

Celebration of success:

Cheong holding up a framed photograph of her historic win in Budapest with Kali (right) and Dr Abu Bakar during the reception in Kuala Lumpur.



Malaysian diving champion feted at Hungarian reception

THE STAR

By PAUL GABRIEL
paulnews@thestar.com.my

26/10/2017

P-3

KUALA LUMPUR: At a gathering of senior foreign diplomats and government officials, a pint-sized Malaysian athlete stood tall.

National diver Cheong Jun Hoong, who claimed a stunning victory at the World Aquatics Championships in Budapest in July, was specially honoured at Hungary's national day reception here on Tuesday.

Shortly after the official exchange of toasts, Hungarian Ambassador Attila Kali invited Cheong to join him on the stage.

The embassy had extended a special invitation to the Perak athlete for her feat in becoming Malaysia's first-ever world diving champion in the Hungarian capital.

"We are proud of what you have achieved for your country. All of Hungary is also very proud of you," Kali said of Cheong's dramatic upset in the women's 10m platform individual final.

Cheong, who was ranked fourth after the first two dives at the championships, eventually beat two top divers from China to clinch the top spot.

Also congratulating her was Deputy Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Dr Abu Bakar Mohamad Diah, who represented the Government at the event.

Cheong, 28, said she was grateful for the recognition and pledged to keep doing her best for the country.

"Victory is sweet, but retaining one's position as the best is much more difficult.

"I am continuing to train hard," said Cheong, an Olympic silver medallist in the 2016 Rio Games.

Kali said the Hungarian mission was continuing to make strides after the reopening of the embassy here in 2015.

"I am proud to say we have had successful events to strengthen our ties in areas such as water management, ICT (information and communications technology), culture, education and tourism," he said.

"I can assure you of more success in the years ahead."

Malaysia is Hungary's third largest trading partner in South-East Asia.

It also has a regional trade office here to maximise investments and boost Hungarian exports.