

# Idiom by Lon Yan

## 姍姍來遲

*shan1 shan1 lai2 chi2*

Local weather is unusually hot this year. Unseasonal high temperature set consecutive records, with a hot weather warning on October 12 when temperatures shot up to 32.7 degrees, the latest warning since records began in 2000, breaking the record set just a few days before.

Weathermen said a stronger subtropical high this summer was responsible for the hotter days, but we can also expect the weather to get hotter in the long-term due to global warming and urbanization.

So when cooler weather finally came, even if it was only for a day, it was newsworthy. The Standard ran a story on October 19 under the headline “Whiff of autumn to provide relief” about temperature forecast to dip to 20 degrees Celsius a few days later.

Sister paper Headline Daily had a similar

report in which it described the autumn this year as “姍姍來遲” (*shan1 shan1 lai2 chi2*).

“姍姍” (*shan1 shan1*) means “slowly,” “to walk slowly,” “來” (*lai2*) is “to come,” and “遲” (*chi2*) “late,” “slow,” “delayed.” “姍姍來遲” (*shan1 shan1 lai2 chi2*), literally, is “walking slowly and comes late,” to arrive slowly.” The idiom simply means “to be slow in coming,” “to be late.”

“姍姍來遲” (*shan1 shan1 lai2 chi2*) is, in fact usually not a good thing. Autumn that is “姍姍來遲” (*shan1 shan1 lai2 chi2*) would affect apparel sales. People with a wardrobe full of autumn fashion would also want cooler weather to come earlier.

Always “姍姍來遲” (*shan1 shan1 lai2 chi2*) to office meetings certainly wouldn't help an employee's chance of promotion.

### Terms containing the character “遲” (*chi2*) include:

遲到 (*chi2 dao4*) – to be late

遲疑 (*chi2 yi2*) – to hesitate in making a decision; hesitant

遲鈍 (*chi2 dun4*) – not sharp (in thought or action); stupid

遲早 (*chi2 zao3*) – sooner or later; in time