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## Artists take extra care over a royal commission

SUNGAI BULOH, Fri. - It took 50 people one month to prepare the documents to be used in the installation of the 12th Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Syed Putra Jamalullail on April 25 at Istana Negara.

Entrusted with the zero-error task, staff of Yayasan Restu including calligraphists Mohd Fadil Sulaiman and Abdul Baki Abu Bakar exercised extra care while inscribing every character on the documents written in jawi.

Artistically designed on goatskin parchment using stems of the local giant fern, the documents include the texts of the doa, the King's speech, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's speech and the proclamation.

Datuk Abdul Latiff Mirasa, chairman of the foundation, said the staff did their very best to ensure quality.

He said it was an honour that the palace had granted the foundation the opportunity to prepare documents for such an occasion.

"This will also help bring Malay culture to greater heights as the designs we incorporated in our pieces are reflections of the race."

In an effort to ensure quality, Abdul Latiff said the artists took almost a day to ink each parchment, which had been roughed out in pencil to avoid mistakes.

"If the pieces were found to be imperfect, the job would have had to be done all over again, a possibility the artists tried to avoid by all means as Istana Negara had earlier allotted them four pieces of parchment for the four documents.

"Since two people were working on the parchments, the same person had to continue writing the characters that he had written. This was to ensure they are standardised," Abdul Latiff said.

The vellum parchment, which comes in sheets of 50.8 cm by 76.2 cm, was imported from Germany.

Abdul Latiff met newsmen at the Riyadh Fannil Islam gallery managed by the foundation.

The gallery houses works of art by Islamic calligraphists and artists in various styles.

The foundation was also involved in the preparation of invitation letters to the Rulers and Yang di-Pertuas Negeri last month.

The copies featured the Zukhuf style which epitomises Islamic decorative art using floral motifs and geometric designs to create exquisite patterns.

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