

## **Torbangun (*Coleus amboinicus* Lour): A Batakese Traditional Cuisine Perceived as Lactagogue**

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Torbangun is believed to contain a certain substance, which helps stimulate breast milk (ASI) for nursing mothers. This was stated by Dr.drh. Rizal Damanik, faculty member of the Department of Community Nutrition, Faculty of Human Ecology of Bogor Agricultural University (IPB) in the dialogue some journalists at the Baranangsiang Campus, on Friday, 22 November 2013. Thus, this plant can prevent malnutrition for infants due to lack of milk production of nursing mothers.

Torbangun is a local name among the Batakese people for the *Coleus amboinicus* Lour plant. In nature there are about 200 species of *Coleus* plants, that include herbaceous plant species (shrubs) distributed in the tropical areas of Asia, Australia, Africa and America.

In his study, Dr.. Rizal Damanik comparing nursing mothers who consumed Torbangun with mothers who didn't consume such plant but they took supplements for nursing mothers for urban communities. The results proved that mothers who consumed Torbangun have produced abundant breast milk more than those who took supplements.

For Batakese people from North Sumatra, torbangun, which is considered nourishing, is usually given to the mother for one month after giving birth in order to restore her state of balance. Utilization torbangun as laktagogum (stimulates milk production), has been practiced by Batakese women for hundreds of years but has not been well documented. No other ethnic group in the world have utilized torbangun as laktagogum similar as those practiced by Batakese women.

The practice of consuming torbangun soup has been practiced for hundreds of years, and its adherence is still strong. Nevertheless, at least up to 2001 (when the study on the use torbangun .as laktagogum implemented by Dr Rizal Damanik began), there is no scientific or research results have been documented comprehensively to substantiate its benefits in nutrition and health in humans of the torbangun.

The are various methods of cultivation of coleus plants or torbangun. In addition, to be an ornamental plant, grown in the home garden, coleus are widely used for health and medical purposes, among others, to cure asthma, cough, mouth sores, and snake bites. (Wied).

perceived to serve several purposes which include enhancing breast milk production and acting as a uterine cleansing agent; and (3) the tradition has been practiced for hundreds of years, and its adherence is still strong.