



**Leaping with faith:** Mandy Goh Li in action during the 400m hurdles event.

# Physical Education graduate Mandy has more than just medals on her mind

**PETALING JAYA:** National middle-distance runner Mandy Goh Li has her sights set not only on medals but also on a meaningful career in teaching.

The 25-year-old Sarawakian hopes to secure a teaching placement in Kuala Lumpur to train daily at the National Sports Council (NSC) facility.

A Physical Education graduate from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Mandy has been training full-time since January and is set to begin her teaching duties in June.

“I do really hope that I will be placed in Kuala Lumpur. It would be ideal to work and train in the same place,” said the ever-spirited Mandy.

“I want to teach Physical Education and inspire students through the power of sports.”

She shared her aspirations after a triumphant weekend at the Super Series MA International Meet at Stadium Merdeka, where she clinched three gold medals.

Mandy won the 400m on Saturday with a time of 58.23s and returned on Sunday to take the 400m hurdles in 62.33s.

She was also part of the victorious Malaysian 4x400m relay team, clocking a time of 3:56.91.

Reflecting on her performances, Mandy felt her season opener was solid but not flawless.

“I wasn’t too pleased with my 400m run, even though I won. I used it as a tune-up for the hurdles, but I know I can do better,” she said.

“However, I’m happy with my hurdles time. The track conditions were tough, and I was aiming for 63 seconds – but I managed to go faster.”

With just under three weeks to go before the Asian Track and Field Championships in Gumi, South Korea, from May 27-31, Mandy is focused on fine-tuning her technique and building speed endurance under the guidance of coach Hashim Mustaza.

“I only started doing hurdles at 18, so there’s still room to grow. My goal is to reach the final in Gumi and hopefully beat my personal best of 60.72s,” she said.

In the men’s 400m hurdles, national record holder Fakhrul Afizul Nasir showed his class by clocking 51.97s to secure gold after fending off a strong challenge from Aiman Najmi Anuar, who finished second in 52.73s after winning the flat 400m event.

“It looks like the competition is going to be intense this year, especially with Aiman stepping up,” said Fakhrul.

Although the rain made it tough, Fakhrul was satisfied with his performance.

“This is only my second meet of the season. I clocked 53.97s in the Varsity Track and Field Meet in Kluang. I’ve only been training for four weeks, so things are heading in the right direction.”

With the ATF on the horizon, Fakhrul’s goal is clear: “I want to break my own national record again.”