

Fill up 'holes' in Perak's history

• **By Jaspal Singh**
news@nst.com.my

IPOH: There are yawning gaps in the Taiping Museum library's collection of books on Perak.

The library was once one of the most important centres for research on the history of the state. But now hardly any significant books on the state's past remain.

Where all the books went is anyone's guess.

As far back as 2003, the *New Straits Times* highlighted the dilapidated condition of the books in the library and the important titles "missing" from its catalogue.

Now, a Perak history buff is asking the state government and the National Heritage Department to provide the money to bring the library back to its former eminence.

He says that both the British Museum library in London and the Leiden Museum in Holland have large collections of books on Perak, and suggests that copies can be acquired.

Perak Heritage Society vice-president

Mohd Taib Mohamed said: "There are hundreds of book titles in the possession of the British Museum library in London, which shares the same catalogue with Taiping Museum on Perak history."

He said this was thanks to a pre-Merdeka enactment called the Book Publication and Registration Enactment.

Under the ruling, copies of all books published on Perak history had to be added to the libraries of both the Taiping Museum and the British Museum.

Taib, who heads the Perak state secretariat library, added: "Besides the British Museum library, the Leiden Museum library in Holland has numerous original books on Perak, as well as other states in the country.

"These books are part of our country's heritage. It is a sad fact that some original titles now cannot be found in Taiping Museum's library. But we can make the effort to enrich the library with copies of the books from the British Museum."

He said the Perak Heritage Society was willing to work with the state government and the National Heritage Department if their help was needed.