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 slowing 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