

DIVING

Rio is history

MISSION:

Jun Hoong is looking ahead to reaching greater heights

AJITPAL SINGH

ajitpalsingh@nst.com.my

CHEONG Jun Hoong is treating the Rio Olympics as a thing of the past as the diver still has unfinished business in other major competitions.

Jun Hoong, who paired up with Pandelega Rinong for the women's 10m platform synchro silver medal in Rio last month, will only join her teammates in China for training next week due to visa issues, which she is confident will be sorted out soon.

"The Rio Games is history. I do not want to think about it anymore as I still have many more years to serve as a national athlete. I want to get better and stronger, and most importantly remain injury free to be among the best in the world in the platform and springboard disciplines," said Jun Hoong who was a recipient of Universiti Putra Malaysia's (UPM) incentive scheme



Undergraduates **Cheong Jun Hoong** (left) and **Zaidatul Husniah Zulkifli** after receiving Universiti Putra Malaysia's incentive scheme in Serdang yesterday. Pic by Saifullizan Tamadi

in Serdang yesterday.

"I want to treat it like a new beginning for myself as I do not want to get too distracted with my medal from Rio. I still have the drive and ambition to compete at the highest level and I will continue to give my very best in competitions and training.

"I still have a lot to learn from diving. I need to improve my technique and also try out tougher routines. The silver from Rio is definitely a motivation for me to strive for excellence.

"Frankly, I am not thinking about

the 2020 Tokyo Olympics as my focus is on the immediate assignments.

"Anything can happen in the next four years and it is better for me not to set goals yet."

Jun Hoong, who received RM4,000 from UPM for her efforts in Rio, has set her sights on a podium finish in the 2017 World Aquatics Championships and the Commonwealth Games the following year.

"Winning a medal in diving comes with hard work. It is also risky as divers can easily get injured. Of course there will be pressure when I

compete again as everyone will expect me to do well in all competitions as an Olympic medallist," said the 26-year-old.

Jun Hoong is raring to get down to business when she reports for training in China next week.

"For the last two weeks, I have been juggling between appreciation functions and training.

"I have slacked a little but things should get back to normal in China. There are no distractions there and I should regain the feeling to train hard again."

Jun Hoong is only in her second

year as a Bachelor of Communication undergraduate despite joining UPM in 2009.

"UPM has a flexible programme for national athletes, where we are given exemptions to take one or two subjects in each semester. It will be tough to say whether I can finish the course soon. I will take my current semester exams after the Asian Championships in November," Jun Hoong added.

UPM also handed RM1,000 each to shooter Johnathan Wong and sprinter Zaidatul Husniah Zulkifli for competing in the Rio Olympics.