Abbreviating terror: 9/11 in the press

On and around the first anniversary of the attack on the World Trade Center, the world's press made full use of '9/11' (also the national emergency telephone number in the US). The symbolism of number/divider/number has not replaced either 'September 11' or 'Sept. 11', but added to them by giving the date a special resonance. It may yet become the key name for the whole horrific series of events.

Ups and downs in *ET* 72 (18:4), October 2002

- The response to our tribute to Louis (L. G) Alexander ('We looked, listened and learned), who died on 17 June 2002, has been heart-warming.

- Most regrettably we did not represent several of the phonetic symbols properly in Tony T. N. Hung's seminal article '"New English" words in international English dictionaries'. On p. 64 we reproduce the page in question with the proper symbols. ➤➤

Some examples of NE words of Southeast Asian origin

The NE words of Southeast Asian origin listed on the left below have all appeared in international English dictionaries. They are shown here with three sets of transcriptions: first, the original transcriptions in such dictionaries (in some cases with later revisions), then two columns of transcriptions which I would recommend. The first column of recommendations uses only the existing inventory of phonetic symbols found in standard English dictionaries, while the second column of recommendations uses an expanded inventory of symbols, such as [ts] for the voiceless dental affricate, and [ø] for the mid front rounded vowel, for a small number of items. For practical reasons, I would recommend adopting the first recommended transcriptions.

NE words (existing symbols)	Published (novel symbols)	Recommended	Recommended
agak-agak	[ˈɑːgɑːk ɑːgɑːk]	[agak agak]	
alamak	[ɑːˈlɑːmɑːk]	[alamak]	
ang moh	[ˈɑːŋmɔː]	[aŋ mɔ]	
ang pow	[ˈɑːŋpɑʊ]	[aŋ baʊ]	
angkat	[ˈɑːŋkɑːt]	[aŋkat]	
bak choi	[bak tʃɔɪ]	[bak tʃɔɪ]	[bak tsɔɪ]
bodoh	[ˈboudou]	[bodo]	
cheong hei	[ˈtʃɪɒŋ heɪ]	[tʃɪɔŋ heɪ]	[tsøŋ heɪ]
chin chai	[ˈtʃɪntʃaɪ]	[tʃɪn tʃaɪ]	[tsɪn tsaɪ]
Chiu Chau	[tʃiu tʃaʊ]	[tʃiu dʒaʊ]	[tsiu dzaʊ]
gila	[giːlɑː]	[gila]	
guan xi	[gwanʃi]	[gwan si]	
kai fong	[kaɪ fɔŋ]	[gaɪ fɔŋ]	
kai lan	[kaɪ lan]	[gaɪ lan]	
kaypoh	[ˈkɛpɔː]	[gɛ bɔ]	
lap sap	[lɒp sɒp]	[lap sap]	
pai kau	[paɪ kaʊ]	[paɪ gaʊ]	[paɪ gʌʊ]
pak choi	[pak tʃɔɪ]	[bak tʃɔɪ]	[bak tsɔɪ]
sam fu	[sʌm fu]	[sam fu]	
tim sum	[tim sʌm]	[dim sʌm]	

instance, one may find *bak choi* stressed on the second syllable, *choi sum* on the first, and *Chiu Chau* on both, for no apparent reason. In actual fact, in all three words – and in NE words derived from Chinese in general – both syllables are stressed more or less equally in the local pronunciation (in Hong Kong, Singapore, or Malaysia, where these words are commonly found). I realise of course that this goes against the grain of the stress patterns of standard English, which normally permits only one primary stress per word, and here we once again encounter the old problem of *whose* pronunciation we are aiming to represent. Local speakers of English clearly give more or less equal stress to both syllables in all the above words. My rec-