Starting right: Mohd Jironi enjoying his sahur at 4.30am at the National Sports Council cafeteria.

Jironi a model sportsman
Plucky youngster continues training during Ramadan

By YP SIVAM
sivam@thestar.com.my
Photos by KAMAL SELLEHUUDDIN

Mohd Jironi Riduan is an exemplary sport model - dedicated, disciplined and determined to do his utmost for the highest.

Despite having to fast in the month of Ramadan, the plucky Jironi has not stopped his training in preparation for the Asian University Games at Kuala Lumpur from Dec 11 to 21.

Jironi, who won the 1,500m gold medal at the Kuala Terengganu Sukma in May this year, usually trains for two hours in the morning and another two hours in the evening each day.

He also goes for regular physical workouts at the National Sports Council (NSC) gymnasium.

Jironi's coach S Muthiah, a former international and three-time SEA Games 1,500m gold medalist, has drawn up a training programme for him during the fasting month.

Muthiah said he would like Jironi to be physically conditioned for the Asian University Games.

"The Games is the only competition for Jironi for the remaining part of the year. Since it is the fasting month, I don't want any exhaustive training sessions for him.

"But the boy is very dedicated..."
Mohd Jironi checks his e-mail and gets ready to attend classes at UPM and disciplined and has not missed any training session, Muthiah said.

During the fasting month, Jironi, who stays at the Bukit Jalil Sports School (BSJ) dormitory, wakes up at 4.30am. After Sahur and prayers, he takes a break, checking e-mails.

Then he goes off on his motorcycle to attend classes at UPM. During lunch time, while his non-Muslim colleagues are having lunch, Jironi goes to the mosque at UPM to recite the Quran. He then returns to the afternoon class session. At 4pm, he starts his two-hour training session at the National Sports Council (NSC) training centre in Bukit Jalil.

Jironi sticks strictly to the training programme drawn up by Muthiah. "It is tiring but I know have to go through the routine to maintain my fitness and physical condition. I have lost about 3kg in the last two weeks, though not strong, I am determined to go through the daily training programme," Jironi said.

Jironi, who won the bronze medal in the 800m in the SEA Games in Kuantan last year, breaks fast with his Muslim colleagues. On the day StarMetro interviewed him, Jironi attended a breaking fast session hosted by the Sport Minister at the Putra Stadium in Bukit Jalil.

The day ends with Jironi joining his team mates for the Terawih prayers at the NSC surau.