

Super Latif smashes world record three times

MALAYSIA'S Paralympians delivered the perfect antidote to the nation's gold medal barren haul from the Rio Olympics last month with three gold medals and two world records.

Mohammad Ridzuan Mohammad Puzi won the country's first ever Paralympic Games gold medal when he outran his rivals in the 100m T36 (cerebral palsy) in a Games record of 12.07, smashing the old mark of 12.15 set four years ago in London.

An hour after his stunning run, Muhammad Ziyad Zolkefli won gold in the T20 shot put with a world record 16.84m throw, decimating the 2007 mark of 16.29m by Australian Todd Hodgetts.

The icing on the cake came from the long jump where Abdul Latif Romly shattered the world record three times en route to bagging the gold medal with a leap of 7.60m to complete a clean sweep of world, Asian Games and Paralympic Games titles.

Croata's Zoran Talic (7.12m) was second and Dmytro Prudnikov of Ukraine (6.99m) was third.

The three gold medals by the Paralympians may well compensate for the disappointment felt by sports fans in the country over the medal's absence among the four silver and one bronze collection the Malaysian contingent

gained at the Rio Olympics.

Malaysians rejoiced over that collection for its unprecedented quantity despite its dispiriting absence of the glister of gold.

Malaysia's three Paralympic gold medallists will receive RM1 million each, the same offered to their able-bodied counterparts.

Naza Corporation Holdings also rewarded the gold medallists with a new Kia Sportage and a residential suite at Trion 888, Equine Park.

Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said his decision to reinstate the reward for Paralympic medals to be on par with the Olympics was inspired by Ziyad three years ago.

"Our para athletes' achievements and sacrifices must be honoured the same as other athletes. Not 30 per cent of 'normal' athletes," he wrote on a Facebook post.

"I would not know how to feel 30 per cent proud of them. I only feel 100 per cent proud of our para heroes. They have shown us that yes, they are not ordinary. They are extraordinary."

Malaysia rewards Olympic and Paralympic athletes with RM1 million for a gold medal, RM500,000 for a silver and RM100,000 for a bronze.

In addition, they will receive a lifetime monthly pension of RM5,000 for a gold medal, RM3,000 for the silver, and RM2,000 for the bronze.

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Paralympics

Rio 2016

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MEDALS TALLY

COUNTRY				
CHINA	26	26	19	71
BRITAIN	17	8	13	38
UKRAINE	13	10	15	38
UNITED STATES	8	11	7	26
BRAZIL	5	9	5	19
HOLLAND	4	7	9	20
GERMANY	4	6	4	14
UZBEKISTAN	4	4	11	19
TUNISIA	4	3	1	8
MEXICO	4	1	1	6
MALAYSIA	3	0	0	3
THAILAND	1	1	0	2
VIETNAM	1	0	1	2
SINGAPORE	1	0	0	1

Abdul Latif proudly displays the Jalur Gemilang after his world record feat in the Paralympic Games in Rio yesterday.

HISTORY MAKER

