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NATION

Over 1,000 documents de-classified

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BOOST: The National Archives is making its archives more accessible to the public

**LIYANA JAMALUDIN
AND MICHAEL MURTY**
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

MALAYSIANS can now access the first Malay newspaper, *Jawi Peranakan*, that was published from 1887 to 1895.

The Malaysia National Archives (ANM) has downgraded the ranking of its old records' compilation to make them more accessible to the public.

Also available is the first newspaper with sketches that were produced in London, England, on Nov 29, 1845, to accompany a story on Tanah Melayu, titled "Gallant Defeat of Malay Pirates on the Coast of Borneo".

ANM director-general Daresah Ismail said the organisation had prepared a list of group archives that could be viewed by anyone aged 25 and above. They can register themselves as researchers with the ANM.

"As an incentive to researchers, the ANM has included new documents that have qualified to be viewed by the public in that list."

The ANM made history last year by reviewing 1,594 units of pre-1972 classified records.

The ANM headquarters holds 1,417 units out of six classified records groups which have

ly been de-classified to make it accessible to researchers.

Daresah urged the public to donate old articles and journals to the ANM to complete its collection.

"Old newspapers, journals and documents are Malaysia's treasures as they have records of our history.

"As Malaysians, we have a right to know what happened in the past. Some old journals may reveal more than history textbooks."

She said the ANM would also consider buying antique newspapers and journals.

"We should be generous when giving knowledge to others."

Newspaper collection at the ANC started since the 1960s. It had acquired 281,633 copies of newspapers, including Malay newspapers (158 types), English (57), Chinese (49) and Tamil (29).

Last year, 15 editions were acquired, including *The Illustrated London News*, *Ballou's*

Pictorial, *The Penny Illustrated Paper*, *The Graphic*, *Harper's Weekly*, *Penang Daily News*, *Penang Shim-bun*, *Straits Echo*, *Sunday Gazette*, *Time Malaya* and *Merdeka*.

There are 63 newspapers dated 1845.

The ANM started its archiving process in the 1970s based on documents from institutions both in and out of the country, and also from personal collections. Addition-

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Daresah Ismail
Malaysia National Archives
director-general

Archiving Process

INFOGRAPHIC: NST



1. Conservators will check handwritten documents for damage and ink blotches.



2. The documents are soaked in a solution of distilled water and magnesium carbonate for 45 minutes to rid it of acid.



3. They will be put on airing racks to dry overnight.

4. There are three ways to preserve documents: traditional, lamination and encapsulation.

- **Traditional preservation** is used for old and handwritten documents;
- **Lamination** is used for printed matter like newspapers and magazines; and,
- **Encapsulation** is used for single-leaf documents such as building plans, posters and certificates.

5. There are three methods of traditional preservation: manual, leafcasting and tissue repair.

- **Manual preservation** uses handmade paper, which is acid-free. It is imported from Japan, the United Kingdom and India.

- **Leafcasting** uses a machine to fill in holes of damaged documents with pulp.



- **Tissue repair** uses a mixture of starch and distilled water as an adhesive layer to glue thin layers of tissue to the front and back of the document to strengthen it.



6. The documents are then bound into volumes.



7. A cover board is attached to the bound documents.