

# letters to the editor

## Facing up to the future

All sorts of tech was on show at the Hong Kong Electronics Fair (Autumn Edition) which ended on Tuesday, from face massagers to electric scooters. The event showcased the latest in consumer electronic products and attracted more than 4,300 exhibitors from 25 countries and regions around the world. Photo: EPA

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## Farewell to a genius

Professor Charles Kao Kuen, the "father of fibre optics", died on September 23. He was 84. Kao won a joint Nobel Prize for physics in 2009 and many other awards.

His work on fibre optics made inventions such as the internet possible.

As we all know, fibre optics helps to speed up the transmission of digital data. This led to the invention of smartphones, which have greatly improved people's quality of life and brought them together.

The fact that Kao was living in Hong Kong boosted the city's image as a place for science and research. Nowadays, Hong Kong relies on high-speed internet connections and realises that innovation and technology are crucial for future development and growth.

Kao has passed on the flame to our younger generation, who are the future pillars of society. They need to follow in his footsteps and help make Hong Kong a world leader in science.

**Humen Chau Hiu-man,  
Leung Shek Chee College**

## Buskers for arts hub

I am writing in response to "West Kowloon the perfect place for street performers" (*SCMP*, August 12). I support Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor giving the buskers a temporary place,



then working out a licensing system for the longer term.

I believe busking is both good and bad for Hong Kong. Although some people do not like street performances, there's no need for any bad blood between buskers and the general public.

The biggest problem in Hong Kong is a lack of space. Most buskers choose crowded streets for their performances hoping to attract the most attention. Sadly, the noise pollution can annoy pedestrians and the residents nearby.

On the other hand, busking is part of the local culture and adds to the city's artistic value. Many performers come from different countries around the world. Buskers are also a tourist attraction.

I hope the government introduces a licensing system for them soon. Until then, they should be allowed to perform at the West Kowloon arts hub.

**Chloe Tang Ka-yi, Pope Paul VI College**

## Typhoon troubles

I am writing about the government's poor response to Typhoon Mangkhut, which tore through the city last month.

Our leader Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor issued a statement, calling "for employers to show understanding and flexibility in handling staff who have practical difficulties in resuming work".

But the public still criticised her for failing to properly understand the chaos caused by



the most intense typhoon on record. Some were angry at the government for not declaring a day off for workers who had trouble going to work.

It was a Monday, and most rail and bus services were suspended. What's more, trees were blocking roads and it was dangerous to walk due to falling tree branches. MTR stations were packed with commuters, with crowds even spilling on to the streets.

While primary and secondary school students enjoyed a two-day break, the government did not think about the workers who face many challenges in their daily lives.

I hope Lam will learn a lesson from this experience. She should try to put herself in the workers' shoes. We are all humans, after all.

**Matthew Lin Kai-him,  
Law Ting Pong Secondary School**

## Wi-fi ban in cafes

I support the "no Wi-fi policy" introduced by some cafes in countries such as the US and Australia.

Gone are the days when people were talking and laughing during a meal in a restaurant. Nowadays almost everyone is glued to their screens. This is very rude.

Banning Wi-fi is good because it helps us to interact with family and friends. Then people can eat while talking to each other."

Maybe Hong Kong can introduce a no Wi-fi policy in our cafes, too.  
**Ho Man-ching, Tsuen Wan Public Ho Chuen Yiu Memorial College**



## Star letter

### Need to promote cycling culture

I am writing in response to the article, "Bicycles still discouraged in Hong Kong urban areas due to 'high traffic density'" (*SCMP*, September 25).

Cycling is a very environmentally-friendly form of transport and a healthy way for people to go about their daily activities. It is a common mode of transport and a popular recreational activity in some European countries, such as the Netherlands and Denmark.

In this sense, Hong Kong is way behind. The city is not a safe place for bike riding because it is too crowded. Its roads are full of cars and other vehicles which pose a serious danger for cyclists.

According to the article, there are 340 areas in Hong Kong where people can't cycle.

Some people may argue that a "cycling culture" is healthy so it should be promoted in Hong Kong. But we should not follow other countries just for the sake of it. We need to have proper plans.

Hong Kong already has many cycling tracks and parks, especially in the New Territories. Riding on a cycling track is much safer than riding on congested roads.

Safety should be a priority in whatever we do. There must be some good reasons for the government to ban cyclists from so many areas in the city.

**Heidi Cheng, King Ling College**

### From the Editor

Thanks for your letter, Heidi. Finally, there's some good news for local cycling fans. The government is planning to lift a biking ban on 16 bridges and flyovers in the coming months.

Some people say the changes are not enough since there are 340 places across the city where cycling is banned. Others have expressed concern about the possible effect on road safety.

The government needs to work to create more cycling tracks, but there is the cost - buildings, roads and pavements would have to be demolished and new ones built.

Maybe a bike track is something to be looked at when new towns are built.

I don't think we can compare Hong Kong with European countries where many places are easy to reach and can be explored by bike. In the Netherlands, for example, there are 32,000 kilometres of cycle paths. In Denmark, tourists as well as locals are encouraged to go on "cycling holidays". Obviously Hong Kong is different, but we are on the right path.

The decision to lift cycling bans on some bridges and roads is a good sign.

Hopefully, the government will one day abolish most of the city's cycling restrictions.  
**M. J. Premaratne, Sub-editor**