

Jun Hoong honoured to be leading contingent

NEWLY crowned diving world champion Cheong Jun Hoong is all excited to be one of the three flag-bearers for Malaysia at the opening ceremony of the KL Sea Games at National Stadium in Bukit Jalil on Aug 19.

Jun Hoong, who won the women's 10m platform individual gold medal at last month's World Championships in Budapest, was selected along with cyclist Azizulhasni Awang and silat exponent Mohd Al-Jufferi Jamari, who are also world champions in their respective field.

"I thank the concerned parties for giving me this honour and

recognition to be one of the flag-bearers," said Jun Hoong, who is currently in Guangzhou, China for centralised training, yesterday.

"I take it as a reward from my country for all the difficulties and obstacles, I had faced all these years to become an accomplished diver.

"It is special this time as Malaysia will have three flag bearers. It is the most valuable gift I have ever received as an athlete and I am excited."

National coach Yang Zhuliang said it is a great honour for diving.

"Malaysia have achieved a lot in diving of late and this is a huge recognition for the sport.

"It will also motivate the divers to achieve a clean sweep of 13 gold medals in the Sea Games," said Zhuliang, whose 16-member squad will return from their training camp in China on Aug 18.

Diving also enjoyed the same honour at the 2015 Singapore Sea Games with Leong Mun Yee as the flag bearer.

Azizul, a bronze medallist at last year's Rio Olympic Games, achieved a historic gold in the men's keirin at the World Track Cycling Championships in Hong

Kong in March

"It's a priceless experience to compete and to carry the flag in your home Sea Games. It's a recognition for cycling and I hope this will spur my teammates to fight all the way," said Azizul.

As for Al-Jufferi, he was the winner of the men's Putra E class at the World Silat Championships in Bali in December last year.

Jun Hoong was recently given a clean bill to compete in the Sea Games after recovering from a back problem. She will compete in the women's 1m springboard and 10m platform individual events. **Ajitpal Singh**