

Ramadhan in MJIT

Muslims all around the world will be fasting on the 9th month of the Islamic calendar. *Ahlan wa sahlan* Ramadhan (welcome Ramadhan). In Malaysia Ramadhan begins on Saturday, June 28th.2014, although the date is only confirmed once the new crescent moon is sighted. In some countries fasting start on Sunday, June 29th.2014. Because the cycle of solar calendar does not match the lunar calendar therefore each year, Ramadhan begins about eleven days earlier than in the previous year. Some country insist on the local physical sighting of the moon to mark the beginning of Ramadhan, but others use the calculated time of the new moon or the Saudi Arabian declaration. That's why fasting starts at different times in different countries

Fasting is one of the five pillars of Islam which requires individuals to abstain from eating, drinking, smoking and sexual intercourse in the daylight. The purpose of fasting is not to inflict suffering but to be stronger like a kind of spiritual athleticism.

During the month of Ramadhan, the fast begin at first light of dawn just before sunrise, Muslims are required to have *Suhur* (pre-dawn meal). Then at sunset Muslims gather for *Iftar* (meal) to break the fast. And for Muslims the starter or side-dish most sought after for breaking fast is none other than the dates be it fresh, dried or preserved dates. During Ramadhan many Muslims read Quran daily and divide into daily reading segments that conclude at the end of the month.

Ramadhan is about doing charity by self-sacrifice and using the experience of hunger to grow in empathy with the poverty stricken and less fortunate. Many volunteer to get donation or raise money for clothes and foods and hold *Iftar* dinners for the less fortunate.

Besides abstaining from food and drink, Ramadhan teach us to refrain from anger, gossiping, malice, back-biting, suspicion, extravagance, vulgarity, infidelity and arrogance. Hoping that we will be starting a new episode in life with a clean soul and cleared of those bad habits by the time Ramadan is over."

After 29 or 30 days of fasting Muslims celebrate *Eid-ul-Fitr* Most families go to the *Masjid* (mosque) to celebrate *Eid-ul-Fitr* with morning prayer which later followed by feasting among families and friends. After that they visited their ancestor burial sites to say some *Du'aa*.

In the world of sports, reconciling faith and fitness will be a critical testing time for few practicing Muslim players. The game demands that they be in peak condition during the knockout matches. Ramadhan coincides for the first time since 1986 with the soccer tournament While Brazil's heat and humidity, required breaks every 30 minutes to rehydrate athletes with water. As the World Cup reaches the quarter finals those likely to be affected include France's Karim Benzema and Bacary Sagna, German midfielder Mesut Ozil and Sami Khedira; Swiss midfielder Xherdan Shaqiri; and Belgium's key players Marouane Fellaini, and Adnan Januzaj.

Actually Ramadhan fasting is not mandatory to certain groups such like the pregnant woman or breastfeeding mother, those seriously ill or at health risk and travellers. Many parents gradually train their kids from as young as 5 years old depending on their willpower for a half day or alternate days of fasting.

Back here in MJIT, be it fasting or not life has to goes on, the students go to the classroom each day, the lecturer give lectures and the researches deep in their laboratories. But the atmosphere is rather quiet compared to before, probably because neither fork nor spoon are inactive for this month alas the café was temporary closed while the cheery loud noises are toned down for the moment.