HARI RAYA PUASA: ACTIVITIES IN THE FASTING MONTH

A compilation by the Inclusion & Integration Unit, Student Affairs Office

Breaking fast during the month of Ramadan
Iftar is the daily meal eaten after sunset during the Ramadan month. Aside from breaking fast, iftar also serves as an important bonding event among families, friends and the community. 1 As Ramadan is the month of giving, embracing forgiveness and being thankful2, sharing of the iftar meal with the less fortunate during this month is believed to magnify the spiritual rewards and blessings for those who are able to do so3.

Spiritual reflection, Self-discipline & Self Improvement
Fasting in Islam is mandatory for all Muslims who have reached the stage of puberty and are healthy both in mind and body. It involves abstaining from food, water and other acts deemed sinful4 during the hours of sunrise till sunset. Fasting also entails deep spiritual practise by controlling one’s thoughts and desires. Through self-reflection, one is able to empathise towards the poor and needy5 and develop a stronger sense of righteousness.

The Sacred Fruit
Dates are known to be one of Islam’s sacred fruits and symbolise abundance and faith. They are a common staple during Ramadan, eaten when breaking fast6 to provide much needed nutrition for the body. After a long day of fasting, dates help replenish the body’s blood glucose level7 while rehydrating and replenishing fluids in the body. It is no wonder that the date is considered a holy fruit and is believed to help purify one’s soul, body and mind.

Special Evening Prayers
Taraweeh prayers are commonly practised only in the month of Ramadan, in the mosque or at home and conducted either individually or in congregation.⁸ The prayers involve periodic cycles of muscular activity (standing, bowing, prostrating and sitting), while sections of the Quran are read. Taraweeh prayers allow for the reading of the entire Quran to be completed by the end of the Ramadan month.⁹ While not mandatory, it is believed that reciting the completed Quran helps to cleanse the soul and bring multiple benefits to one’s physical and mental well-being.¹⁰

Look out for our next U.n.I Bite in 2020, where we cover the activities happening on the day of Hari Raya Puasa!

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