into the *Guinness Book of Records*.

In the past week, Malaysia became not only an antipart (two points exactly on opposite sides of the Earth) but

also a favoured destination for her future travel.

After leaving Slovenia, she passed through North America and South America where she made a stopover at the other antipart in Cuenca, Ecuador.

After this she passed through Antarctica, New Zealand, Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Thailand, Cambodia and parts of South-East Asia.

She is getting her BMW F650 motorcycle repaired and roadworthy for the next leg of her trip. Her motorcycle is fully sponsored and maintained by BMW.

Her trip was enjoyable and easy due to helpful and co-operative people, she met along the way, she said.

She is currently trying to fly her motorcycle to Nepal where she will begin the next leg of the journey. She will then travel through the Indian subcontinent before making her way back home.

Benka hopes to get assistance in flying her motorcycle to Nepal as she has been turned down by one airline and given high quotes by freight forwarders.

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