



Janna (right) and Arissa enjoy their activities even more while waiting to break fast.

Fasting despite medical condition

> Children with cerebral palsy enjoy observing the month of Ramadan

BY G. SURACH
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR: The month of Ramadan brings a whole new meaning for two children as they fast alongside their siblings and family members.

While most Muslim children tend to be less active during the fasting month, Izdihar Janna Adzly, 12, and Arissa Azizulrahman, six, enjoy their activities even more in anticipation of breaking fast according to their respective parents.

When *theSun* met them recently at the Step and Smile Conductive Education Centre Malaysia both children were playing board games, with Janna multi-tasking between a board game and an interactive game on her iPad.

"I like to break fast with kuey teow soup. I like nasi ayam too," said Janna, who started to fast during Ramadan three years ago.

The 12-year-old from Semenyih who has cerebral palsy, said while she does have hunger pangs she always looked forward

to breaking fast with her family.

Her mother Rafidah Rafizah Ahmad, 42, said Janna's interest to fast stemmed from her willingness to observe the religious practice with her family.

"She noticed this and wanted to do it willingly. However, to ease her into the habit during the fasting period, we ensured that she fasted for at least half a day when she was younger," she told *theSun*.

Meanwhile, Arissa's father Azizulrahman Mohd Zain, 46, said his daughter, who has a minor form of cerebral palsy, only started fasting from last year.

"Being the fourth among seven siblings, she wanted to do it as she had observed her elder siblings fasting.

"Her five-year-old brother, who is not fasting, does tempt her with food, however, prompting her to complain to me," he chuckled.

He pointed out that she was not particular about any food and that she liked eating anything that was served to her.

Azizulrahman, who works as a consultant, said Islam encourages children to fast when they are ready.

He added that while the Quran states those who have a medical condition are pardoned from fasting, the willingness of both children to fast despite their condition should serve as an example for others to emulate.