

[The Star Online](#) > Southeast

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## Swiftlet business soaring high in Pahang

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KUANTAN: A total of 1,489 swiftlet premises have been developed by 1,036 operators in Pahang.

Kuantan topped the list with 700 premises managed by 500 operators followed by Rompin, Pekan, Temerloh, Jerantut, Bera, Bentong and Raub.

State Agriculture, Agro-based Industries and Felda Affairs Committee chairman Datuk Tan Aminuddin Ishak said the high demands for swiftlet nests in the Chinese community made it a lucrative business.

The migration of the birds from caves to towns helped people set up new business ventures, he said.

“The annual trade in Malaysia is estimated to be worth RM500mil. In Pahang alone it is worth RM36mil,” he said here recently.

Tan Aminuddin said the bird’s raw nest could fetch between RM1,000 and RM2,000 per kilogram.

Interest in the industry was so high that commercial buildings and homes had been converted into nesting places, he added.

However, there were certain issues which needed attention, especially the risk of disease, bird droppings, cleanliness of towns, noise pollution, price of property devalued and depreciation in quality of life, Tan Aminuddin said.

In view of this, the Veterinary Services Department was committed in providing training on good animal husbandry practice, he added.

“This practice had been made a requirement under local government by-laws before the issuance of licences.

“The department has organised courses on this practice for operators to enable them to get the permits,” he said.

Tan Aminuddin also said the department would carry out checks from time to time to ensure the premises were free of diseases and did not pose risks to the public and the birds.

“The swiftlet industry has great potential for farmers in the state but there is a need to check its development to avoid conflicts and health risks.

“If properly managed, the industry can contribute to the state’s coffers with farmers earning good incomes,” he added.

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