

# ECER Dorper sheep auction raises RM500,000

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The East Coast Economic Region's (ECER) Dorper sheep auction over the weekend has raised about half a million ringgit which will indirectly benefit 200 participants, including the orang asli, in a sheep breeding and rearing project in Pekan.

Witnessed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob in Pekan, the auction saw 389 sheep sold for RM221,300 in the public category, while the charity auction saw 50 sheep sold for RM265,000, the ECER Development Council said yesterday.

It marked ECER's first charity auction involving 12 companies placing their bids. The highest bid was RM120,000 made by Kuantan Port Consortium Sdn Bhd for 10 sheep.

In the inaugural auction in 2010, ECER

raised RM265,000 from the sale of 465 sheep.

The Dorper sheep, a South African breed developed by crossing the Dorset Horn and Blackhead Persian sheep, is a fast-growing meat-producing animal.

Datuk Jebasingam Issace John, chief executive officer of the ECER Development Council, said he was pleased with the outcome of the auction as it showed collaboration between industry players and ECER.

It would augur well for the sheep-breeding programme, he added.

He said although it was less than three years since the agropolitan scheme was launched in Pekan, the participants, including 102 orang asli, were already reaping the benefits.

"Participants have seen their monthly

incomes increase to RM1,200 or more. The proceeds of this auction will go to the Pekan Agropolitan participants' welfare," said Jebasingam.

The sheep sold in the auction were from the sheep-rearing scheme in Runchang and Batu 8.

The primary economic activity of Runchang focuses on sheep rearing, while the Batu 8 scheme's main economic activity is in oil palm plantations.

The Pekan Agropolitan project is expected to raise 25,000 sheep by 2015, making the district the biggest hub for Dorper sheep in the region.

The project was one of ECER's initiatives to help develop the region and improve the people's livelihood. — Bernama