

THE NEWS GALLERY

BEYOND HEADLINES



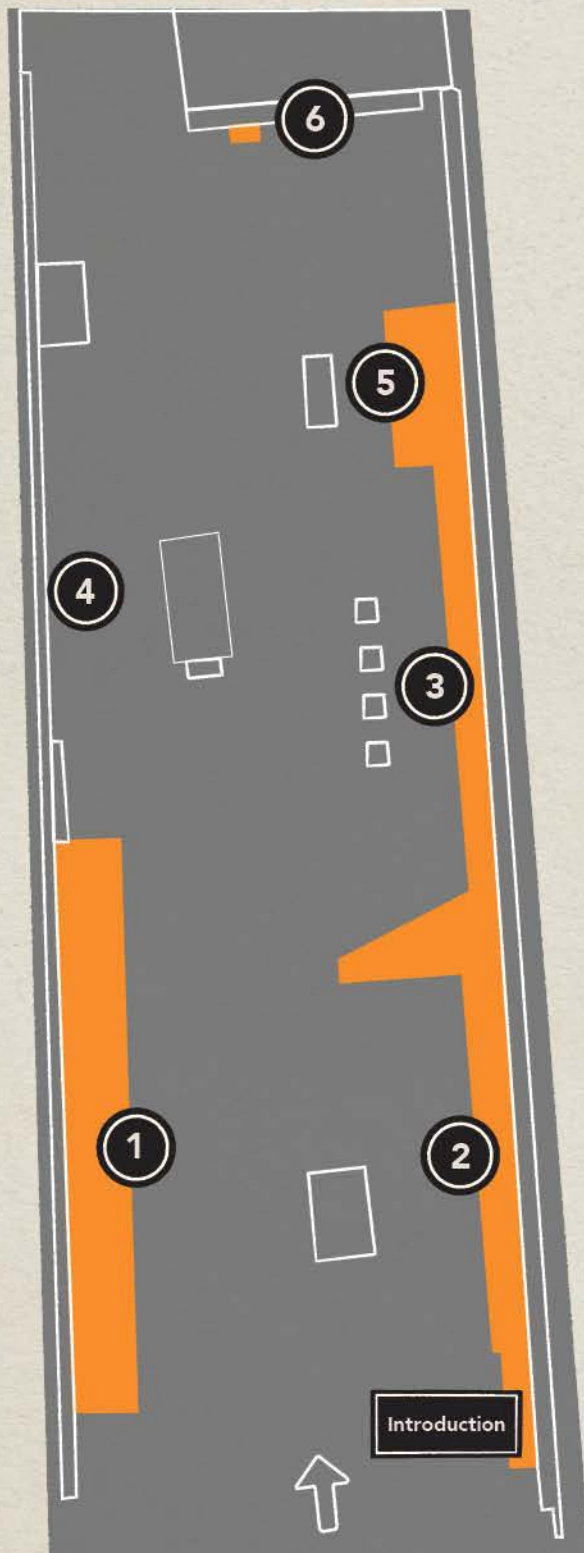
Exhibition Guide



NLB

National Library
Singapore

Exhibition Floor Plan



First published in the 17th century, the modern newspaper is one of the oldest channels through which people receive information about events taking place around them and beyond. As the Internet revolutionised media in the 21st century, one's ability to interpret, evaluate and make use of information has become an essential life skill.

The News Gallery: Beyond Headlines offers an interactive platform where visitors can learn to be more discerning about information and media through the National Library's rich resources on newspapers. This permanent exhibition tells the stories of Singapore newspapers in the library's collection dating from the 1820s, presents episodes from Singapore's history through the perspectives of different media, offers insights on fake news, and explores the different facets of the fascinating yet bewildering world of news media.

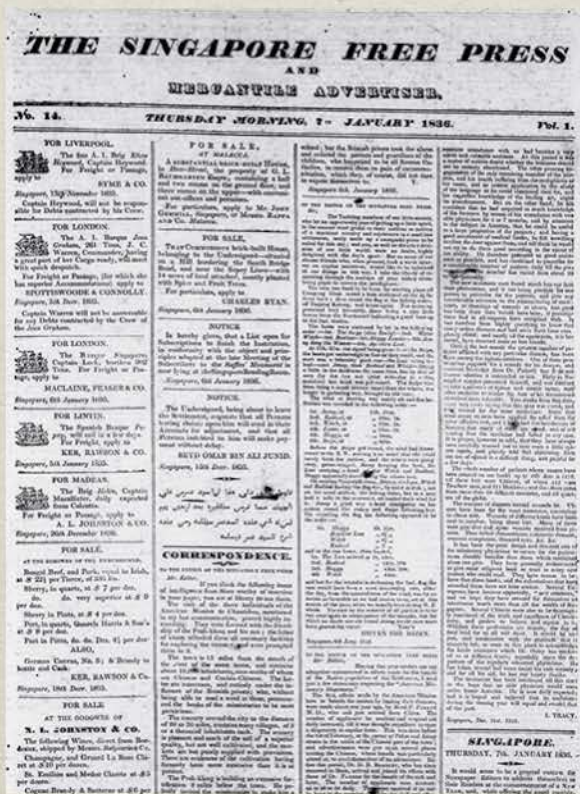
- 1 Early Editions**
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- 3 Fact or Fake?**
- 4 Extra! Extra!**
- 5 Read All About It**
- 6 Make Headline News!**

Early Editions

Founded in 1824, Singapore's first newspaper was the *Singapore Chronicle and Commercial Register*. It remained the only local newspaper for more than a decade due to the gagging act, which banned any publication that was not approved by the authorities. When the act was repealed in 1835, it opened the market up to other newspaper publishers, such as *Singapore Free Press* (1835) and *The Straits Times* (1845). Vernacular newspapers such as Chinese-language *Lat Pau* (1881), Malay-language *Jawi Peranakan* (1876) and Tamil-language *Singai Nesan* (1887) brought business information and community news to

the various ethnic groups residing in Singapore and Malaya. These publications addressed the concerns and interests of the respective communities as well as championed causes important to them.

The stories of Singapore newspapers reflect the country's diverse socio-cultural tapestry. The National Library is home to a rich archive of over 120 Singapore newspaper titles published since 1827. On display are the original copies of selected newspapers from the library's collection, which will be refreshed from time to time.



**Singapore Free Press and
Mercantile Advertiser**

7 January 1836

Singapore: Singapore Free Press

First published on 8 October 1835, the *Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser* was Singapore's second English-language newspaper after the *Singapore Chronicle*. It was so named to mark the abolishment of the gagging act. The newspaper ceased publication in 1869 but was revived in 1884. It was acquired by *The Straits Times* in 1946.



Nanyang Siang Pau

10 April 1941

Singapore: Nanyang Press Ltd

Nanyang Siang Pau was a Chinese-language newspaper first issued on 6 September 1923. It was established by businessman and philanthropist Tan Kah Kee with the aim of promoting commerce and education. Some of the most well-known Chinese writers and journalists from China and Singapore worked for the newspaper, such as Fu Wumen (傅无闷) and Hu Yuzhi (胡愈之). On 16 March 1983, Nanyang Siang Pau merged with Sin Chew Jit Poh, another leading Chinese daily, to become Nanyang Xingzhou Lianhe Zaobao (later shortened to Lianhe Zaobao) and its evening edition, Lianhe Wanbao.



Utusan Melayu

26 September 1945

Singapore: Utusan Melayu Press Limited

First published in Singapore on 29 May 1939 as a Malay daily in Jawi script, Utusan Melayu was a landmark publication as it was the first Malay newspaper to be wholly owned, financed and written by Malays. Before that, Malay newspapers were controlled by Muslims of Arab and Indian origins. Yusof bin Ishak, who later became Singapore's first Malayan-born Yang di-Pertuan Negara (Head of State) and subsequently president, was one of the newspaper's prime movers.



Tamil Murasu

5 May 1936

Singapore: Sarangany

First published on 6 July 1935, the objective of Tamil Murasu was to propagate socio-economic reforms carried out by the Tamil Reform Association, one of the earliest Tamil associations in Singapore. Concerned about the status and rights of the Tamil community in Singapore, Tamil Murasu often discussed the need to uplift Tamils through social and economic transformations.

Behind Every Story

At first glance, a news story might seem to be a mere account of an incident or development in the world. In truth, a news article is subjected to many forms of influence, such as a newsroom's political affiliations, its source of funding, expectations of its readers, causes it champions, personal opinions of its editors and journalists, and public sentiment. Understanding this enables readers to be more discerning and inquiring about the news they come across.

This multimedia exhibit presents events from Singapore's history and how they were reported in newspapers and other media. By comparing the different ways these events were presented and interpreted in the media, one can gain insights into history through the lens of journalism as well as learn how the media works.



Impregnable fortress or propaganda? Opening of naval base

Before the Second World War, Singapore's defences were thought to be so robust that the island was touted as an "impregnable fortress". Local English newspapers portrayed the opening of the naval base in Sembawang in 1938 as a historic milestone, highlighting it as the largest in the world, equipped with state-of-the-art facilities. Hence, it was a shock to many when Singapore fell to the Japanese in 1942, shattering the illusion of its invincibility.

Singapore Standard
星洲日報
SINGAPORE, FRIDAY, MAY 13, 1955
11 PENNY TWENTY

Strikers, Students Run Riot Outside Alexandra Bus Depot
S.C. BATTERED TO DEATH
RIOT SQUAD CRACKS DOWN
Student Killed, 12 Injured
Troops Alerted In Johore And Blakan Mati

A BID TO MASH GOVT MARSHALL
One Course Open

Investors Hesitant On Shares
Big Bandit Training Camp Found Near Thai Border
But No Trace Of Chin Peng Yet

Black Object! Speeds Over Batu Pahat
THAIS GET MALAYAN EQUIPMENT

FERRY TRAGEDY
Death Toll Now 133

Peace Loving

Turn To Page 2
NEW VACCINE



Singapore Standard
13 May 1955

Communist unrest or industrial dispute? Hock Lee bus riots

The Hock Lee bus riots in 1955 are among the deadliest riots in Singapore's history, arising from a labour dispute between bus workers and the management of the Hock Lee Amalgamated Bus Company. The local newspapers held different views on what had triggered the violent outbreak. The English press pointed to communist operations behind the scenes, while the Chinese press alluded to mistreatment of the workers and police brutality as its causes.

The Straits Times
AVERAGE DAILY CERTIFIED SALE EXCEEDS 150,000
ESTABLISHED 1845
31 CENT
KUALA LUMPUR 1965

RE-PO
Now look to the future

Tengku pledges support for admission to Commonwealth and United Nations

What it means at a glance

Singapore is out
By FELIX ARMBRECHT: Kuala Lumpur, Monday

SINGAPORE today separated from Malaysia, following an amendment to the Constitution approved unanimously by both Houses of Parliament under a certificate of urgency.

Tengku: It was my idea...
KUALA LUMPUR, Mon.—Tengku Abdul Rahman, Prime Minister of Malaysia, today said that it was his idea that Singapore should separate from Malaysia.

Secret signing
Today's dramatic vote follows the secret signing of the Independence of Singapore Agreement last September by leaders of the two governments and ministers.

Good signs
Malaysia, at the moment, is a young country with a bright future. It is a country of great potential and it is a country of great promise.

For electrical products throughout Malaysia
GEC

Raja is named Foreign Minister
Raja is named Foreign Minister.

Emergency meeting
Emergency meeting.

for correct weighing...
AVERY
The first step in correct weighing is correct calibration.

The Straits Times
10 August 1965

Crisis moment or business as usual? Singapore's separation from Malaysia

On 9 August 1965, Singaporeans awoke to the shocking news of Singapore's separation from Malaysia. The local press differed in their focus and sentiments in their reporting of the historic event. Both *The Straits Times* and *Berita Harian* gave more coverage to the press conferences of Malaysia Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, while *Nanyang Siang Pau* mostly featured Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's views. While *The Straits Times* described the separation as "tragic news", the Chinese paper adopted a non-emotional and almost positive tone in its reports.

Move taken as used gum disrupted MRT services

Chewing gum to be banned

By Dominic Nathan

CHewing gum will be banned in Singapore from Friday.

In a short statement issued yesterday, the Environment Ministry said that the ban was imposed because spent chewing gum had disrupted MRT train operations.

Also, it added, chewing gum litter had been a perennial nuisance at public places like cinemas and housing estates.

On the problem the SMRT encountered with chewing gum, it said: "Spent gum has been found stuck in MRT train tracks. SMRT has to incur unnecessary cost to remove the chewing gum laboriously."

"More seriously, spent chewing gum has caused

gum or anything similar prepared from a gum base of vegetable or synthetic origin, would come under the ban.

He added, however, that existing stocks of the products could be re-exported.

On the penalties for violating the ban, he said that anyone convicted of selling chewing gum from Friday could be fined up to \$2,000.

For importing the substance, a first conviction carries a fine of not more than \$3,000 and a jail term of not more than one year or both.

Second and subsequent convictions would mean a fine of not more than \$3,000 or a jail term of not more than two years or both.

It is not known if the mere possession of chewing gum would in itself be an offence.

Housewife Mary Yong, 32, said: "I am all for the ban. It is a dirty habit, especially when people just spit out the gum or stick it to the back of chairs in cinemas or bus seats."

Agreeing, Mr Tang Cheong Soon, 32, a civil servant, said: "If you cannot import, make or sell chewing gum, then the littering and mislabeled problem is removed. Banning it solves the problem effectively although it seems too extreme."

He added that stiffer penalties and an education programme might have the same impact as a ban.

At present, the maximum fine for eating in the MRT premises is \$500.

Mr Abdul Raabod, 38, a student, said that punishing

Pragmatism or paternalism? Chewing gum ban

On 30 December 1991, the Singapore government announced that it would ban the import, sale and manufacture of chewing gum. The various opinion pieces in local newspapers offer an interesting study of how different media outlets framed and interpreted this unusual law. *The Straits Times* published letters and editorials expressing that the measure was too drastic and heavy-handed. The Malay and Chinese press mostly perceived the ban as a pragmatic solution to dealing with a perennial littering problem, conceding that it could be more effective than meting out harsher punishments for offenders and running public education campaigns.

The Straits Times
4 January 1992

COMMENT/ANALYSIS

Asad Latif replies to the commentaries...

It's all invectives and not cold logic



It is interesting to note that the ban on chewing gum is not a new one. In fact, it has been in place since 1992. The ban was imposed because spent chewing gum had disrupted MRT train operations. Also, it added, chewing gum litter had been a perennial nuisance at public places like cinemas and housing estates. On the problem the SMRT encountered with chewing gum, it said: "Spent gum has been found stuck in MRT train tracks. SMRT has to incur unnecessary cost to remove the chewing gum laboriously." "More seriously, spent chewing gum has caused gum or anything similar prepared from a gum base of vegetable or synthetic origin, would come under the ban. He added, however, that existing stocks of the products could be re-exported. On the penalties for violating the ban, he said that anyone convicted of selling chewing gum from Friday could be fined up to \$2,000. For importing the substance, a first conviction carries a fine of not more than \$3,000 and a jail term of not more than one year or both. Second and subsequent convictions would mean a fine of not more than \$3,000 or a jail term of not more than two years or both. It is not known if the mere possession of chewing gum would in itself be an offence.

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Editorial power: Michael Fay saga

The detention and caning of an American youth, Michael Fay, in 1994 in Singapore caused an uproar in the United States. The case soon became a debate of differences in culture, values and attitudes between East and West. The coverage of the case demonstrates the power of news editorials in shaping public opinion. Editorials in US newspapers portrayed Fay as a victim of human rights abuse, while Singapore newspapers defended the sentence and the country's right to uphold its own laws.

The Straits Times
1 May 1994

THE STRAITS TIMES

Yes to two mega resorts
CREATING THE BUZZ OF A GLOBAL CITY



35,000 new jobs and huge gains to economy

Marina Bay Sands and Sentosa are two of the most exciting developments in Singapore's history. Marina Bay Sands, a \$6.6 billion integrated resort, will feature a world-class casino, hotel, and shopping mall. Sentosa, a 1.5 km long island, will be transformed into a premier entertainment and leisure destination. These two mega resorts will create 35,000 new jobs and bring in billions of dollars in revenue for the Singaporean economy.

Sure bet or slippery slope? The casino debate

Between 2004 and 2005, Singapore's decision to introduce casinos was hotly debated in the media. The ways the various newspapers framed their reports revealed the different perspectives on the issue. While local newspapers focused on the trade-offs between the economic gains and social costs of casinos, the international press highlighted the fact that Singapore's political climate was becoming more liberal.

The Straits Times
19 April 2005

Fact or Fake?

With the advent of the Internet, fake news has become a global threat, proliferating particularly on new media platforms. People can now self-publish at low or no cost, remain anonymous and dodge accountability. As such, questionable content can be easily created and disseminated widely.

The impact of fake news can be profound and devastating. It has caused public panic and social disorder. Vast resources are often

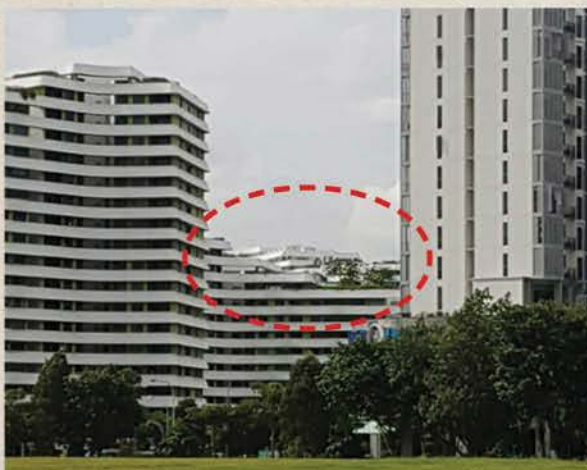
wasted in undoing its damage. Fake news also has the potential to destroy the reputation of individuals and organisations. Likewise, it can undermine trust in institutions, sow racial or religious discord, and instigate political unrest.

The interactive quiz here is based on specific cases of falsehood from both Singapore and abroad, and is designed to offer key learning points about fake news, its impact and what we can do to curb its spread.



Anti-immigrant disinformation during the Brexit referendum

An investigation following the 2016 Brexit referendum in the UK revealed that there had been a series of advertisements on Facebook containing disinformation aiming to influence voters to support Brexit. The ads focused on hot button issues such as immigration and animal rights. These ads fed into fears such as the loss of employment, with one ad even suggesting that Turkey was about to join the European Union, and that Britain would experience an influx of 700,000 Turkish immigrants.



Fake news on Punggol Waterway Terraces collapse

In November 2016, an alternative news site published an article claiming that the top floor of a Housing Development Board (HDB) Built-to-Order flat in Punggol Waterway Terraces had collapsed, accompanied by an image of the supposedly damaged building. The article went viral on social media. The Singapore Civil Defence Force and HDB deployed resources to investigate, and clarified that the report was a hoax.



WhatsApp lynching in India

India has the highest number of WhatsApp users in the world. From 2017 to 2018, it was the channel through which falsehoods about beggars and labourers – that they were criminals – were spread, causing them to be targeted and attacked by lynch mobs, often with fatalities. In response, WhatsApp launched an advertising campaign against fake news in India and restricted the number of recipients of forwarded messages to five.

Tharman Shanmugaratnam Invests \$1 Billion for All Singapore Residents. Use HIS Method To Become Rich In Just 7 Days!

AS SEEN ON



Tharman Shanmugaratnam promises \$1 billion for all Singapore residents

(Tuesday, September 18, 2018) - The deputy prime minister of Singapore and president of the Monetary Authority of Singapore, Tharman Shanmugaratnam promises \$1 Billion for all Singapore residents.

Investment scams

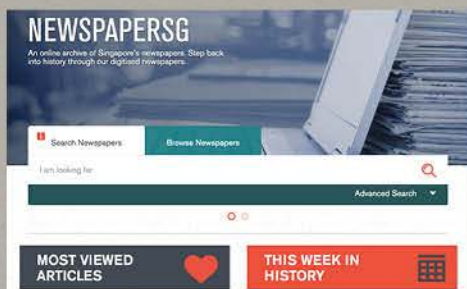
In recent years, several prominent Singaporeans, including government ministers, billionaires and celebrities, have been featured in fabricated news articles to solicit bitcoin investments. Apart from featuring their photographs and logos of local mainstream media agencies, these reports also included sensational headlines and fake quotes. Despite media coverage and alerts issued by the Monetary Authority of Singapore and the Singapore Police Force, some Singaporeans still fell victim to these scams.

Extra! Extra!



Newspapers offer much more than news – they are filled with advertisements, comics and puzzles, food and media reviews, photo features, travel articles, recipes, aunt agony columns and more. This section showcases the various segments of newspapers, exploring different facets of the fascinating world of media. This display will be updated from time to time.

Read All About It



Read all about the latest breaking news and stories of yesteryear in the National Library's digital collection of historical and current newspapers. Discover a rich and growing online archive of Singapore newspapers published since 1827 on NewspaperSG, as well as current newspapers from Singapore and around the world in PressReader.

Make Headline News!



Make your dream of appearing on the front page of a newspaper a reality! Take home a digital souvenir of your visit by creating headline news with your photograph at this interactive kiosk.

Thank you for visiting the exhibition!



Visit **go.gov.sg/tng-exh**
for information on upcoming programmes.



Visit **NewspaperSG** for our rich archive
of Singapore newspapers since 1827.

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