

# All excited over 50 sen coin

THE STAR 27/2/17 M/S 14

## Much ado over a 1968 mint that sold for S\$6,500 three years ago

By **ANDY CHUA**  
andychua@thestar.com.my

**SIBU:** News that a 50 sen coin made in 1968 was auctioned off in Singapore for S\$6,500 has sent collectors, especially those having coins of the denomination produced from 1967 to 1969, into a frenzy.

With the sound of *ka-ching* ringing in the ears of collectors, it was no surprise that the Sarawak Philatelic and Numismatic Society chairman John Goh found himself swamped by calls ever since a report of the auction, held in the city-state in 2014, was carried only in January by *Sin Chew Daily*.

The news went viral after social media users started spreading it.

"That news caused collectors to go crazy. Last week when I switched on my handphone after reaching home from Kuala Lumpur, I saw over 500 missed calls, WhatsApp messages

and SMS-es. These caused my phone to hang.

"All these people said they own 50 sen coins minted in those three years and wanted to sell them. They were asking if theirs could also fetch that Singapore auction price," he said.

Up until yesterday, Goh was still receiving calls from collectors, including from Singapore.

He noted that the particular 1968 coin was the only one in the world categorised as "Graving-65", denoting that it is still in its original state, being untouched by bare hands and not in circulation.

"That coin is also a 'mint error' with no security edges. That is why it could be auctioned off at a very high price," he explained.

(Mint errors mean coins that are irregularly manufactured and come in irregular shapes, sizes or types, hence their attraction among collectors and high value.)

But for those dreaming of pocketing a handsome profit for their humble little coins, here's the truth: their coins are worth only 50 sen as per their face value.

Goh said these old coins are still available in banks in the state and Sabah, which could not return them to Bank Negara due to the high cost that it would entail to transport such a weighty load.

"These old coins are still in use in the two states. Just last week, a bank called me asking whether I wanted to buy their 500 pieces of 50 sen coins," he said.

He added that his explanation on the matter has not been widely shared by the collectors and "that is why people are still looking for me".

And he expects to be still besieged with enquiries from collectors at the society's exhibition of coins, bank notes and stamps at Giant Hypermarket here from March 3 to 5.



257

257 Malaysia, 1968, 50 sen, mint error, without security edge, finest known. KM-5.2, NGC Gem MS 66. Wong Hon Sum collection.  
马来西亚, 1968年, 50仙 错铸铜镍币, 无坑齿边, 经 NGC 鉴评 MS 66, 目前最高评级者. 黄汉森藏 \$2

257

6,500

**Valuable collection:** The 50 sen coin that was auctioned off in Singapore in 2014.