

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Young finalists shine at The Chinese Challenge 2011 Grand Finals**

**4 September 2011, Singapore** – The Chinese Challenge 2011 concluded with its Grand Finals tonight, which featured six student finalists vying for the top prize. 16-year-old Huang Feixue emerged as the winner after one hour of intense competition and walked away with \$5,000 worth of prizes.

Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Ministry of Education and Ministry of Law, Ms Sim Ann, was the Guest-of-Honour at the event, which was broadcast tonight on Channel 8 from 9pm to 10pm.

Feixue, a Singaporean who moved to Shanghai at the age of nine and returned when she was 14, mastered a strong command of Chinese language and gained a deep understanding of Chinese culture during her stay there. Her confidence and smart use of strategy secured her a place in the Final Round, where she faced tough competition from fellow finalist, 13-year-old Teo Kang Lin.

Competition between the two young contestants intensified as they entered a tie-breaker after the Final Round. The deciding question was eventually attempted by Feixue after a short moment of silence, and her correct answer earned her the title of Winner of The Chinese Challenge 2011.

Feixue said that her experience of living in Shanghai has helped her immensely in managing the questions at the contest. “The exposure and immersion opportunities during my stay overseas have helped me in achieving greater understanding and appreciation of Chinese culture and language,” said the Nanyang Girls’ High School student. Raising an example, she said that her answer to the deciding question was made after recollecting the words of a tour guide in China.

First runner-up, the 13-year-old Teo Kang Lin is the youngest finalist participating in The Chinese Challenge. Kang Lin, a student at Anglican High School, awed the audience with his quietly calm

demeanour and his depth in Chinese language and culture. He started learning Chinese calligraphy at eight and has a strong interest in Chinese history.

Kang Lin also faced competition from his elder sister Teo Tong Lin, who was one of the first runners-up at The Chinese Challenge 2010. Commenting on their differences, the sibling pair noted that Tong Lin had breadth in knowledge of Chinese culture and language, while Kang Lin had depth. They also said that participating in this contest together had benefitted both of them as they would share their gathered information with each other.

The Chinese Challenge – 《华文? 谁怕谁! 》 was first launched in 2009 by the Promote Mandarin Council with the aim to encourage Chinese Singaporeans to enjoy and improve their Mandarin, while deepening their knowledge of Chinese culture through exposure to the finest in Chinese culture and language. Returning for its third year, The Chinese Challenge 2011 online contest lasted from 4 July to 14 August, and is one of the highlights of the Speak Mandarin Campaign 2011.

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## About Speak Mandarin Campaign 2011

This year marks the 32nd anniversary of this nationwide campaign that was first launched in 1979 by then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. The objective then was to encourage Chinese Singaporeans to use Mandarin instead of dialects. Over the years, the campaign has shifted its focus to encourage Chinese Singaporeans to both embrace speaking Mandarin and enjoy an appreciation for Chinese culture and language.

### For media enquiries, please contact:

Ms Wong Jiashi  
Campaign Manager  
Speak Mandarin Campaign  
Language Councils Secretariat  
National Library Board  
Mobile: +65 9478 8233  
Email: [Jiashi\\_WONG@nlb.gov.sg](mailto:Jiashi_WONG@nlb.gov.sg)

Ms Lee Min Jie  
Associate  
Speak Mandarin Campaign  
Language Councils Secretariat  
National Library Board  
DID: +65 6342 4072  
Email: [Min\\_Jie\\_LEE@nlb.gov.sg](mailto:Min_Jie_LEE@nlb.gov.sg)

Janice Wee  
Account Manager  
BANG Public Relations Pte Ltd  
Tel: 6372 3564  
Mobile: 9144 0477  
Fax: 6836 2623  
Email: [janice@bang.com.sg](mailto:janice@bang.com.sg)

Carrie Sim  
Account Executive  
BANG Public Relations Pte Ltd  
Tel: 6372 3562  
Mobile: 8127 7446  
Fax: 6836 2623  
Email: [carrie@bang.com.sg](mailto:carrie@bang.com.sg)