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Bits of history up for online sale

By Arman Ahmad

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - It's easy to own a sword from the King of Siam circa 1896 or a cookie container bearing the signature of former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Just visit cyberspace to find these items and other interesting bits of Malaysian history waiting to be snapped up.

On websites like e-Bay and lelong.com, these articles are making their way out of dusty cupboards and into the hands of new owners via on-line auction sites.

A check by the New Sunday Times showed many interesting items up for sale.

On the e-Bay Malaysia website, a telegram sent by MCA founder Tun Tan Cheng Lock circa 1952 is on sale.

According to the auctioneer, it is the original copy of the telegram sent by Tan to the late Datuk B.H. Tan and refers to the celebrations of the Umno-MCA Alliance's election success in Johor Baru on Dec 15, 1952. The opening price is RM1,000.

Slightly more expensive, however, is the original hand-written letter sent by Datuk Onn Jaafar to B.H. Tan.

Dated Sept 4, 1951, it makes reference to the meeting of the Independence of Malaya Party at the Hotel Majestic Kuala Lumpur on Sept 16, 1951.

There are also other items up for sale that had less to do with affairs of state, but are more personal in nature.

One such item is a golf club used by Tunku Abdul Rahman priced at RM6,000. Not all items belong to famous people. Some items are from ordinary Malaysians but have become precious due to nostalgic value.

There is the black Jabatan Telekom Malaysia telephone from the 1970s which is priced at RM158.

A cookie container bearing the signatures of Dr Mahathir and his wife given to visitors at his residence during Hari Raya in 2003 was also found on the lelong.com site for RM68.

But older items from this nation's past are offered at phenomenal sums.

A sword which was a gift from the King of Siam, King Chulalongkorn Rama V, to the Sultan of Terengganu, Sultan Zainal Abidin III, is one of the oldest items on auction.

It was presented either during King Chulalongkorn's visit to Terengganu in September 1888 or during the Sultan's visit to Siam in August 1896.

According to its seller, Zahrom, from Terengganu, the sword was recorded in the book Sejarah Darul Iman by Datuk Setia Jasa. The asking price is RM100,000.

(END) Source : New Straits Times