





The National Library Board launches new permanent exhibition to promote information and media literacy through newspapers




Singapore, 13 March 2020

ANNEX A

SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NEWS GALLERY: BEYOND HEADLINES EXHIBITION


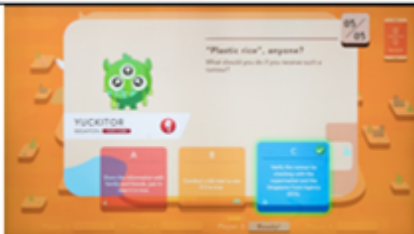
S/N	Image Reference	Exhibition highlight	Description
Zone 1: Early Editions			
1.		<p>Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser</p> <p>7 January 1836</p> <p>Singapore Free Press</p> <p>In English</p> <p><i>Zone 1: Early Editions</i></p>	<p>First published on 8 October 1835, the Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser was the second English newspaper in Singapore.</p> <p>The four-page weekly initially consisted of commercial and shipping news but ceased publication in 1869 due to stiff competition. In 1884, Charles Burton Buckley, author of the classic book, <i>An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore 1819 – 1867</i>, revived the paper. The Straits Times, a long-time rival, eventually acquired it in 1946.</p> <p><u>The front-page of this early issue</u> features a new year's greeting from the editors, readers' letters on a variety of topics, advertisements for ships sailing to Liverpool and London, as well as notices by businesses and individuals. One notice by pioneer Arab trader, Syed Omar bin Ali Aljunied, announced his departure from Singapore, and requested that those with claims upon</p>
			him or who were indebted to him make their payment without delay.
2.		<p>Nanyang Siang Pau (南洋商報)</p> <p>10 April 1941</p> <p>Nanyang Press Ltd.</p> <p>In Chinese</p> <p><i>Zone 1: Early Editions</i></p>	<p>First published on 6 September 1923, Nanyang Siang Pau was established by businessman and philanthropist Tan Kah Kee to promote commerce and education. Tan had started a printing press to print labels and invoices for his rubber plantation business, and the newspaper helped him advertise his rubber products.</p> <p>On 16 March 1983, Nanyang Siang Pau merged with Sin Chew Jit Poh, another leading daily, to form Nanyang Xingzhou Lianhe Zaobao (later shortened to Lianhe Zaobao) and its evening edition, Lianhe Wanbao.</p> <p><u>The front page of this issue</u> is taken up by advertisements, much like newspapers today. These include advertisements about beauty products, Chinese textbooks, fountain pens and medicines treating kidney problems. Some of the most well-known Chinese writers and journalists worked for the newspaper, such as Fu Wumen (傅无闷) and Hu Yuzhi (胡愈之), whose names appear at the bottom of the page. With strong financial backing and experienced</p>


			staff, the newspaper became one of the leading dailies in Singapore.
3.		<p>Utusan Melayu</p> <p>26 September 1945</p> <p>Utusan Melayu Press Limited</p> <p>In Malay, Jawi script</p> <p>Zone 1: Early Editions</p>	<p>Utusan Melayu was started on 29 May 1939, as a Malay daily in Jawi script. It was the first Malay newspaper to be wholly owned, financed and written by Malays. Singapore's first President, Yusof bin Ishak, was one of the newspaper's prime movers.</p> <p>The newspaper's first building was located at Queen Street in 1939. It published mostly local news and championed Malay rights. By 1941, it had reached a daily circulation of 1,800 copies and was sold at 10 cents per copy, while the annual subscription was \$30.</p> <p>This issue was among the first to be published again following the end of the Second World War. Unsurprisingly, it was dominated by news on the fate of Japan. Due to post-occupation nationalistic sentiments, Utusan Melayu's circulation rose to around 35,000 copies a week by 1958.</p>
4.		<p>Tamil Murasu</p> <p>1 October 1956</p> <p>Sarangapani</p> <p>In Tamil</p> <p>Zone 1: Early Editions</p>	<p>Tamil Murasu was published on 6 July 1935 to propagate socio-economic reforms carried out by Tamil Reform Association, one of the earliest Tamil associations in Singapore. In 1936, the association sold the paper to a well-known leader of the Tamil community, G. Sarangapani, who became its editor and sole proprietor until his death in 1974.</p> <p>Mirroring Sarangapani's concern for the status and the rights of the Tamil community in Singapore, the newspaper often discussed the need to uplift the community through social and economic transformation.</p> <p>In 1995, the paper became part of the Singapore Press Holdings and continues as a daily newspaper today.</p> <p>This issue includes the <i>Maanavar Manimandram Malar</i>, or the "Students' Bell Club" supplement, which began in the early 1950s to preserve and promote Tamil writing among Singapore youths.</p>

Zone 2: Behind Every Story			
5.		<p>Opening of Naval Base</p> <p>14 February 1938</p> <p><i>Zone 2: Behind Every Story</i></p> <p>The Morning Tribune, 15 February 1938, Singapore Naval Base Is Insurance Against War.</p>	<p>With the completion of the King George VI Dock at Sembawang Naval Base in 1938, Singapore was dubbed Britain's "insurance against war" by government officials, a reputation perpetuated by the pre-war press.</p> <p>Construction of the naval base had cost £28 million over a decade. News reports highlighted that it was the world's largest naval dock, equipped with state-of-the-art facilities.</p> <p>When Singapore fell to the Japanese four years later, many were shocked, as British propaganda and the media had popularised a false sense of safety. A letter in 1939 to The Straits Times, (<i>Living In A Fool's Paradise In Critical Times</i>), was one of the rare few alternative voices that cautioned readers against this dominant perspective.</p>
6.		<p>Fall of Singapore</p> <p>15 February 1942</p> <p><i>Zone 2: Behind Every Story</i></p> <p>The Shonan Times, February 20, 1942, Japan's Position Impregnable.]</p>	<p>Propaganda, especially in times of war, typically portrays biased or one-sided information meant to promote a political cause or a point of view. Facts and information are distorted and manipulated to discredit opponents.</p> <p>For instance, during the Second World War, Japanese controlled press regularly boasted that Japan would create a new world order based on justice. It framed the war as cooperation between Asian nations working towards peace and harmony.</p> <p>On the other hand, a widely covered speech by British Prime Minister Winston Churchill described the fall of Singapore as a military defeat and branded Japanese aggression as "criminal madness".</p>
7.		<p>Maria Hertogh Riots</p> <p>11-13 December 1950</p> <p><i>Zone 2: Behind Every Story</i></p> <p>Utusan Melayu, 7 December 1950, Nadra menanais meminta pertolongan, pemberita Utusan "Saya sangat susah hati.... terpaksa memakai gaur" Menanyakan khabar Che Aminah. Nadra cried asking for help from Utusan's reporter 'I am very upset (or troubled) ... forced to wear gown' Asked for news about Che Aminah.</p>	<p>The custody battle for Maria Hertogh, between her Malay foster mother and her Dutch biological parents was highly sensationalised by the media. Maria's parents had put her in the care of their friend, Che Aminah binte Mohamed, during the Japanese Occupation in Java. In 1950, a legal battle for the girl ensued between her parents and her foster mother.</p> <p>Provocative images and emotive headlines – including one that said Maria Hertogh had knelt before a Virgin Mary statue – in the newspapers fanned the anger of the Muslim community towards the colonial authorities.</p> <p>The media coverage was a contributing factor to the riots that broke out after the conclusion of the case.</p>

8.	<p>香口胶入口商希望 能获宽限期清存货</p> <p>【本報訊】據新加坡《星島日報》報導，由於新加坡政府宣布禁食口膠，不少進口商及零售商均表示，他們目前仍有大量存貨，希望政府能給予一段寬限期，讓他們有時間清理這些存貨。據悉，目前新加坡市面上仍有大量口膠在流通，這些口膠主要是由外國進口商運抵新加坡的。由於政府禁食口膠的決定，這些進口商和零售商都面臨著巨大的庫存壓力。他們希望政府能考慮到他們的實際情況，給予一段寬限期，讓他們有時間將這些存貨清理掉。否則，他們將面臨巨大的經濟損失。</p>	<p>Chewing Gum Ban</p> <p>30 December 1991</p> <p><i>Zone 2: Behind Every Story</i></p> <p>Lianhe Zaobao, 1 January, 1992, 香口胶入口商希望獲寬限期清存貨 Chewing gum importers ask for an extension to clear existing stock</p>	<p>On 30 December 1991, the Ministry of Environment announced that the import, sale and manufacturing of chewing gum would be banned in Singapore. The decision triggered a heated debate in the press, which published several opinion pieces on the issue. The columns and letters illustrate how the media framed the unique law.</p> <p>The Straits Times published several <u>letters</u> from readers who disagreed with the ban and felt it was too drastic, while a <u>columnist</u> framed the ban as a sign that the government was prepared to make unpopular decisions even as it aimed to be more consultative.</p> <p>Other Singapore papers, like the <u>Business Times</u>, described the ban as a pragmatic solution to deal with littering problems caused by chewing gum.</p> <p><u>Berita Harian</u> and <u>Lianhe Zaobao</u> also published articles justifying the ban, highlighting the importance of self-discipline and the idea that personal rights could be sacrificed for society's greater good.</p>
----	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Zone 3: Fact or Fake?			
9.		<p>Fake news about the collapse of Punggol Waterway Terraces</p> <p><i>Zone 3: Fact or Fake?</i></p>	<p>On 11 November 2016, an online article claimed that the top floor of Punggol Waterway Terraces had collapsed, showing an image of the supposedly damaged building.</p> <p>This image captured people's attention as it provided visual 'evidence', increasing the believability of the news. This fake news went viral and provoked panic amongst the public.</p>
10.		<p>Fake MOH health advisory</p> <p><i>Zone 3: Fact or Fake?</i></p>	<p>In January 2020, people in Singapore began receiving a text message purportedly from the Ministry of Health (MOH). Among other cautions, the text informed them that "the influenza this time is serious" and urged them to "keep their throats moist" to ward off the virus.</p> <p>MOH never issued this advisory. In a statement published by The Straits Times on 7 January 2020, MOH debunked the idea that keeping one's throat moist could prevent the flu.</p>





11.		<p>Fake news articles linked to investment scams, featuring prominent Singaporeans</p> <p><i>Zone 3: Fact or Fake?</i></p>	<p>Several prominent Singaporeans including government ministers, billionaires and celebrities were featured in fabricated news articles used to solicit bitcoin investments or new business ventures. The articles used their photographs with logos of local mainstream media agencies, as well as fabricated comments and sensational headlines, to deceive the public.</p> <p>Despite media coverage and alerts issued by the Monetary Authority of Singapore and the Singapore Police Force's Scam Alert website, seven Singaporeans lost a total of \$78,000 to such investment scams within a three month period in 2018.</p>
12.		<p>"Plastic rice" in NTUC Fairprice supermarkets</p> <p><i>Zone 3: Fact or Fake?</i></p>	<p>In 2017, rumours emerged that NTUC Fairprice supermarkets were selling rice made of plastic under its house brand and that the news was confirmed by chemists. This rumour was quickly disseminated, urging Singaporeans not to purchase NTUC's house brand of jasmine rice. The claim caused panic and led to some customers demanding for a refund and compensation from NTUC.</p> <p>The NTUC filed a police report over the rumours and addressed the incident on social media, stating that its rice had passed safety checks by the authorities. The</p>

			<p>Agri Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) then followed up to inform the public that it had not detected any fake rice in Singapore.</p>
13.		<p>Fake news of Mr Lee Kuan Yew's passing</p> <p><i>Zone 3: Fact or Fake?</i></p>	<p>On 18 March 2015, when Founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew was critically ill, a piece of fake news said he had passed away. The fake news even made it to international media including CNN in the United States and CCTV of China.</p> <p>Singapore authorities had to issue a statement to confirm the falsehood of the news. Mr Lee Kuan Yew eventually passed on 23 March 2015.</p> <p>It was later revealed that a Singaporean student had created the fake news by digitally altering screenshots of the Prime Minister's Office website. He shared the fake news initially amongst his group of friends, who proceeded to share it online.</p>

Zone 4: Extra! Extra!

As newspapers attempted to drive up their circulation, they included features such as puzzles, riddles and horoscopes to entertain readers. These features became integral to newspapers as they prompted audience participation and boosted circulation.

Businesses also tapped on puzzles and quizzes as part of their promotional or advertising campaigns. Companies would sponsor prizes or even organise their own contests in newspapers to attract customers and establish their brand names.

14.		Crossword Puzzle Malaya Tribune, 24 June 1926, p. 9. Malaya Tribune Press <i>Zone 4: Extra! Extra!</i>	Malaya Tribune ran its own series of puzzles in 1926, offering cash prizes to winners as part of its fundraising for the Children's Aid Society. To participate, every contestant had to pay an entry fee of \$1. This contest grew in popularity and eventually attracted 100 participants. After paying for the prizes, \$25 was donated to the charity. By the end of the year, the Malaya Tribune had raised more than \$400 for the Children's Aid Society.
15.		Spot The Ball The Straits Times, 26 March 1953, p. 4. <i>Zone 4: Extra! Extra!</i>	Fraser & Neave (F&N) ran a series of "spot the ball" contests in 1953. These featured photographs taken at cricket, basketball, football, hockey, tennis and badminton matches, offering cash prizes totalling \$4,000. The contests were published in both The Straits Times and The Singapore Free Press.
16.		Spot The Difference The Straits Times, 28 August 1969, p. 4. <i>Zone 4: Extra! Extra!</i>	In the late 1960s, Cathay Organisation used "spot the difference" contests to promote movies screened at its cinemas, such as this one promoting Once Upon a Time in the West, a 1968 western. It would collaborate with partners such as Boustead's to award prizes to winners. Cathay continued to run such promotions until the early 1980s.
17.		Sudoku TODAY, 8 December 2016, p. 69. Mediacorp <i>Zone 4: Extra! Extra!</i>	When sudoku became popular in the mid-2000s, Singapore newspapers quickly jumped on the trend. The New Paper, Straits Times, and freesheet TODAY all regularly published the puzzle. Sudoku became a regular feature in TODAY for more than a decade until it ceased its print edition in 2017.