

# Serama – a feather in Malaysia's cap

No fowl is as 'on fire' as the diminutive bird which has a huge following worldwide

**PETALING JAYA:** It's the Year of the Fire Rooster and no fowl is as "on fire" as the Malaysian serama.

The diminutive breed is so popular that groups have been set up as far as in the United States, Europe and other parts of Asia to promote the showing and breeding of the bird.

The Malaysian serama – famous for its puffed up chest – is considered the gold standard, so much so that enthusiasts come from countries as far as Belgium, Greece, Spain, Kuwait and even Mexico and Brazil just to learn about this breed.

The development and showing of serama as a sport can be intense competitions with half a point making the difference between champions and losers.

Serama and its eggs are popular on eBay and online pet forums in the United States and Europe, selling for US\$32 (RM144) per egg from show-winning parents and going up to US\$80 (RM358) for a serama with "Malaysian bloodline".

A check on Facebook showed that there were overseas groups set up to discuss the rearing and selling of the bird.

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## Engineering

Tomorrow's Engineer -  
Inspired by Nature

by M. Sri Jalandran,  
Head, Faculty of Engineering,  
SEGi College Subang Jaya



8 January 2017 (Sun), 5.15pm - 6.30pm  
Hall 1, Stage Area, KL Convention Centre

**FREE**  
ADMISSION

The serama will be featured on a series of stamps by Pos Malaysia to commemorate the Chinese New Year.

One local enthusiast, Lee Kok Hoong, said he was often contacted by foreigners eager to learn about this breed of chicken.

"They come to Malaysia to learn about the serama to the extent that one couple from



## Famous chick:

Serama is such a popular breed that many enthusiasts travel to Malaysia just to learn about the bird. Here is one puffing up its chest.

Belgium visit here twice a year.

"There are many serama breeders overseas, some of whom have even crossed the breed with chickens from over there. And the eggs can be sold for about 150 euros (RM708) each," he said.

Considered the smallest breed of chicken in the world, these birds which were created in Kota Baru almost 30 years ago by breeding Japanese bantam with local chicken, typically weighs under 500g each. Some even weigh about 250g.

Lee, a manager in a food company, said that in the 1990s, a serama could easily fetch up to RM38,000 in Malaysia.

"However, the prices have since come down to around RM15,000 per bird," he said. Lee has some 30 birds in Malaysia and another 200 in Bangkok.

His prize-winning bird, named Trouble

Maker and which he bought as a juvenile for RM2,500, is now worth RM7,000.

"I was offered that sum. But I'm not interested in selling," said Lee, who got into the hobby about three years ago.

Lee, who runs the Art of Serama page on Facebook, said that while taking care and breeding serama were relatively fuss free and inexpensive, it was not easy to rear the chicks.

"The chick is very fragile and its body structure can go out of shape as it grows. It's also difficult to get the right colouring.

"The preference is for golden yellow and the next is black. The batik plumage is not so popular," he said.

Lee, who used to breed show dogs previously, said he changed to serama because he wanted to "promote something local".