

## WTF?!

### Identity Crisis

So what race are you if you are born to a Malay mom and Chinese dad? Um, that would make you Malay/Chinese, right? Not so fast. As of January 2, when mixed-race parents have a child, they'll have to choose by declaring one or the other on the Birth Report Form. So if the lucky new parents choose to ordain their little one Chinese, so she will stay. Unless, of course, she starts to show a real predilection for beef rending at which point the parents can choose to change the race (to Malay in our fictitious example). But what if the kid hits her 15th birthday and wants to be more closely associated with the country that will be dominating the world at that time? Then, she can simply switch her race herself and declare herself Chinese. All we can say is thank god they're not also asking for sexual preference.



## Quote of the Week

“So much for alternative views.”

—Former Nominated Member of Parliament Siew Kum Hong, as quoted in the January 2010 issue of *National Geographic* in an article entitled “The Singapore Solution” by Mark Jacobson. Kum Hong was referring to two “No” votes he cast during his days in Parliament: One against a resolution that, in his opinion, discriminated against gays and the other against a law that would lower the number of people allowed to gather for protests. Kum Hong says he received a chilly reception for both votes from his fellow MPs.

## Last Week In Reality

DECEMBER

28 MON

**Sex Machine** In an interview on RazorTV, Gary Ng, the notorious man who posts his sexual encounters on his blog, reports that as a result of the media attention he's received, he now has more than 3,000 contacts on MSN. Of those contacts, he claims to have slept with more than 100. As to why he chose Gary as his pseudonym, Ng says that it stands for Girls (or Guys) Always Remember You. Ng now claims to be tired of sex.

29 TUE

**Beggar, Borrower, Thief** Thirty-six-year-old David Tay Chin has begun serving a three-year-plus-one-month prison sentence. His crime? After being denied the chance to borrow his friend's Honda Fit, he threatened his friend with a metal rod and warned his mate not to “make him go crazy.” He then grabbed the keys and drove the car away. It was found abandoned in Bencoolen Street a month later. Tay will also be caned 12 times.

30 WED

**That Was Close!** Sophia Pang has made history as being the first woman from Singapore to ski to the South Pole. The 36-year-old Pang is part of the Kaspersky Commonwealth Antarctic Expedition team and began her epic journey from the western coast of Antarctica on 22 November. The mother of three has reported that her team is running low on crucial supplies like toothpaste and poo bags.

31 THU

**New Year Segue** The two-wheeled personal transport devices known as Segways have arrived at Changi airport. Passengers and visitors alike can hire their very own Segway at Terminal 3's check-in area, with the ride costing \$10 for three trips round the circuit. As always, there's a shopping incentive: Spend \$20 in a single receipt and you get two rounds of the circuit for the bargain price of \$5. As if flying wasn't already enough of an adventure.

1 FRI

**Litter-Lying Bugs** It is reported that 116 tickets for littering were issued on New Year's Eve. What's more, the National Environment Agency announced that the majority of litterbugs here are Singaporeans—and that the incidents of locals littering increased in 2009, while those of foreigners dropping trash actually went down. Excuses include: “The cigarette butt burned my hand and I dropped it,” and “I intended to pick it up later but I was apprehended.”

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## All Wet

The Northeast Monsoon has arrived! Here are just a few reasons why we love this season.

All that moisture leads to frizzy hair which leads to more hair product purchases which helps stimulate the economy.

It gets the tourists to stop whining about how hot it is in Singapore.

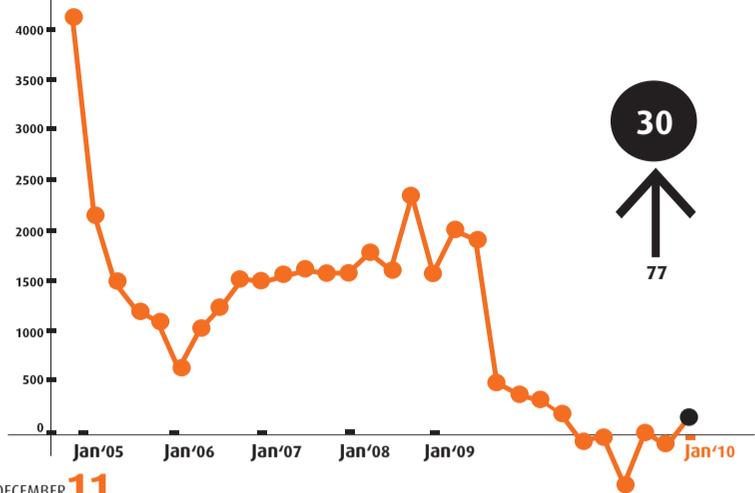
It lets us focus on more indoor activities. And we don't mean Xbox.

The big winds are great for taking down the tacky Christmas decorations at Marina Bay and along Orchard Road.

Less aircon means more money for iPhone apps.

### Fast Facts

**OB Index** Charting the ups and downs of Singapore's openness, tolerance and freedom of expression.



DECEMBER **11**

The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) issued a \$70,000 fine to Yen Logistics Services owner Steven Yen Tuck Hei for failing to adhere to safety procedures to protect his workers. The fine stemmed from a 2007 case when driver Koh Hong Son removed strapping on a set of steel pipes which were piled too high on his truck. The pipes rolled and fell on him, causing injuries that eventually led to his death. According to Silas Sng, director of MOM's occupational safety and health inspectorate: "The company did nothing to ensure the safe loading and unloading of goods from vehicles, even though such work is its main activity ... Simple measures could have saved lives." **+30**

## HOT

### Tourists

Singapore last month registered the highest number of visitors to our shores all year. We had 830,000 camera-toting folks arrive, an increase of 8.4% from the previous month.

### Queenstown Built-To-Order Flats

BTO projects Skyville@Dawson and SkyTerrace@Dawson have six times as many people as there are units clamoring to get in. 9,865 applications have been received for 1,718 available rooms.

### Pasir Ris Sports Complex

Work has begun on the \$40 million sports facility that will contain eight badminton courts and a pool. It is scheduled to be ready by June 2011.

### Watching an Entire Movie

Singapore Airlines announced that on all flights to the US, the inflight entertainment system will be switched off one hour before landing. No blankets either.

### Tribal People

Despite the message of *Avatar*, tribal folks are having it rough in neighboring countries. Thailand deported over 4,000 ethnic Hmong to Laos, and an enormous damn project in Borneo has displaced thousands of indigenous people.

### Security Companies

Of the 248 make-you-safe companies surveyed by the police's Security Industry Regulatory Department, 37 received "D" grades. That's double last year's number.

## NOT

# ONE BIKRAM YOGA A DAY

### Rachel

Then: Property Officer  
NOW: Studio Manager  
Age: 26

### Clancy

Then: Trading Manager  
NOW: Certified Bikram Yoga Instructor  
Age: 28

### Barbara

Then: IT Pricing Analyst  
NOW: Certified Bikram Yoga Instructor  
Age: 33



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[www.bikramyoga.com.sg](http://www.bikramyoga.com.sg)

### Eleanor

Then: Industrial Engineer  
NOW: Certified Bikram Yoga Instructor  
Age: 30

### Diane

Then: Marketing Consultant  
NOW: Certified Bikram Yoga Instructor  
Age: 40

### Tara

Then: Dancer  
NOW: Certified Bikram Yoga Instructor  
Age: 36