



Mardonah Langkap feeds Murnirah Dongkoka at their wedding in Labu yesterday.

Orang Asli couple have Malay-themed wedding

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SEREMBAN: An Orang Asli wedding here has given new meaning to religious integration in the country.

The couple, both Catholics, had a largely traditional Malay ceremony at a Temuan village in Labu yesterday.

Murnirah Dongkok, 24, wore a baju kebaya, while her husband, Mardonah Langkap, 22, was dressed in baju Melayu with a *tengkolok* (head gear).

The pair, who sat on a traditional Malay bridal couch, were sprinkled with yellow rice and scented water by family members, relatives

and guests as a sign of blessing.

The bride's uncle, Darus Badak, 72, gave her away in the presence of the groom's uncle, Bedong Bicho, 54.

Present were three village heads and guests.

Murnirah, who is the daughter of one of the village heads, Tok Cekerah Dongkok, 70, married Mardonah, who's from a nearby Orang Asli village in Mantin.

Dongkok said: "Some might find the tradition odd but our ancestors have been practising *adat perpatih*, which was brought by migrants many

centuries back from Minangkabau in Indonesia."

The villagers from Kampung Sebir, who follow the matrilineal system (*adat perpatih*) or customary law, also have a unique dowry according to the position of an Orang Asli in their tribe.

Relatives of the top three village heads — consisting of Tok Batin, Tok Jenang and Tok Cekerah — command a dowry of RM48.40, RM66.60 and RM44.40 respectively, while other villagers pay RM25.25.

Besides the three village heads, titles are also accorded

to the groom with significant names such as Panglima Angin, Garang, Awan, Hutan and Tengah.

Another interesting aspect of the wedding was the celebratory feast called the *makan beradab* where exotic food and favourite dishes of the tribe, such as rendang cooked with monkey, pangolin, iguana and wild boar meat, were served.

Among the 13 families and 150 villagers living in the settlement, eight families are Catholics, while the others still practise their animist religion.