HISTORIC WIN AT THE WORLD AQUATIC CHAMPIONSHIP

Jun Hoong's family 'shocked but elated'

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Cheong Jun Hoong with her gold medal after winning the 10m platform individual at the World Aquatics Championship in Budapest, Hungary, on Wednesday. With her are Ren Qian (left) and Si Yajie from China. EPA PIC

WORLD AQUATICS CHAMPION

CELEBRATIONS WILL HAVE TO WAIT

It's straight to Sea Games training for gold medallist

NURADZIMMAH DAIM
IPOH
news@nst.com.my

FRESH from her historic win at the World Aquatics Championship in Budapest, Hungary, diver Cheong Jun Hoong, will have to wait before meeting her family.

Upon returning, she will be preparing for the 2017 Sea Games in Kuala Lumpur next month.

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Cheong Jun Hoong's mother, Leow Lai Kuan, and her sister, Jun Yeng, watching her on the podium at the World Aquatics Championship in Hungary on Wednesday. PIC BY L. MANIMARAN

Najib, Zahid congratulate Jun Hoong on her success

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak congratulated national diver Cheong Jun Hoong yesterday after she created history by becoming the first Malaysian to win the gold medal at the World Aquatics Championship in Budapest, Hungary, on Wednesday.

"Congratulations @cheongjunhoong! First world champion #Negaraku in the Women's Platform event at #FINABudapest2017," said Najib in his Twitter account.

The 27-year-old Perakian, who shared the silver medal with Pandelela Rinong in last year's Rio Olympics, scored 397.50 points in the women's 10m platform individual.

Former world champion Si Yajie of China grabbed the silver medal with 396.00 points, while her fellow teammate, Ren Qian, who is the Rio Olympics gold medallist, had to settle for bronze after amassing 391.95 points, according to the Fina website at www.fina.org.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said Jun Hoong's victory had created history and was a boost to national pride.

"Congratulations @cheongjunhoong, world champion in women's 10m platform individual.

"History is created and it is a national pride. Thank you national athletes," he said on Twitter. **Bernama**

'Family never pressured Jun Hoong as she gave her best'

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"Thank you, Malaysia, for all the support given to my daughter. I am so proud of her," said Jun Hoong's mother, Leow Lai Kwan.

Speaking at the family's home in Kampung Kepayang here yesterday, Leow admitted that she was quite nervous about her daughter's performance.

She and her husband were glued to the television since 12.30am to watch their daughter's event.

"I watched the event on live telecast with bated breath and could not believe it when she was announced the champion for the category.

"I prayed for her, but we never thought that she would beat the world champion (China's Si Yajie)."

Leow said Jun Hoong finally phoned her at 2am to convey the news of her victory.

"We are so happy. We hope Malaysians will continue supporting her and pray for her success," said Leow, who was all smiles.

Jun Hoong's youngest sister, Jun Yeng, 24, who is studying in Kuala Lumpur, rushed home to share the joy with her parents.

The younger sibling said her sister would have her hands full in preparing for the Sea Games next month.

"The celebration will have to wait as she will undergo training for Sea Games as soon as she arrives in Kuala Lumpur on Monday.

Jun Yeng said she and her family members were keeping each other updated in a WhatsApp group.

She added that her family did not impose any pressure on Jun Hoong as they knew that she was giving her best at every championship.

"She doesn't normally look at the scoreboard and only finds out her total score after the final dive," she said, adding that the family also shared her passion for swimming.

Jun Hoong, 27, became the first Malaysian to win a gold medal at the tournament with a score of 397.50 points in the women's 10m platform individual.

The win stunned many as she had beaten world diving champion Si Yajie from China, who bagged the silver medal with a score difference of 1.50.

China's Ren Qian, who was the silver medallist in the 2015 championship and last year's Olympics gold medalist, bagged the bronze medal with a score of 391.95.