

Rice Bonds Brunei, Malaysia

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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 21 (Bernama) -- The ASEAN Food Fiesta themed 'Rice That Binds Us' has in a way shown the close bond between Brunei and Malaysia, with both countries almost similar rice dishes - Brunei's 'lapat' made of red rice and Malaysia's 'ketupat palas' made of glutinous rice.

The two dishes are mostly served during festivals like Aidilfitri and family gatherings.

Royal Brunei Catering executive chef Shokrin Abdul Rahman said lapat is made from red rice cooked in coconut and milk and wrapped in 'Silat' leaves.

"The dish is about the same as Malaysia's ketupat palas, only that in Brunei we use red rice for the uniqueness," he told Bernama at the fiesta held today in conjunction with the ongoing 27th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits here.

Shokrin, with 20 years of culinary experience, also took the opportunity to show other Brunei favourites like steamed pandan rice cake wrapped in nipah leaves 'Salurut', kuih Gatas, Wajid Temburung, Penyaram, Tapai and Kelupis.

As for Laos, according to representative Thay Vanh Pathammavong, the rice eaten in the country, which will be the ASEAN chair next year, is soaked overnight in warm water before it is steamed.

"With the technique that we use, the rice will become softer and pleasant to eat," he said, adding that just like in Malaysia, Laotians also eat their rice with 'sambal' and curry.

At the event Thay also introduced Khao Poon noodles made from rice that resemble 'laksa utara' in Malaysia.

Over 60 ASEAN delicacies from the member countries were served to guests, including Cambodian 'Amok Trei' (steamed fish curry served with white rice), Indonesian 'Naci Bakar Ayam Jamur', Malaysian 'laksa' and Myanmar 'Mote Hin Gar' (Rice Noodle with Fish Soup).

Also included were Philippine chicken rice soup 'Arroz Caldo', Singapore Hainan chicken rice, Thailand 'Khao Tung Na Tang' (crispy rice cake) and Vietnam beef noodles 'Pho Bo'.

Rice was selected for the fiesta as the ASEAN main staple food reflects the binding platform for the ASEAN community.

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