Citizen Thio goes to Parliament

DERRICK A PAULO
derrick@mediacorp.com.sg

SHE describes herself as a person with strong views, and in the 45 minutes she spends with TODAY, she dishes out quite a few.

But at one point, newly announced Nominated Member of Parliament Thio Li-ann catches her words midstream for a few sentences before launching into Constitution 101 where one learns that the Philippines is, possibly, the only country in the world to have the word “love” in its Constitution.

“One of the first few functions of the Constitution is to reflect the identity of the people, and there is very little in character here. All we can say is we are succinct, we are technical, almost legalistic, but it tells us nothing about our history. That’s why we are so detached,” says Prof Thio.

Her essay in her NMP application talks of the “rising levels of cynicism, disaffection and alienation” she sees in the students she interacts with.

She admits: “There have been years I’ve been so disillusioned, I wanted to give up and I do my usual ‘why didn’t I teach company law’. Everybody would love me because I would be the professor that helps them make money. And I was good at company law.”

The crux of the matter, really, as to why a critic of the NMP scheme is becoming an NMP is that it is her “good faith response to be engaged rather than alienated”.

“That was my test. Do I really care? Because I have a really nice life as an academic. But, do I sit in an ivory tower or do I climb down?” she says at the end of the interview.

She said it once in the interview. It is about being a “citizen with a capital C”, and Prof Thio hopes to show Singaporeans “that it is their country”.

Missed the news on TV? No worries – you can get it online with MobTV

IF YOU have missed your favourite news bulletins on television, fret not. Now, a new service by Mediacorp Online Broadband TV (MOBTV) is giving viewers the chance to catch the entire news programme over the Internet — just an hour after its TV broadcast.

On Monday, MOBTV, Singapore’s first subscription-based video-on-demand service, added five news programmes to its already-extensive catalogue. These are uploaded each day to allow subscribers the choice to watch them whenever they choose. The bulletins include the popular News 5 Tonight and News 8 at Ten programmes.

This move comes ahead of MOBTV’s upcoming move to go international this quarter.

Subscribers of the $10.90-a-month service will get to catch news, current affairs programmes on Channel NewsAsia, Channel 8 and Channel U as part of the deal. From next month, MOBTV plans to introduce third-party content such as Asian dramas, movies, music videos and music downloads.

Launched in May last year, MOBTV provides viewers immediate access to their favourite programmes via digital streaming or download on their computers anytime they want it. Genres available include drama, variety, sitcom, infotainment and reality.