

# Stringent rules over bird's nest

## China's move will not affect Malaysia

**BERA:** China has introduced a new stringent medical and health guideline to check the import of bird's nest from bird-flu infected countries, Deputy Agriculture and Agro-based Industries Minister Datuk Chua Tee Yong said.

Chua said, however, the guideline would not affect local exporters as Malaysia was free of bird flu.

"We believe the move is targeted at other countries and not us. Local exporters should not be unduly worried but instead prepare to face competitors," he said, after a dialogue with bird's nest traders and farmers in the Bera MCA office here yesterday.

Chua said the Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) requirements stipulated by Beijing were still applicable and negotiations were still ongoing.

He said Malaysia was prepared to send its officials to meet their counterparts in China and the ministry was waiting for a directive from the Cabinet.

In **PUTRAJAYA**, the Malaysian Federation of Bird's Nest Merchant Association has sought Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak's assistance to

resolve China's ban on bird's nest imports from the country.

The federation felt that the Prime Minister's cordial relationship with Chinese leaders could bring an end to the ban which was imposed in July last year.

The federation yesterday handed a memorandum on the matter to Najib. It was received by his political secretary Wong Nai Chee.

The delegation led by federation president Datuk Tok Teng Sai later had an hour-long dialogue with Wong.

Tok said the federation felt that it was unsuitable to install RFID tags as the bird's nest would have to pass through many hands between the time it was harvested and when it reached the consumer.

In **KOTA KINABALU** Sabah Wildlife Department director Dr Laurentius Ambu said the requirement by China for RFID for bird's nest export is likely to hit Sabah and Sarawak which harvest its nests from natural caves.

The two states, which have the largest number of natural caves in the country, are concerned about the requirement for RFID.