

# Cab Chat

Fan Kam-sing, 51, believes the new medium-of-instruction policy will make life even tougher for pupils who go to schools that teach in Chinese



I think the new medium-of-instruction policy will worsen the labelling effect on students. Some parents will still push their children to study at a class using English. So for those who remain at schools teaching in Chinese, things will get much worse.

Parents and students are always striving to study at English medium-of-instruction schools. Most of the parents think these schools are prestigious and they tend to regard schools that teach in Chinese as inferior. But when parents choose a school for their children, they should take into account their ability. I think schools should put students with good and poor English together to study. This would remove the labelling effect.

As a father of a pupil at secondary school, I prefer to choose a school that fits the ability of my child. I would choose the school according to the ability of my daughter. I would not force my daughter to study at a school that teaches in English.

It is not a good policy to separate schools like this. The mother-tongue policy is a failure in many respects. Students who are forced to study in English may find it difficult because they do not have the language ability, and they find it hard to catch up. On the other hand, those pupils at Chinese-language schools will lose the opportunity to learn English, which will lead to a decline in English proficiency.

Yet despite this, the education minister, Michael Suen Ming-yeung, says the government will earmark HK\$980 million in the next five years to implement "fine-tuning" measures.

I also think the new medium-of-instruction policy will increase the workload of teachers, as they may have to prepare teaching materials in both languages. Also, now is not the right time to implement the medium-of-instruction policy, as the new academic structure for senior secondary education will be implemented this year. These policies are new to pupils, schools and parents. I fear there will be chaos.

One of the 21 most wanted Tiananmen Square protesters, Xiong Yan (熊焯), passed through immigration at Chek Lap Kok airport and stepped on to Chinese soil for the first time in 17 years - flying into Hong Kong, the city through which he fled to the United States in 1992. He faced no questions from immigration staff. I was surprised by this. I don't know how he could enter Hong Kong so smoothly.

But Jens Galschiot, the Danish sculptor and activist, was refused entry to Hong Kong after being questioned by the immigration authorities for five hours. I think the entry ban was related to politics. People's minds become more mature as time goes by. More people want political rights. I think it is

better for a place to develop economically and politically at the same time.

The police said a four-year-old boy was stabbed to death by a man wielding a knife in Sham Shui Po. I think the government lacks resources to back up its policy of getting mental patients back into the community. There is a lack of staff to follow up each patient. I think the government should hire more staff and increase the number of hospital beds for mental patients. We should not be afraid. We should help them integrate into the community.

Two girls aged 13 and 15 were arrested and appeared in court on suspicion of mugging a taxi driver at knife-point, and robbing him of HK\$660 and

## I think schools should put students with good and poor English together. This would remove the labelling effect



a mobile phone. I think we should raise concerns on juvenile problems. Youngsters are too materialistic and are easily influenced by their peers. It is easy to go bad but it is difficult to turn good again. If a child is led astray, parents will obviously be upset. But I think family background can explain a lot. If a child has grown up in a single-parent family, it may be easy for him to be led astray.

I think the installation of surveillance cameras in the cabs can help to protect us from such crimes. When someone wants to commit a crime, he or she would dare not do this knowing that a camera was recording every action.

Kobi Chan

# CitySeen

with Andrew Sun. Additional reporting by Clara Mak and Vivian Chen. Send tips, tickets and invitations to andrew.sun@scmp.com



## Actor bristles as whiskers fail to divert prickly queries on foe

Juno Mak Chun-lung's new moustache was the centre of attention at a Nokia phone launch on Friday, despite reporters trying to change the focus to Edison Chen Koon-hei. "I was making my album so I didn't have to see anyone and I just grew it out," Mak said of the tash.

With his new facial growth - you decide if he looks more like Dr Sun Yat-sen or a snotty French waiter - Mak was helping plug the new N97 mobile phone at the Four Seasons Hotel. However, he spent the better part of his time dodging queries about his former rival Chen and his long-romoured romantic interest in Gillian Chung Yan-tung.

Repeatedly asked about Chen's comments during his CNN interview, Mak replied he had not seen it and had no



feelings about the scandal-maker. However, the Chinese press wasn't giving up so easily and pressed the singer about Chen, saying he was retiring from showbiz "indefinitely" and then now reappearing so soon. At that point, a trace of emotion made his moustache curl up sinisterly. "I think if someone doesn't know how to respect other people, this person shouldn't be respected in the same way. I do not want to waste my energy on such a person." I see a feud brewing.



## Rain pours on charm about his clothing line after arriving fashionably late for press date

Rain (Jung Ji-oon) might be the king of K-pop, but his reign has been rocky of late. His English movie debut in *Speed Racer* crashed and burned. He lost a lawsuit in Hawaii due to cancelled concerts and now owes US\$8 million in the verdict. No wonder he didn't accept any interviews on his quick stop in town on Friday promoting his new clothing line Six To Five, with a "fashion concert" at the Convention and Exhibition Centre that included former television co-star Lee Da-hae from *My Girl* as guest model.

Instead, the entertainer agreed only to a press conference at the W Hotel, and he was more than half an hour late arriving for that. By the time Rain

(pictured) showed up, half the journalists had already tired of waiting and left.

That didn't deter the pop idol from trying his charm, greeting everyone with a bit of Cantonese. "Hello everyone! I am Rain," he uttered before retreating back to Korea to discuss his year-old fashion brand, the name of which references his June 25 birthday. "I always liked to design clothes that are unique and comfortable. At first, I didn't think of developing it into a brand since it was more like a hobby, but later I thought it wouldn't hurt to add some variety to the fashion scene for young people."

Wouldn't hurt to pay for some of his legal settlement, too.

## Ngong Ping 360 cable car takes a break amid big cleanup

In case you have friends visiting this week, take note not to recommend they try out the Ngong Ping 360. That's because the cable car operation is temporarily suspended for about two weeks starting today for its annual servicing and examination. In addition to maintenance, this week they will also have experts from Europe here to do a scheduled tightening of the hauling rope.

While we are at it, if you have other guests coming in September, you might forewarn them that another two to three weeks of maintenance will take place on



the Ngong Ping 360 then, too. Meanwhile, on Friday's World Environment Day, more than 100

volunteers from the cable car service, as well as other area colleagues from Hong Kong Disneyland, Chek Lap Kok airport, plus volunteers from Hong Kong Wetland Park and the general Tung Chung community, all helped to clean the ecologically diverse 2.7-hectare Tung Chung mangrove. We don't know whether to be happy that so much was cleared or depressed that negligent people dump so much rubbish into pristine nature.

## 'Britain's Got Talent' star to push new CD on Hong Kong trip

If you've seen the commercials on TV, you probably know former *Britain's Got Talent* winner Paul Potts is coming back to Hong Kong. The reason, of course, is that he has a new record to promote. *Passione* is the name of the CD and he will be here for three days this month, with the Miramar Group sponsoring two of his main engagements.

On Thursday, June 18, the Mira Hotel in Tsim Sha Tsui will be the location for a private evening of music and wine with the singer belting out a few of his pop-a-hits as guests enjoy a wine tasting. The next day, he will take part in an exclusive album signing in the Miramar Shopping Centre starting at 6pm.

As the main sponsor, the Miramar is offering its mall's prolific shoppers a chance to get into both of these events. Next weekend, the first 10 people to spend more than HK\$800 at the mall, or in its adjacent Knutsford Steps' food and beverage outlets starting on Friday, will be entitled to two tickets to the music and wine showcase. Or if you only make purchases totalling HK\$500 or more, then you can get a copy of *Passione* and one pass to the *Britain's Got Talent* winner's CD signing. They are on a first-come, first-served basis and passes are in a limited quantity. The other method to get access to both these events is to buy a copy of his album from any CD Warehouse outlet to enter a draw.

However, we're sure a lot of you are wondering when Susan Boyle will show up on these shores.



Contact Us City Newsdesk city@scmp.com tel 2565 2252 fax 2564 3746 Life features@scmp.com tel 2565 2621 fax 2562 2485 Sport sports@scmp.com tel 2565 2660 fax 2811 1278 Scmp.com Customer Service Hotline info@scmp.com tel 2680 8822 Reprint permission reprint@scmp.com tel 2680 8180, photosales@scmp.com tel 2680 8169 Classified Post classified@scmp.com tel 2565 8822 Advertising Sales Advertising manager Louisa Yuen louisa.yuen@scmp.com tel 2565 2439 Marketing communications@scmp.com tel 2250 3120

**HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEANUP CHALLENGE**  
海濱清潔比賽  
Sep 19 - Oct 19

HELP

In 2008, 86 corporate, school, community and Government teams representing nearly 5,000 volunteers removed 25,000 kg's of rubbish from Hong Kong's beaches. This represents a mere fraction of what remains on land and in water. The ultimate objective of the Coastal Cleanup Challenge is to cancel this event. Please help us make this the last.

SEAS THE DAY. SIGN UP A TEAM.

www.hkcoastalcleanup.org • 28685585

清潔香港 • 海灘做起

---

As a SCMP reader, you now have a chance to win attractive prizes from Coastal Cleanup Challenge. Visit [promotions.scmp.com/coastalcleanup](http://promotions.scmp.com/coastalcleanup) by June 15, 2009 to win.

Official Organisers

Sponsoring Organisations

Charity Partner

Sponsors

Sponsors

Sponsors

Sponsors

Sponsors

Media Partners

South China Morning Post

www.scmp.com **South China Morning Post**

Talkback The E-mail Forum

**Should the rules on outdoor space be more flexible?**

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department should not allow discretion without controls, and I do not believe officials have any wish to stop alfresco dining, provided it is done properly.

These open spaces belong in the public domain. The only people who profit from them being commandeered by restaurateurs are the restaurateurs themselves and the owners of the premises from which they operate.

Value per square foot to buy the restaurant, and rents, are magnified and the prices charged to customers therefore have to be higher.

The licences given by the government are given on the basis of inspections made only of the enclosed spaces; that is, kitchens, grease traps, hygiene and first-aid facilities, staffing and fire appliances. The open spaces have not been considered in the granting of these licences, but the consequent loopholes are being exploited.

The public does not benefit in any way.

The profit from the vastly expanded spaces used by the outside tables is huge and is to the detriment of other nearby caterers who lose clients. This leads to a reduction in diversity and choice for the public.

Once there is lack of control and inequality, triads step in to fill the voids. I hope that government is not steamrollered into giving way on this issue, by big business interests and their johnny-come-lately supporters.

While on this issue, could somebody please tell us why the sharp-suited young gentlemen selling contracts for television and computer services are allowed to set up mobile stands with impunity,

**Ice-cream hawkers are the sort of characters who add a bit of local colour**

.....

Suki So, Sha Tin

wherever and whenever they want, under the very eyes of hawk-control officers? Hawkers trying to make a hand-to-mouth living selling good honest wares are hounded.

**Jack Haworth, Cheung Chau**

**Should developers get extra floor space for adding green features?**

Some architectural experts have urged the government to provide incentives for developing sustainable architecture.

For example, it has been suggested exempted floor area could be provided if the developer provided certain green features to the required standard.

Is this the right approach? Should we reward the developers for doing something that they should be doing anyway?

In fact the ultimate cost for providing the green features will be paid by the tenants or the purchasers.

Incentives for green or sustainable features will pave the way for the developers to gain more area for sale.

The correct approach would be to encourage developers to provide sustainable features through corporate social responsibility.

Developers who fail to do so will be driven out of the market.

In public buildings, the government

can set a good example by maximising its effort in pursuing sustainable architecture.

**H. C. Bee, Kowloon Tong**

**Should more ice-cream hawker licences be issued?**

It is great when you are out walking during the searing heat of summer to come across an ice-cream hawker. Hawkers are the sort of characters who add a bit of local colour.

It is very convenient to buy their products. Therefore, I think more licences for ice-cream hawkers should be issued.

However, it is important to ensure the hawkers maintain proper levels of hygiene when it comes to their products.

**Suki So, Sha Tin**

**On other matters ...**

The red rainstorm warning went up at 11.0am on June 4.

From midnight to 1am, more than 50mm of rain had fallen over the western part of the New Territories, and in fact the rain bands had finished with this area and were moving into Kowloon. Only an amber rainstorm warning was issued.

When the urban areas started to receive the heavy rain, the red rainstorm warning was issued, even though the amount of rainfall was the same. The rain had actually already stopped over Lantau and Tuen Mun, so the red rainstorm warning was meaningless in these areas.

Ideally, the red rainstorm warning should have been raised an hour earlier, when the western part of the New Territories was suffering from the deluge.

Yet again, high attention is given to the urban areas, while those living elsewhere get second-class treatment.

**G. Marques, Lai Chi Kok**

ANNOUNCEMENT

OBITUARY

NIEM CHU WAI FUNG (嚴朱蕙芬)

1916-2009

Beloved wife of Niem Chung Lie, devoted mother of John, mother-in-law of Christine, loving grandmother of John Jr. & Michelle, grandmother-in-law of Jenny Yuen and Andy Wong, great-grandmother of Caryn and Lauren and Amber Wong, passed away peacefully on June 2, 2009.

Funeral service will be held at the Methodist International Church, 271 Queen's Road East (corner of Kennedy Road) Wan Chai, Hong Kong on Thursday, June 11, 2009 at 2:15 PM

Talkback

Tomorrow's Talkback questions

**Should schools test pupils for drugs?**

**Do sales brochures mislead flat buyers?**

Send your e-mails to [talkback@scmp.com](mailto:talkback@scmp.com). Please include your full name, address and telephone number, not necessarily for publication.

South China Morning Post Publishers Ltd. reserves the right to edit letters for publication and reproduce them (in whole or part) in any of its print, digital or electronic publications and websites