

# Zaidatul struggling to adapt to training conditions in the US

By AFTAR SINGH

**KUALA LUMPUR:** National sprinters Zaidatul Husniah Zulkifli (*pic*) and Jonathan Nyepa are going through contrasting fortunes in the United States since they moved their training base there three months ago.

National coach K. Balamurugan had hoped for both his charges to excel but unfortunately, the 26-year-old Zaidatul has been struggling to find her footing in the local competitions.

Only Jonathan has showed marked improvement.

The duo will be in the US until September.

The six-month training cum competitions are part of their preparation for the Philippines SEA Games from Nov 30-Dec 11.

Zaidatul, who is the 2017 Kuala Lumpur SEA Games' 100m and 200m

silver medallist, posted times of 11.77 and 11.80 in two 100m competitions in Georgia in April. She has a personal best of 11.56.

She withdrew from the Star Athletics International Sprints Series in Florida on Sunday due to tightness in her left leg.

Balamurugan said the pint-sized Zaidatul needed more time to adapt to the cold conditions in the US.

"She is having problems getting used to the cold weather here. On Sunday, she did her usual warm-up session but felt discomfort in her leg just before the competition. We withdrew because of fear of injury," said Balamurugan.

"She also pulled out from another local competition here due to the same problem.

"Zaidatul will not go through physio and rehabilitation programme to strengthen her legs.

"Hopefully, she will overcome this and start clocking decent times," he said.

Unlike Zaidatul, Balamurugan said the 23-year-old Jonathan, who has a personal best of 21.10 in 200m, has adapted well.

"Jonathan clocked a personal best of 20.97 (200m) in the Torrin Larence Memorial in Georgia in April to surpass his previous best," said Balamurugan.

"Jonathan has made good progress and I'm confident that he will do a personal best in the next tournament."

Jonathan will take part in the 100m in the World University Games in Naples, Italy, from July 3-14.

His personal best is 10.28 and Balamurugan wants him to clock 10.20.

Zaidatul, who is pursuing a degree in Education at the Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), will not compete in the World University Games as only those 25 years and below are eligible.

