

PERPUSTAKAAN AWAM PASIR GUDANG

KERATAN AKHBAR BERKAITAN PASIR GUDANG
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LIVELIER WITH NEW ' DAUGHTER '

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Livelier with new 'daughter'

Chance encounter brings strangers together as family

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JOHOR BARU: Ramadan has always been a quiet and muted affair for a 68-year-old wheelchair-bound grandmother since her husband died six years ago.

This year's fasting month is much livelier for Siti Khadijah Abdullah with the addition of a new "family member" after she took in a woman, whom she met at a welfare home here as her *anak angkat* (adopted child).

Siti Khadijah, whose husband died from a heart attack, said she fell ill in November last year, leaving her with difficulties in walking.

While at hospital, welfare officers told her that she had to be placed at a welfare home as she was unable to take care of herself.

"Before falling sick, I used to work as a hotel housekeeper and took care of my now 20-year-old grandson since his father left him two months after his birth.

"My grandson is my only family member. He had just started working when I got admitted.

"As I did not want to be a burden to others, I decided to go and stay at a welfare home," she said in an interview at her flat in Taman Cendana, Pasir Gudang.

Siti Khadijah, a Muslim convert, remembered feeling quite lonely and homesick at

the welfare home until she met Nur Aleesya Abdullah, 38, one of the residents there.

"We instantly hit it off as she is also a convert and has no other family members.

"We found solace in each other and I treated her like my daughter. I decided to take Nur Aleesya as my *anak angkat* and invited her to stay with me," she said.

Siti Khadijah said she was glad that her grandson agreed and the three of them are now living under one roof.

Nur Aleesya, who has a mild speech impairment, said she was from Seremban and came to Johor Baru after her family abandoned her.

"I am so happy to have met my *gan ma* (godmother in Mandarin).

"I am also thankful that she is willing to welcome me into her home," she added.

Siti Khadijah's grandson, Muhd Habibullah Abdullah, said he was able to go to work at a volunteer relief organisation with peace of mind knowing that Nur Aleesya was there with his grandmother.

"My grandmother was the sole breadwinner and single-handedly took care of me and my sickly grandfather before he died.



A helping hand: Nur Aleesya massaging Siti Khadijah's leg at her flat in Taman Cendana, Pasir Gudang. Looking on is Siti Khadijah's grandson Muhd Habibullah.

"It has been quite tough for her all these years. I am glad that she is now back at home after finding companionship in Nur Aleesya," he said.

