

MY HOME IN



USHER IN THAI NEW YEAR ON SATURDAY

THE Thai Association (Singapore) and the Royal Thai Embassy are celebrating the Songkran Festival this Saturday with a celebration at the Royal Thai Embassy.

The one-day event, which marks the Thai new year, will last from noon to 6.30pm.

Besides traditional Thai performances, the festival will also feature a beauty contest and a Thai-boxing demonstration.

The entrance fee is \$12. Advance tickets are \$10 and children under 12 enter free.

TWO LOANSHARK SUSPECTS CAUGHT

TWO suspected loansharks were nabbed when they were stopped for a routine check at a roadblock in Yishun.

The two men, aged 38 and 42, were stopped in their car on Monday. Police officers found them behaving suspiciously and decided to take a closer look.

Found on them were a stack of cash-deposit receipts, ATM cards, marker pens, a few cans of paint and debtor records.

They were arrested immediately.

my paper 叻报

ENGLISH EDITORIAL

- Consulting Editor: FELIX SOH (felix@sph.com.sg)
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HOTLINE: 6319-8880

e-mail: mypaper@sph.com.sg

ON THE WEB: mypaper.sg

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SINGAPORE

Huang Na to be immortalised?

MRT station mural to feature people and landmarks in Telok Blangah



KOH HUI THENG

HER death at the hands of a murderer shocked and moved thousands of Singaporeans in a rare outpouring of sympathy.

Now, five years after her death, eight-year-old Huang Na could be immortalised in a mural to take pride of place at the upcoming Circle Line's Telok Blangah MRT station.

The Jin Tai Primary School pupil's partially decomposed body was found at the foot of Telok Blangah Hill in 2004.

When contacted, Huang Na's mother, Madam Huang Shu Ying, 36, said she had received a call from Singapore about the possibility of her daughter being featured in the mural.

She said: "I'm okay with the idea, if the artist is simply adding the name (to the art piece) in her memory." The mother of two is now living in Taiwan's Taichung city. She runs a wholesale shoe-export business.

The artist behind the mural, Michael Lee, 36, was commissioned by the Land Transport Authority (LTA) to do the art piece at the station last year.

It is understood that it is still a work-in-progress and whether Huang will make it into the completed work remains to be seen.

An LTA spokesman said that before the art pieces were commissioned, the artists were briefed by the LTA and the curator on the location of the station, the local landmarks, and some potential themes the artists could explore.



MIND MAP: Featured above is part of the mural by artist Michael Lee. Huang Na's name may become part of the art piece, pending approval. (PHOTO: COURTESY OF MICHAEL LEE)

"Each artist was given free rein with regard to their work. Their general concepts were pre-

sented to the Art Review Panel and the proposals were refined over a few months. The final pro-

posals were approved only after it was certain that the designs were acceptable and that the art and architectural designs were fully integrated," she said.

"Although the concept of the art piece at the Circle Line Telok Blangah station has been accepted, the details of the art piece has yet to be approved by the art review panel."

If approved, Huang is likely to share a spot on the mural with politicians such as the late J. B. Jeyaretnam and Sun Yat Sen, and celebrity radio presenter Lee Dai Soh who lived in the Telok Blangah area.

When completed, the mural, to measure 9m in length and 2m in width, will be seen by commuters who take the lift from the train platform to the concourse level.

Some people, like Telok Blangah resident Liew Yan Mei, 29, questioned why the girl could be featured. The public-relations executive said: "I'll be passing through the station daily and I don't really want to be reminded about depressing events."

Telok Blangah MRT station is expected to open from next year.

kohht@sph.com.sg

HELPDESK 我的字典

- Mural: 壁画 bì huà
- Decomposed: 腐烂的 fǔ làn de
- Commuters: 乘客 chéng kè
- Depressing: 令人沮丧的 lìng rén jǔ sàng de

Next Facebook craze could come from NUS

DAWN TAY

COMING up with the next big hit on social-networking sites is on the minds of a group of undergraduates here.

And while such applications – better known as "apps" – developed by the National University of Singapore (NUS) undergraduates may not become lucrative hits eventually, the young developers are not letting it stop them.

Their lecturer, Assistant Professor Ben Leong, said NUS is the second school in the world to offer a Facebook programming course. The course, which

started last year, has drawn 77 students to date.

While it is still possible to develop successful money-making Facebook apps, they are not growing exponentially as they did a year back, said Prof Leong.

He said: "There are many more apps now compared to two years ago – there's a sense of "app fatigue" among Facebook users. Other newer technologies are also emerging, like Google's Friend Connect."

Aspiring game developers Tan Kian Boon and Justin Lye, both 23, are part of a team of six tertiary students who have come up with a university-themed Facebook game, Varsity Chroni-



GAME FOR INNOVATION: (From left) Justin Lye, Bryan Yeo, Chua Yu Han, Tan Kian Boon, Jolly Lee and Kow Wei Man came up with Facebook game Varsity Chronicles. (PHOTO: NEO XIAOBIN)

cles, for their course.

In the game, players choose a faculty and battle against players from other faculties to take over the university. If it is successful, they plan on setting up a game studio in future.

Prof Leong said: "Given that

our population is only so big, there are only so many developers that we can have locally. But talent-wise, Singaporeans are capable of developing the next (version of) Facebook."

dawnt@sph.com.sg