

《南華早報》
首位華人
副總編輯
精選

30 篇文章
教你 300 個
應用英語詞彙

馮強教授 著

序

我很高興這本〈《南華早報》首位華人副總編輯精選：30篇文章教你300個應用英語詞彙〉終於出版了。感謝明報出版社編輯部的鼓勵和幫忙，使這本書可以順利出版。

我中學會考英文科的成績僅僅合格，進入大學後用四年時間勤學英文，每天看《南華早報》和《紐約時報》的社論，把社論內的詞彙抄在筆記本上，運用詞彙作句子，活學活用。四年後，我的英文科成績由E級升到A-級，畢業時全班考第一，最後一個學期的平均績點（GPA）是4.0/4.0。

大學畢業後第一份工作是當美國《華爾街日報》記者，數年後成為第一個當上《南華早報》副總編輯的香港華人，每天晚上負責寫社論和改善外籍編輯撰寫的標題。社論和評論所需的寫作技巧差不多，分別在於社論代表報紙的立場，而評論則代表個人立場。

我從近年在《南華早報》和《英文中國日報》發表的數百篇評論中，精選了30篇輯錄在這本書，希望你學習這些評論中的英語詞彙，把你的英語水平由E或D級升到A-級。

英語水準高的人不但學習效率高，在職場上更加得心應手。

我做到的，你也可以做得到！

馮強
香港樹仁大學客座教授
香港中文大學碩士班兼任講師

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01

Education can help minorities

《教育可以幫助少數民族》

Fung Keung argues that the diminished success rate some ethnic groups experience in Hong Kong is largely due to a lack of Chinese language skills.

On Aug 11, 2015 a concern group called Unison, which aims to promote minorities' rights in Hong Kong, released a report blaming society for the poverty suffered by minorities in Hong Kong. It is **nonetheless** ① unfair to blame the government or the system generally for **a lack of** ② opportunities. Unison is misguided.

Unison cited the unemployment rate of minorities, mostly Sikh Indians and Pakistanis, to prove its case. Unemployment among minorities in 2014 was 7.2 percent, double the overall rate for Hong Kong.

A lack of educational opportunities is a key factor for the poverty of minorities, the group argued. It cited a study it did recently to **bring home its point** ③. It found out that 71 percent of tertiary programs (non-degree), such as higher diplomas or associate-degree courses, are not suitable for minority students because of the requirement of the Chinese language. The picture improves to 50 percent from 71 percent if minority students can speak some Chinese (albeit without writing skills).

Unison said the lack of educational opportunities prevents non-Chinese-speaking students from pursuing what they are interested in and has limited their chances of getting **high-paid jobs** ④ or even securing work at all. It seems unfair and unjustified to call this lack of educational opportunities “discrimination”.

Hong Kong is a Chinese society. One cannot blame the educational institutions for asking applicants to its programs to have Chinese proficiency. If you live in London, you cannot expect Londoners to speak Chinese to you. **By the same token** ⑤, it is absurd to ask the University of Paris to use Chinese as a teaching medium. If you do not speak French, you simply cannot enter the University of Paris. Period.

Hong Kong's degree programs offered by the eight universities that are publicly funded by the government have **crystal clear** ⑥ guidelines. All applicants must pass the Chinese, English, Mathematics and Liberal Studies subjects. Without Chinese proficiency, applicants will not be considered. This rule applies to Chinese and non-Chinese applicants.

Sikh Indians, Pakistanis and other minorities in Hong Kong are well advised to ask their children to learn Chinese when they are young. Sending them to Chinese schools is a **smart move** ⑦. They should also encourage their young to mix with Chinese friends more, such as playing basketball together or singing Chinese songs in karaoke.

There are numerous successful stories about minorities in Hong Kong. They are successful because they learned Chinese when they were young. They or their parents knew well that in order to prosper in a Chinese society, they should speak the language and stop blaming the government or the system. Such people know well that moaning is no use.

These successful people include Gill Mohindepaul Singh, an actor who is said to earn HK\$800,000 a month, and comedian Vivek Mahbubani.

A Pakistani reporter with TVB Chinese news, Nabela Qoser, is the most talked about minority personality in the city. Qoser's Chinese is perfect, **without any trace of** ⑧ an accent at all - i.e., if you did not watch

her on the news broadcast, you would **presume** ⑨ that the reporter was a native Chinese. Moreover, one cannot help noticing that there are many minority people in Hong Kong's police force.

In a nutshell, instead of blaming the system or the Hong Kong government, minorities in Hong Kong are well advised to teach Chinese to their young themselves, or send them to Chinese schools. Most people in Hong Kong believe that if one wants to **excel** ⑩ in this city, one must speak both Chinese and English well.

 註釋

- ① **Nonetheless** = however, nevertheless, 但是; 仍然。
- ② **A lack of** = 缺乏, 缺少。Lack = shortage, scarcity, deficiency, dearth。
- ③ **Bring home its point** = 支持論點, 論證。Drive home = 講明白, 使人理解, 勝利完成, 順利結束。Be home free = 遙遙領先, 穩操勝券。Home and dry = 達到目的; 安全。
- ④ **High-paid jobs** = 高工資的工作。
- ⑤ **By the same token** = for the same reasons as what has just been said, 出於同樣原因; 由此類推。
- ⑥ **Crystal clear** = 透明如水晶的; 非常清楚的, 易懂的。Do I make myself clear? = 你明白我的意思嗎? A clear head = 清晰的頭腦。Eyes as clear as crystals = 一雙眼睛明如秋水。
- ⑦ **Smart move** = 明智之舉。Smart = elegant, stylish, well-dressed, well-groomed。
- ⑧ **Without any trace of** = 沒有任何痕迹。Trace = 痕迹; 證據, 線索, 結果。A trace of fear = 微微有點害怕。On the traces of = 追蹤, 追近。Trace back = 追溯。
- ⑨ **Presume** = assume, deduce, suppose, 擅自(做); 冒昧(做), 假定, 假設; 推測, 認為, 推定, 意味着。I presume he isn't coming. = 我想他不會來了。Mr. Johnson, I presume? = 您就是約翰遜先生吧?
- ⑩ **Excel** = shine, outshine, outclass, outrival, outstrip, 優於, 擅長, 勝過。She excels as a dancer. = 她擅長跳舞。

02

Police must take decisive action and catch telephone scammers

《警方要努力逮捕電話騙徒》

Telephone scams in Hong Kong have reached alarming levels. Something must be done about this before such scams grow worse and hurt more people.

The Hong Kong Police should set up a powerful task force involving the city's Communications Authority personnel to tackle these crimes. The Hong Kong government should give the police more resources to **nip telephone-scamming in the bud** ①.

In July 2015 alone, Hong Kong residents have been cheated out of HK\$85 million by telephone con artists, who often use **sophisticated** ② Internet technology to fool their victims. They often collect information about their potential victims on the Internet.

The number of successful telephone scams is **horrifying** ③. In July 2015 alone, 263 (35 percent of the 729 cases) cases reported to the police were successful. The 729 cases were three times the number of similar reported scams in the first six months of 2015. It seems that a powerful syndicate was operating **with devastating effect** ④ in July and possibly in August.

The scammers are very good with the latest technology. They use software which can fraudulently display Hong Kong or mainland government departments' main lines (including the Hong Kong Monetary Authority's) as the incoming numbers. The fraudsters tell victims they

have broken mainland laws. Then they direct victims to **bogus** ⑤ websites where they are shown forged arrest warrants. The warrants contain victims' photos and other personal details, which can be collected easily from social media websites.

They then tell the victims to deposit a certain amount of money into a mainland bank account to display their willingness to cooperate with law enforcement authorities or simply **make the problems go away** ⑥.

In the last two days of July, the Hong Kong Police arrested a man and a woman allegedly involved in the scams. They served as money collectors in Hong Kong for the masterminds on the mainland. They were arrested when they went to victims' homes to collect money. These two **so-called money collectors** ⑦ for mainland syndicates had fake identity cards enabling them to pose as law enforcement (such as the Independent Commission Against Corruption) officers.

Hong Kong Police, meanwhile, must work closely with mainland police to find the **masterminds** ⑧ behind these syndicates, which are believed to be based on the mainland. The mainland police have more resources and manpower to investigate such telephone scams. Their help and cooperation will be invaluable.

The SAR government is urged to give the police more resources to tackle other crimes in the territory since the police's efforts have been directed to fight the telephone scammers. With considerable **fiscal reserves** ⑨, the SAR government should not hesitate to use some more of its resources to fight these crimes.

Hong Kong citizens are advised to be very **vigilant** ⑩ to detect possible frauds. No matter how convincing the fraudsters sound, citizens

are urged to sit tight, sleep on the information and talk to their relatives and friends before making any decisions. Why so many Hong Kong people became so easily duped remains a mystery. Hong Kong people live on a principle of trust. But these scams show they have been putting their trust in the wrong place.

It just sounds surreal that a month ago so many people were cheated out of their hard-earned money. The latest technology can be a double-edged sword. It helps society advance but it also gives fraudsters a platform to make easy money. Hong Kong citizens must remember this in facing possible scams: When in doubt, leave it out!

註釋

- ① **Nip telephone-scamming in the bud** = 把電話詐騙消滅於萌芽狀態。Nip = pinch, tweak, grab, squeeze, 剪斷。Bud = 芽, 萌芽, 幼芽; 蓓蕾, 蓓朵。Nip a rebellion in the bud = 把叛亂撲滅於萌芽狀態。Bud out = 【美俚】打扮得漂漂亮亮。
- ② **Sophisticated** = urbane, classy, cultured, erudite, refined, 老練的; 精密的; 複雜的; 久經世故的。Sophisticated electronic devices = 尖端的電子裝置。Sophisticated adolescent = 老於世故的青少年。A sophisticated columnist = 老練的專欄作家。A sophisticated novel = 思想內容深奧的小說。
- ③ **Horrifying** = horrific, horrible, terrible, sickening, 令人震驚的; 使人毛骨悚然的。Be horrified to hear the news = 聽到消息十分驚訝。
- ④ **With devastating effect** = 有毀滅性影響。Devastating = harmful, damaging, ruinous, dreadful。A devastating blow = 毀滅性的打擊。
- ⑤ **Bogus** = 假的; 偽造的, false, fake, spurious, counterfeit, phony。Fake diamonds = 假鑽石。A medical fake = 冒牌醫生。Fake illness = 裝病。
- ⑥ **Make the problems go away** = 使問題消失。There you go again = 你又來這一套了。
- ⑦ **So-called money collectors** = 所謂的「收數佬」。So-called = supposed, alleged, purported, professed。
- ⑧ **Masterminds** = brain, architect, instigator, 策劃者; 策劃, 暗中指揮。A naval architect = 造船技師。The architect of one's own fortunes = 掌握自己命運的人。The architects of the Constitution = 憲法起草者。

- 9 **Fiscal reserves** = 財政儲備。A fiscal policy = 財政政策。
- 10 **Vigilant** = watchful, attentive, alert, observant, 機警；警惕的，警覺的；警戒的。

Old age pension plan is worth supporting

《老年退保計劃值得支持》

Professor Nelson Chow Wing-sun's call for the Hong Kong government to give a pension of HK\$3,000 a month to all Hong Kong citizens aged 70 or above is worth **supporting** ①. About 550,000 elderly people would benefit from the scheme if it is adopted.

Chow, **an emeritus professor** ② of the Department of Social Work and Social Administration at the University of Hong Kong, heads a retirement study initiated by the government's Commission on Poverty. His latest proposal, which would make many old people happy, was revealed to the public on July 24, 2015.

Chow earlier suggested a government, employer and employee contribution model to fund a universal pension, but he later **abandoned** ③ this plan. This is because employers and employees were unwilling to contribute. Chow could not blame them.

Currently, people aged 65 or above can apply for an Old Age Living Allowance. However, many elderly people are not eligible to apply because they have assets exceeding HK\$210,000. The dilemma is that elderly people treat their limited assets as an "emergency fund" and will not touch them unless there is **a life-or-death situation** ④. In reality, these people live **in abject poverty** ⑤. They receive no money from the government and do not want to deplete their "emergency fund".

Chow's latest proposal is fantastic, as no old people will fall through

the cracks because the HK\$3,000 pension is not “means (or assets)-tested”. The universal pension will be welcomed by employers and employees alike as they do not need to contribute to the pension.

Many employees in Hong Kong have complained about the existing pension plan, the Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF). Under this scheme, employers are required to contribute 5 percent of employees’ income to the MPF, capped at HK\$1,500 a month. The employees’ MPFs are managed by fund companies, many of whom charge **exorbitant fees** ⑥ as there is limited, if any, government supervision. Many employees’ fund returns become negative after the high management fees are deducted. (To give the government credit, it is working to regulate the fee structure but nothing concrete has surfaced.)

It is time the government showed its concern for the elderly by **conceding to** ⑦ Chow’s latest proposal. This will allow all people aged 70 or above to receive HK\$3,000 a month without the need to meet any **prerequisite** ⑧ conditions. It would make more than half a million people happier. Happy people would contribute to more efficient governance. The government should approve the proposal **without hesitation** ⑨.

Of course, every good deed comes with a price. The government would need to allocate between HK\$6 billion and HK\$7 billion a year to pay the 550,000 old folks the HK\$3,000 a month pension. The amount totals about 2.3 percent of the government’s annual recurrent expenditure.

Some people may ask where the government will find the additional expenditure. Well, the answer is very simple: Charge the middle class and businesses more taxes. In Hong Kong, the standard salary tax is 15 percent and corporate tax is 16.5 percent. Hong Kong is a caring society. In order to make elderly people happier, the middle class and corporations should

have no objections ⑩ if the respective salary and profit tax rates are hiked slightly.

Kudos goes to Chow and his team, who have spent a lot of effort in coming up with different pension plans for elderly people. His latest proposal is sensible and workable. Let us all embrace it.

04

“Appreciate Hong Kong” aims to heal divisions in our society

《「欣賞香港」旨在治癒社會分化》

The Hong Kong government on Dec 1 will launch the “Appreciate Hong Kong” campaign. This is to **heal** ① divisions in our society caused by the “Occupy Central” movement last year. Citizens and political parties should support the campaign. Hong Kong people deserve to live in a peaceful and harmonious environment.

The campaign offers people from **all walks of life** ② - rich and poor - opportunities to participate in fun activities. Ocean Park and Disneyland will give free tickets to **low-income** ③ families and young people with **special needs** ④, respectively, to visit the amusement parks.

Government-run museums will be opened to the public **free of charge** ⑤ in January 2016. Private companies and associations will also organize carnivals, and food and cultural festivals. This is to allow people to **have a good time** ⑥ and to understand what Hong Kong stands for.

The above activities are part of 10 initiatives announced by Chief Secretary for Administration Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor in late November. They will be **coordinated** ⑦ by the government.

The 79-day illegal “Occupy” protest last year, in which many young people and university students participated, reflects that the community is divided and perhaps even **radicalized** ⑧. Divisions and radical acts are bad for Hong Kong’s social and economic development. In **worst case scenarios** ⑨, tourists and investors will hesitate to come to Hong Kong

註釋

- ① **Supporting** = 支持的，支撐的。Support a family = 養家活口。Enlist the support of = 爭取(某人的)支援。Give support to = 支援。In support of = 支援；擁護。
- ② **An emeritus professor** = 榮譽退休教授。
- ③ **Abandoned** = 被拋棄的；無約束的。Abandon oneself to pleasure = 恣意享樂。Abandon oneself to emotion = 感情用事。
- ④ **A life-or-death situation** = 生死關頭。True to life = 逼真，栩栩如生。The average life of a nation = 一國人口的平均壽命。The life of an artificial satellite = 人造衛星的壽命。
- ⑤ **In abject poverty** = 在貧窮中。Abject = miserable, wretched, dismal, horrible, gloomy, 不幸的，悲慘的。An abject time-server = 卑鄙的趨炎附勢者。Make an abject apology = 告饒。
- ⑥ **Exorbitant fees** = 過高的價格。Exorbitant = excessive, inflated, sharp。Inflated = 誇張的，言過其實的。An inflated tyre = 充氣輪。An inflated style = 誇張的文體。
- ⑦ **Conceding to** = 承認，讓步。Concede = grant, admit, allow, yield, give in。Concede a point in (argument) = 在(爭論)中退讓一步。Concede a game = 輸一局。
- ⑧ **Prerequisite** = 先決條件；前提；作為前提的；必備的。
- ⑨ **Without hesitation** = 毫不猶豫，毫不躊躇地，立即。Hesitation = unwillingness, reluctance, disinclination, hesitancy。
- ⑩ **Have no objections** = 沒有異議。There is no objection to your leaving at once. = 你現在即刻走也不礙事。Raise an objection = 提出抗議(異議)。

as a result. We all know well that Hong Kong needs their money to create more jobs in retailing and other sectors and to boost our gross domestic product growth.

The government's latest initiatives to make us feel happy are clearly **well intentioned** ⑩. However, they fail to address important issues. These include, among others, youth unemployment and lack of housing for young people.

The government and private companies should strive to create more jobs for our youth. Even if there are no jobs created in the short term, the government and private companies could offer internships to young people and pay them a monthly allowance of some HK\$3,000. That would keep a lot of troublesome youth off the streets and give them hope.

Discussing the housing shortage issue, Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying said that the government was considering using some land in country parks to build private and public housing. That is very good news for young people - although Leung needs to ease the concerns of environmentalists. However, he knows that satisfying young people's needs is a priority.

Hong Kong citizens are being encouraged to participate in some of the government's 10 initiatives such as visiting some of the SAR's fine museums to know more about Hong Kong's history. One good example is the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence in Shau Kei Wan on Hong Kong Island. There one can imagine how the city was defended when the Japanese invaded in December 1941.

Hong Kong is our home. Let us show some appreciation for the good life this city has offered us. The government-initiated "Appreciate Hong Kong" campaign, which will run from Dec 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016, is worth supporting. Let us all do something to lift the spirits of the city.

註釋

- ① **Heal** = 癒合，使和解，cure，mend，repair，nurse。Time heals most troubles = 時間會消除煩惱。
- ② **All walks of life** = 各行各業。Walk away from = 從……走開；從……脫身。Walk off with = 拐逃，偷走，搶走（獎品）。
- ③ **Low-income** = 低收入。Low tricks = 卑鄙手段。A low opinion of = 對……評價不高。Feel low = 情緒低落。Speak in a low voice = 低聲說話。
- ④ **Special needs** = 特殊需求。A special case = 特例。Special duty = 特殊任務。A specialist in diseases of the heart = 心臟病專家。
- ⑤ **Free of charge** = 免費。As free as the wind = 自由自在，行動自由。You are free to go or stay. = 去留隨你意願。
- ⑥ **Have a good time** = 玩得很開心。
- ⑦ **Coordinated** = 協調。Coordinate = organize，synchronize，direct，manage，harmonize。
- ⑧ **Radicalized** = 激進化。Radical measures = 激烈手段。
- ⑨ **Worst case scenarios** = 最壞情況。Scenarios = situations，states，circumstances。
- ⑩ **Well intentioned** = 心懷好意。Intention = purpose，aim，intent，objective，意向；意圖，目的；打算。A person of good intentions = 好心人。By intention = 故意。Have no intention of doing... = 無意做……。The intention of a clause = 條文的意旨。With the best of intentions = 好心好意地，誠心。

A solution to the housing crisis

《房屋問題的解決方案》

Fung Keung says social harmony and stability can be achieved if Hong Kong comes up with a practicable and an affordable housing policy by using country park land.

It is a very good idea to use country park land to build homes. The Hong Kong government should immediately **launch** ① a survey into the ecological value, purpose and use of country parks. Many people believe that parts of the 400 square-kilometer country parks spread across Hong Kong can be used to build private and public housing.

Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying said on Nov 11 that he has raised the idea with young people during forums on housing. He suggested that flats built on country park sites can be sold to targeted groups - including young people - at lower prices, with their land premiums **waived** ②.

Leung might face the **ire** ③ of environmentalists in Hong Kong. Fortunately, environmentalists in this city are known to be peace lovers and they will not **resort to** ④ violence. Leung should convince them that it is for the greater good that we build homes on country park sites, as property prices have soared in recent years. After all, most young people, even university graduates, cannot afford to buy flats.

Before angry young people take it to the streets - in a worst-case scenario - to voice their dissatisfaction, Leung is well advised to proceed with building more government-subsidized homes in low-sightseeing-valued country park sites. These government-subsidized homes are known as flats built by the Housing Authority's Home Ownership Scheme (HOS).

These flats could be sold at a much lower price than market price, making ownership affordable for young people and low-income families who do not wish to live in a rental flat built by the government.

Our Hong Kong Foundation, a local think tank founded by former chief executive Tung Chee-hwa, suggested around the same time that the government fix the land premiums of HOS flats at the time of purchase. When prices for private flats go up, HOS flat owners can sell their flats at market prices, but need only repay the government a (much lower) land premium fixed earlier.

The think tank's other proposal is also **worth supporting** ⑤. Many Hong Kong citizens live on rental properties developed and owned by the government. Since they rent these flats, they do not have **a true sense** ⑥ of ownership. Ownership is important if we want the city to remain stable, prosperous and peaceful.

Our Hong Kong Foundation suggested that the government sell the rental flats to tenants at roughly half the market price and allow them to pay a low down payment. For example, if the flat's market price is HK\$4 million, the government would sell it to the tenant at HK\$2 million and allow the renter to mortgage the flat with a 5-percent down payment, making a purchase **affordable** ⑦ to most renters.

For flats in the private market, banks require owners to have a 30-percent down payment before it considers providing a mortgage loan. That is a figure that is **hardly** ⑧ affordable to people who live in government rental properties.

With more HOS flats built on country park sites and the recommended move to help public housing tenants to purchase the flats they live in

from the government with a **huge discount** ⑨ from the relevant market price, the number of people owning homes in Hong Kong would increase significantly. These new moves would help enhance social harmony and Hong Kong people could live more happily.

In a nutshell ⑩, it is a good idea to use country park land to build homes for young people and low-income families and sell government flats to tenants at huge market discounts. Social harmony and stability are the key.

註釋

- ① **Launch** = 開展，發射；投出；提出，start，commence，initiate，instigate。Launch a ship from a shipyard = 使船從船塢下水。Launch a spear = 投矛。Launch a torpedo = 發射魚雷。Launch a new enterprise = 辦新企業。Launch a fierce attack = 展開猛烈攻勢。Launch a mass movement = 開展群眾運動。
- ② **Waived** = 省免，放棄（權利、要求等）。Waive formalities = 省免正式手續。
- ③ **Ire** = 忿怒，anger，rage，fury，indignation，wrath。
- ④ **Resort to** = 訴諸於。Resort to (force) = 用（武力），動（武）。A carriage was the only resort = 乘馬車是唯一的辦法。In the last resort = 作為最後的一着手段。A fashionable resort = 高級遊樂地。A holiday resort = 假日遊樂地。
- ⑤ **Worth supporting** = 值得支持。
- ⑥ **A true sense** = 真正的意義。The five senses = 五官。The moral sense = 道德觀念。A man of sense = 有理智的人。Common sense = 常識。Come to one's senses = 恢復理性；恢復知覺。
- ⑦ **Affordable** = 價格實惠。I cannot afford the expense (time). = 我花不起這筆費用（騰不出工夫來）。I cannot afford to be critical. = 我不能苛求。
- ⑧ **Hardly** = 幾乎不，barely，scarcely。It's hardly true. = 這不像是真的。Hardly any = 幾乎沒有。
- ⑨ **A huge discount** = 巨大的折扣。Accept his story with some discount = 他的故事不能盡信。
- ⑩ **In a nutshell** = 簡而言之，簡潔的，扼要的。Nutshell = 極小的容器；窄小的房屋。

We should lift our declining English standards

《香港人的英語水平要提高》

A Swedish-owned international English training institution, EF English First, announced its latest English **proficiency** ❶ ranking on Nov 4. In it, Hong Kong has dropped to 33rd place this year from 31st in 2014, among the 70 countries and territories polled.

Since 2012, English standards in South Korea and Japan have **surpassed** ❷ those in Hong Kong. About 910,000 **non-native** ❸ English speakers took the test this year, which examined grammar, vocabulary, reading and listening skills. The only thing it did not test was speaking skills. Singapore, the top-ranking Asian country, was 12th among the 70 countries and territories surveyed.

To many people in Hong Kong, this news does not **come as a surprise** ❹. There appears to be several reasons contributing to Hong Kong's decline. First, there is the official policy of using Chinese as the **teaching medium** ❺ in high schools. Second, the **ubiquitous** ❻ use of smartphones among youngsters has discouraged them from using English in virtual or verbal communication.

The third reason, which remains a skeleton in many local universities' cupboards, is the use of Chinese instead of English in tertiary education. Many professors and lecturers will not refuse when students request them to lecture in Chinese for fear that they might get a low grade in teaching evaluations done by students at the end of a semester.

In a nutshell, the use of English in communication has dropped **precipitously** ❷ since the handover of Hong Kong to the China in 1997. This decline is home-made and we should not blame the central government. It is discernible that after 1997, government officials and civic and business leaders have used mainly Chinese in public speaking.

Young people imitate successful leaders in society. Every corner they turn, people are speaking Chinese. They rarely develop a habit or interest in communicating with one another in English. Language skills are acquired. If people do not use English, they will lose it. It is as simple as that. The damage has already been done.

To lift declining English proficiency in Hong Kong, the first thing we need to do is see that people understand that a good English standard is key to Hong Kong's survival. Foreign companies **set up** ❸ shops in Hong Kong partly because we can speak English. Hong Kong's role as a major financial and trading center will be undermined if our English standard keeps on dwindling.

The second thing we should do is ask government officials and business leaders to use more English, not Chinese, in speaking to the press. This will have a **trickle-down effect** ❹. When people watch TV news, they will listen to officials and social leaders speaking English. Subtly, people will start speaking in English and their English will improve. We should never underestimate the effect the behavior of social leaders has on young people. They are young people's role models.

Third, our higher education institutions should be serious about using English as the teaching medium. If students listen to and speak Chinese in class, their English proficiency will hardly improve. If students speak and write more in English, four years down the road their English level should

rise to a satisfactory standard. Universities should introduce **incentives** ⑩ for local students to mix with exchange students and practice English speaking.

Fourth, rich tycoons in Hong Kong can fund English learning and speaking activities across the territory. For example, youth centers in various districts can set up English-speaking clubs with financial support from rich businessmen in the city. Such funding will go a long way to securing Hong Kong's position as a world city.

As a first step, we should speak English with our colleagues today.

註釋

- ① **Proficiency** = 熟練，skill，ability，talent，expertise，aptitude，adeptness。Attain proficiency in English = 精通英語。
- ② **Surpassed** = 超越。Surpass = exceed，better，outdo，outshine，outstrip。Surpass oneself = 超越自我。
- ③ **Non-native** = 非本地。Native place = 故鄉。Native sons of New York = 純粹的紐約人。
- ④ **Come as a surprise** = 來一個驚喜。Surprise = astonishment，amazement，wonder，disbelief，shock。The news greatly surprised us. = 這消息使我們大為吃驚。I have a surprise for you. = 我有一個意想不到的東西給你看（消息跟你講）。
- ⑤ **Teaching medium** = 教學媒介。Medium = method，channel，instrument。Medium of exchange = 交換媒介；貨幣；支票。
- ⑥ **Ubiquitous** = 無所不在，omnipresent，universal，abundant。The struggle between opposites is ubiquitous. = 對立的爭鬥無所不在。
- ⑦ **Precipitously** = 急轉直下的，陡峭，quickly，hurriedly，swiftly，hastily，abruptly。
- ⑧ **Set up** = 建立。A head set = 聽筒；耳機。A complete set = 全副；全套。
- ⑨ **A trickle-down effect** = 涓滴效應。Tears trickled down her cheeks. = 淚水從她的面頰一滴一滴地流下。A trickle of visitors = 稀稀落落的訪客。
- ⑩ **Incentives** = 誘因，獎勵，inducement，enticement，motivation，encouragement。

Increasing fees to maintain competitiveness justified

《以加費增加競爭力是合理的》

Recently some lawmakers in Hong Kong criticized international schools in the city for raising school fees in the new academic year, which began Sept 1. Sadly, they are **barking up the wrong tree** ①.

About 30 international schools are operating in Hong Kong. They increased school fees by an average of 5.6 percent this month, according to a new survey. How such a reasonable increase has drawn the ire of local legislators is **beyond me** ②. **On the contrary** ③, perhaps the international schools should have raised fees even higher in order to maintain Hong Kong's competitiveness.

Hong Kong's international financial center status relies heavily on local talent as well as **expatriates** ④. Foreign banks and financial institutions in the city hire many Americans, Britons, Canadians, French, Germans and Australians. But many expatriates might have **second thoughts** ⑤ about relocating to Hong Kong if they believe the quality of international education in Hong Kong is deteriorating.

When inflation in the city runs between 3 percent and 5 percent this year, a 5.6 percent rise in school fees sounds normal and reasonable. Some lawmakers perhaps are just trying to get their names in the newspapers when they complain about this to journalists. They, perhaps, should understand the situation better before making such irresponsible comments. (By no means are we suggesting that their freedom of speech should not be respected.) But such comments should always be based on the facts.

A **short-sleeved** ⑥ Michel Rene pink shirt costs HK\$665. But Hong Kong people have a choice. They can buy similar-quality shirts made in Southeast Asia for a fraction of the cost of the Michel Rene shirt. But at the same time, can we really criticize Michel Rene for charging such a high price? Of course we can't.

The legislators also criticized the government for **turning a blind eye** ⑦ to the fee increase by international schools. Technically, the Education Bureau of the government must approve all fee increases. In reality, it is just **a rubber stamp** ⑧. The government has no right to intervene because the international schools are not funded by the government. The fee increases in some cases are based on international schools' special needs, such as **pumping up** ⑨ their development funds.

The lawmakers argued that the fee increases would deny the children of local middle-class families an international education. Our representatives in the Legislative Council need to wake up! Local families do have choices. They can either put their children in local schools or schools run by the English Schools Foundation (ESF) if they want them to study in an English-speaking environment.

The ESF operates five secondary schools, nine primary schools, four kindergartens and a school for students with extensive special needs. The ESF is supported by the Hong Kong government. If Hong Kong people want their children to enroll in international schools such as the French International School, the American International School or the Australian International School (the latter two are located in an expensive Kowloon Tong area of Hong Kong), they have to pay the price. Special privileges require special fees. This is **a no-brainer** ⑩.

Hong Kong is a free market. International schools have every right to

raise fees to maintain competitive. The SAR needs to remain competitive to attract expatriates to work here. If local families want their youngsters to study in international schools, they should be prepared to pay the high fees. They do have a choice. They can send their kids to local Chinese-speaking schools or English-speaking schools run by the ESF if they want to pay lower or no school fees.

 註釋

- ① **Barking up the wrong tree** = 攻擊錯了物件。At the top of the tree = 在最高地位。Up a tree = 進退兩難，不知所措。
- ② **Beyond me** = 超出我的理解範圍。Beyond possibility = 不可能。Injured beyond help = 受了無法醫治的重傷。Beyond endurance = 無法忍耐。
- ③ **On the contrary** = 相反的是，矛盾的，對抗的。Be contrary to expectations = 出乎意外。Quite the contrary = 正相反。
- ④ **Expatriates** = 移居國外者。
- ⑤ **Second thoughts** = 重新考慮。What is the central thought of this article? = 這篇文章的中心思想是什麼？You are much in my thoughts. = 我常常想念你。After much (serious) thought = 仔細考慮後。
- ⑥ **Short-sleeved** = 短袖。Have a plan (a card, something) up one's sleeve = 別有用心，另有應急計劃，另有秘訣。
- ⑦ **Turning a blind eye** = 對……視而不見；無視。With one's eyes shut = 不注意，胡亂地。With open eyes = 明知故犯。
- ⑧ **A rubber stamp** = 平易通過。Stamp the grass flat = 踏平草地。
- ⑨ **Pumping up** = 推動……發展。A breast pump = 吸奶器。Be pumped out = 累得喘不過氣來。
- ⑩ **A no-brainer** = 非常容易理解的事情。Be full of brains / have good (plenty of) brains = 聰明，好腦筋。Have no brains = 沒頭腦，笨。Have a lucid brain = 思路清晰，頭腦清醒。Pick (suck) somebody's brains = 採用(竊取)某人的主張(想法，知識，研究成果等)。

08

A smile costs nothing - but it can bring rich rewards to HK

《臉帶笑容可以給香港帶來好處》

Brothers and sisters on the mainland, please come visit us. You are most welcome in Hong Kong. No more **hard feelings** ❶, please.

The latest tourist numbers are worrying. Hong Kong Tourism Board figures show that 4.92 million visitors came to Hong Kong in July, a drop of 8.4 percent from July 2014. More troublesome is the number of visitors from the mainland, which fell almost 10 percent to 3.85 million. About 80 percent of tourists visiting our city come from the mainland.

It is a no-brainer that a decline in the number of visitors means less business for local hotels, retail shops and restaurants. When there is a drop in business, these enterprises might lay off people, including janitors and waitresses, to keep their businesses running. Janitors and waitresses come from the lower economic class. We just hate to see these people suffer, don't we?

Then on Sept 5, more bad news **bombarded** ❷ us. In August, the Purchasing Managers' Index compiled by Nikkei/Markit fell for the sixth consecutive month to 44.4 from 48.2 in July. (Any reading below 50 indicates **economic contraction** ❸, while any above 50 shows expansion.) A Nikkei/Markit analyst said the data continued to point to weaker demand conditions amid an uncertain global economic outlook.

What should Hong Kong people do in facing such a **gargantuan** ❹ challenge? Perhaps a smiling campaign should be **in the offing** ❺. If we

smile more at mainland visitors, they will feel our warmth and eagerness. When they return to the mainland, they will tell their friends and relatives that Hong Kong welcomes them. No more **bad blood** ❻ between us and our mainland brethren.

Let bygones be bygones ❼. Hong Kong people's anger toward mainlanders in the past was chiefly **triggered by** ❽ the cross-border **parallel-goods traders** ❾, who often caused mayhem in local markets and train stations. They disrupted people's daily lives and hurt their well-being. However, new mainland rules stipulate that they can only come to Hong Kong once a week.

Hong Kong is a free society. While we respect the expression of different political views by different groups, we should always **bear in mind** ❿ that any political movements which might harm the local economy should be avoided as they affect the livelihoods of ordinary citizens. Young people also need to learn that they should put Hong Kong's larger interests before their personal agenda. If Hong Kong sinks, it will almost certainly exert a negative impact on their lives. Hong Kong's future and theirs are inextricably linked.

We need to work harder to attract mainland visitors at a time when the renminbi (RMB) has devalued against the Hong Kong dollar, which means Hong Kong goods become more expensive in RMB terms. Indeed, July retail sales in Hong Kong fell 2.8 percent from a year earlier.

In short, Hong Kong people should not tar all mainland visitors with the same brush - and say they are all rude, inconsiderate, pushy, and so on. We should all remember that the offensive visitors represent only a small minority. Some Hong Kong people, as we often observe, are also impolite and selfish.

We will all be in bad shape if the Hong Kong economy slumps further. GDP growth in the first half of this year was down 2.6 percent compared with the first half of 2014. For the full year of 2015, brokerage firm Morgan Stanley forecasts a meager 2 percent growth, due to what it terms “an uncertain economic outlook”.

Apart from smiling more at mainland visitors, we might consider taking our vacation on one of our outlying islands. Taking the whole family to spend the weekend in a beachside hotel on Cheung Chau Island or Lamma Island might not be a bad idea. Boosting domestic consumption is a way to help bolster the local economy.

It could make a big difference to poor families in Hong Kong if we are friendlier to mainland visitors and spend our vacations somewhere in Hong Kong. Their jobs might be saved. They can put food on the table.

Every single tourist dollar will go a long way in helping Hong Kong’s underprivileged. Let’s all adopt a new mindset in how we treat our brothers and sisters from north of the Shenzhen River.

 註釋

- ① **Hard feelings** = 厭惡，敵對。Hard pressed for money = 手頭很緊。Be hard hit = (感情等) 受到沉重打擊，很傷心。
- ② **Bombard** = 轟炸，炮擊，bomb shell, blast, barrage, attack。
- ③ **Economic contraction** = 經濟收縮。Contract = diminish, shrink, narrow, shrivel, wither。Draw up a contract = 定合同。Contracting parties = 訂約雙方當事人。
- ④ **Gargantuan** = 巨大的，huge, gigantic, enormous, massive, vast, colossal, immense。
- ⑤ **In the offing** = 即將發生。
- ⑥ **Bad blood** = 敵對。They demand blood for blood. = 他們要求以血還血。Be related by blood = 有親戚關係。Blood is thicker than water. = 血濃於水。We need fresh blood. = 我們需要新的人員。Blue blood = 貴族血統。
- ⑦ **Let bygones be bygones** = 過往不究，過去的事就讓它過去吧；忘掉過去的冤仇；捐棄前嫌；既往不究。Revivals of bygone styles = 舊時式樣(風格)的復活。
- ⑧ **Triggered by** = 被……引發。
- ⑨ **Parallel-goods trader** = 水貨商。A parallel instance (case) = 同樣的例子(情況)。His prudence is parallel to his zeal. = 他固然謹慎，也同樣熱心。
- ⑩ **Bear in mind** = 牢記在心。Would you mind shutting the door? = 對不起，請你把門關上好嗎？Mind one’s P’s and Q’s = 言行謹慎，謹言慎行。

09

Police need to act urgently to stop fake investment scams

《警方要馬上制止投資騙案》

In the wake of a series of ① telephone scams ② that have cheated Hong Kong people out of millions of dollars, police reported recently that there has been a substantial increase in fake investment scams as well. It is feared that Hong Kong is on the verge of ③ becoming “scam city”. This may hurt the city’s reputation if something is not done immediately about such scams.

Unlike the telephone scams which target the aged and innocent, the investment scams aim to defraud ④ middle-aged professionals such as accountants, lawyers and bankers. The Hong Kong Police said recently that in the first half of 2015, 85 people had been cheated of a total of HK\$61 million. That is an average of about HK\$800,000 per head. This is all very unpleasant - if not horrifying!

The rise in such scams is also alarming. For the whole year of 2014, a total of 55 people were cheated out of HK\$29 million. The six-month figure this year is already more than double last year’s total. Some people have undoubtedly lost most of their savings and become greatly depressed ⑤. Depression can lead to suicide, which has also been on the rise. Suicide Prevention Services, a non-governmental organization in Hong Kong, said on Sept 11 that the number of people aged between 30 and 49 who committed suicide jumped 17 percent in 2014 from 2013.

How educated professionals can fall victim to ⑥ investment scams is extraordinary. The con artists ⑦ use bogus investment schemes in

Asian cities to lure professionals, promising them high and quick returns on their investments. When the Hong Kong stock market is volatile, these investment plans become a magnet to many professional people. These are people with extra money to spend or invest.

Con artists assure potential investors the investment opportunities they present are unique and if they do not take them, the chance will be lost forever. To achieve some credibility, the con artists show potential investors their companies’ assets and their business connections - invariably ⑧ some rich and famous people in Hong Kong. They sometimes even organize staged investment seminars to convince investors that well-known investment gurus are on their side and they have nothing to fear.

As always, when investors become anxious and want their money back, the conmen will procrastinate ⑨, citing various excuses. When investors lose patience and rush to the conmen’s offices, all they find are empty spaces; nothing is left in the offices and the investment promoters have vanished. The chances are the conmen are celebrating their illegal gains somewhere in Southeast Asia while the poor Hong Kong investors are left to bemoan their misfortune ⑩, if not their stupidity.

Some professionals who lost millions of dollars reported their cases to the police. But many never did for fear of losing face. A police spokesman said that even if the police find the conmen, it is not certain that the con artists will still have the money with them. The money could have been transferred to countries in Southeast Asia, where it becomes very hard to trace.

The police should work harder to catch these scammers. Since 2013, the police have only arrested six investment scheme fraudsters. Perhaps the police commissioner can consider beefing up the Commercial Crime

Bureau, which is responsible for pursuing the con artists.

Meanwhile, the professional people who were cheated out of millions should have been aware that whenever one hears the term “high and quick returns”, one should be skeptical and think about it carefully. People should not let “greed” blind them and stop their “critical thinking”. They should also talk with friends, colleagues and relatives before they part with their hard-earned money.

It is hoped that professionals, as well as other Hong Kong citizens, learn a lesson from these investment scams. Let us work together to save Hong Kong from the scourge of scammers.

註釋

- ① **A series of** = 一系列。A series of victories = 連戰連勝。A series of misfortunes = 一連串的不幸。
- ② **Telephone scams** = 電話詐騙。Scam = rip-off, con, trick, swindle。
- ③ **On the verge of** = 將要，瀕臨。He was on the verge of betraying his secret. = 他險些兒(差點)洩露了秘密。Verge on madness = 瀕於瘋狂。
- ④ **Defraud** = 欺騙，deceive, swindle, cheat, fleece, dupe。With intent to defraud = 【法律】蓄意詐騙。
- ⑤ **Depressed** = 沮喪的，unhappy, miserable, dejected, glum, disheartened。
- ⑥ **Fall victim to** = 成為……犧牲品。Victims of war (war victims) = 戰爭受害者。Victimless crime = 無原告犯罪(如賣淫、吸毒等)。
- ⑦ **Con artists** = 騙子，用花言巧語欺騙別人的人。The pros and cons = 贊成者和反對者；贊成票數與反對票數；正面理由和反面理由。
- ⑧ **Invariably** = 總是，不變的，habitually, unvaryingly, perpetually, consistently, customarily, undeviatingly。
- ⑨ **Procrastinate** = 耽擱，延遲，postpone, adjourn, delay, dawdle。
- ⑩ **Bemoan their misfortune** = 悲歎，哀悼；惋惜，哀歎不幸。Bemoan = lament, bewail, regret, mourn, grumble。Bemoan one's fate = 悲歎自己的命運。

No cost too high when kids' lives are at stake

《要盡力保障孩子生命》

On June 12, a 3-year-old girl plunged to her death from the window of an eighth-floor apartment in Sham Shui Po - one of Hong Kong's oldest and poorer districts.

It doesn't seem to be just **an isolated case** ①. It came nine months after a 2-year-old Nepali girl died after falling five stories from a building in Yau Ma Tei where, earlier this year, another kid - a 4-year-old boy - **miraculously** ② survived after plummeting five stories from another building.

Such tragedies are unfortunate and **heart-breaking** ③ for the families involved, rich or poor. Common sense dictates that something has to be done immediately to prevent them from recurring and to reassure parents that their children are adequately protected.

In all three incidents, the children's family members and a domestic helper were arrested for alleged cruelty, ill treatment or neglect of a child. But, no matter how severe any punishment **meted out** ④ may be, it can never bring the children back to life.

Apparently, at the time of the tragedies, the family members were busy with **household chores** ⑤, leaving the children unattended. In the case of the 3-year-old girl, her grandmother had gone out of the flat to dry clothes on a public rack.

It wouldn't be too much to demand that the government consider

providing a financial subsidy to families with children below six years of age, who are more likely to **be left unattended** ⑥ and are not mature enough to realize the dangers lurking before them at home.

In **less well-off** ⑦ families that may not be able to afford domestic helpers, family members or caretakers might be too occupied with household chores to devote close attention to and care for young children. They might assume that youngsters would realize the danger of climbing out a window for instance. But, the fact is that young children lack a sense of danger and could be, sometimes, **driven by mere curiosity** ⑧, leading to accidents.

Telling families to install an iron grille for windows may sound simple, but that costs money, and this tends to impose a financial burden on poor families.

The government can help with **a two-pronged approach** ⑨ - subsidizing such families in the installation of home safety devices, or the hiring of part-time maids to keep a close eye on children at home.

It might not cost the government much, but the subsidies **would go a long way** ⑩ in helping to prevent young children, particularly those aged between 2 and 4, from ending up with the same fate as those in the three cases.

Non-governmental agencies can also play a part by contributing to the subsidy pool, as can local universities which do have student groups dispatched to perform voluntary community work from time to time. These students would be doing society a big favor by helping less well-off families to look after their young children and instill a sense of safety in them.

The key message is to save lives and, if such an awareness is promoted and raised, more lives can and will be saved.

 註釋

- ① **An isolated case** = 孤立事件，個別事件。Isolated = exceptional, unique, solitary, unrepeated。An isolated patient = 被隔離的病人。Isolate oneself from society = 隱居。
- ② **Miraculously** = 奇蹟般地，不可思議地，令人驚歎地；非凡地；能夠創造奇蹟地，astoundingly, astonishingly, amazingly, incredibly, unbelievably, inexplicably。
- ③ **Heart-breaking** = 令人心碎的。A broken heart = 心碎，絕望。A big heart = 胸襟寬度，心胸開闊。A light heart = 無憂無慮，快樂。A single heart = 單純質樸，一心一意。A stout heart = 勇敢，果敢。A heart of gold / a tender heart = 溫柔的心腸，好心腸。Every heart knows its own bitterness. = 【諺語】各人苦惱自己知。Faint heart never won fair lady. = 【諺語】膽怯者贏不到美人。Have a heart = 發發慈悲，做做好事。
- ④ **Meted out** = 評定，表示。Mete out rewards = 給予報酬。
- ⑤ **Household chores** = 家庭瑣事。
- ⑥ **Be left unattended** = 無人照顧。
- ⑦ **Less well-off** = 不富裕的。Well-off = wealthy, rich, prosperous, affluent, loaded。Well-heeled = 順利的；處於優越地位的；幸運的，運氣好的；手頭寬裕的，有錢的，富有的。
- ⑧ **Driven by mere curiosity** = 只是出於好奇。A mere pretext = 不過（是）托辭。
- ⑨ **A two-pronged approach** = 一個雙管齊下的方法。Two heads are better than one. = 【諺語】三個臭皮匠勝過諸葛亮。A day or two = 一兩日。Put two and two together = 根據情況推論。
- ⑩ **Would go a long way** = 終歸。Come and go = 來往。At (in) one go = 一口氣。Itch to have a go at it = 躍躍欲試。

It's time to extend the smoking ban in HK

《不准吸煙範圍應該開闊》

When people walk along Nathan Road in Kowloon or Des Voeux Road on Hong Kong Island, they inevitably **come into contact with** ① many smokers, puffing away. These innocent non-smokers **have no escape** ② as the paths are so narrow. They are forced to unwillingly inhale second-hand smoke. This is a serious problem because many people die each year from inhaling poisonous second-hand smoke.

It is time the Hong Kong government set an example for all mainland cities and cities worldwide. The government should enact laws to prohibit smoking on streets to reduce air pollution and deaths caused by **smoking-related diseases** ③ - including lung cancer. Smokers can smoke at home if they wish. They can still enjoy the freedom to smoke in private. But their freedom to smoke should never **infringe the rights** ④ of people who don't want to inhale second-hand smoke.

Banning people from smoking on the streets might sound **drastic** ⑤. But only tougher measures are going to produce results. Tobacco companies have plenty of funds to lobby legislators so they will take a softer approach when dealing with smoking. But it is time lawmakers did something for Hong Kong people on this issue. In fact, they and the next generation will benefit considerably from these new laws. After all, who does not want to breathe clean air?

Hong Kong already bans smoking in public places such as cinemas, sports grounds and restaurants. People who **violate these laws** ⑥ are

subject to fines. Beijing adopted similar rules on June 1. All indoor public places and many outdoor ones have to be absolutely smoke-free, which includes primary and high schools and hospitals which treat women or children. Thousands of inspectors will **be tasked with the job** ⑦ of inspecting venues and issuing fines to violators. Beijing's latest move has **won praise** ⑧ from inside and outside the country.

Central government figures show that there are 300 million smokers on the mainland. One million Chinese die from smoking-related illnesses such as lung cancer every year. Even on the mainland a million is not a small number. So why can't people just **kick the habit** ⑨ or seek counseling to treat the addiction?

Smoking is also a serious health hazard around the world; there is little doubt about this. Just look at places far from Hong Kong and the mainland. In the UK, for example, women's life expectancy in 2012 (latest figures available) is 5 weeks shorter than in 2011. UK's Faculty of Public Health noted that the shorter life expectancy among women was the result of "more smoking".

Also in 2012 (latest figures available), lung cancer killed 11,692 people in Taipei, the Taiwan government's health promotion administration revealed. The number of deaths rose 6 percent from 2011. Lung cancer was caused by air pollution, smoking and second-hand smoke, the government health agency noted.

In Hong Kong, the Tobacco Control Office of the Department of Health works hard to enforce the non-smoking laws in public places such as restaurants. It conducted 29,000 inspections in 2014, a 6 percent rise from 2013. It issued a total of 8,000 fixed penalty notices and summonses to offenders. Smokers who are caught are fined HK\$1,500. But what the

Tobacco Control Office does isn't enough.

The government should give Hong Kong people a gift to celebrate July 1, the date of reunification, by **widening the smoking ban** ⑩ and proclaiming new legislation to stop smoking near pedestrians. This will save lives. Moreover, Hong Kong people will support this initiative.

註釋

- ① **Come into contact with** = 接觸。Contact = communicate, link, advocate。A man of many contacts = 交際廣(門路多)的人。Make useful contacts with... = 和……進行有用(利)的來往。
- ② **Have no escape** = 不能逃脫 / 逃避。Escape = flee, abscond, bolt, 逃走, 逃亡; 逃脫, 逃逸; 逃避; 避免。Escape from prison = 越獄。Nothing escapes you! = 你真細心!
- ③ **Smoking-related diseases** = 吸煙相關疾病。An acute (chronic) disease = 急性(慢性)病。A family disease = 遺傳病。Foot-and-mouth disease = 【獸醫】口蹄疫。Be cured of a disease = 治好病。The various diseases of civilization = 文明帶來的弊害。
- ④ **Infringe the rights** = 侵犯權利。Infringe = trespass, invade, overstep, 破壞(法律等), 侵犯(權利等), 違反(協定等)。
- ⑤ **Drastic** = 激烈的, 猛烈的; 果斷的, severe, extreme, dire, sweeping, far-reaching。Apply drastic remedies = 下烈性藥(下猛藥)。Take drastic measures = 採取果斷措施(激烈手段)。
- ⑥ **Violate these laws** = 違反這些法律。Violate = infringe, defy, breach, break, contravene, 違犯, 違反, 破壞, 褻瀆(神聖); 污辱。Violate somebody's privacy = 侵擾某人私隱。
- ⑦ **Be tasked with the job** = 給予工作 / 任務。Task = job, chore, duty, mission, assignment, undertaking。It's quite a task to figure out 10 problems in an hour. = 一小時內算出十道習題可是個艱苦的工作。Bring (call / take) somebody to task (for doing something) = 為……責備(某人)。

12

Sad to see more young people becoming HIV positive

《更多青少年感染愛滋病毒令人痛心》

Hong Kong government figures, released on May 25, showing the number of new HIV infections in the city totaled 173 in the first quarter of 2015. The number is the second highest quarterly figure in over 30 years since the government has begun collecting data on HIV in 1984.

HIV is the virus that can develop into **full-blown** ① acquired immunity deficiency syndrome (AIDS). Although in recent years, the HIV virus has become more manageable through medication, AIDS still claims many lives annually all over the world.

Men make up most of the latest reported HIV infections, accounting for 145, or 84 percent, of the 173 cases in the first quarter of 2015, government figures indicate. **Sexual contact** ② remains **the most common route of transmission** ③, accounting for 73 percent of the total number of cases. About 56 percent became infected through homosexual or bisexual contact. Other causes include heterosexual sex, the sharing of infected syringes and transfusions of HIV-infected blood.

The situation is similar in the United States. The group most affected by HIV in the US remains gay or bisexual men. Male-to-male sex accounted for 63 percent of new HIV infections in 2010 (the latest numbers available), according to the Center for Disease Control of the US government (CDC).

In the US, however, the number of new HIV infections reported

- ⑧ **Win praise** = 得到讚揚。Praise = commend, honor, compliment, extol, eulogize, applaud。Be above (beyond all) praise = 讚美不盡的。Bestow (give) praise (on / upon) = 稱讚。Chant (sing) the praises of somebody = 頌揚 (歌頌) 某人。
- ⑨ **Kick the habit** = 改掉習慣。Kick = quit, overcome, conquer, defeat。Kick the car into higher gear = 給汽車掛快檔。Kick oneself = 嚴厲自責。Kick the bucket = 【俚語】翹辮子, 死去。Kick up a dust (fuss / row / stink) = 引起騷擾。Get a big kick out of... = 從……得到極大的快感 (愉快)。
- ⑩ **Widen the smoking ban** = 拓寬禁煙令。Widen = extend, expand, broaden, amplify, 弄闊, 放寬; 使張開。Lift (remove) the ban = 開禁, 解禁。

has decreased from approximately 130,000 annually to 50,000 a year since the height of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s, according to the US government's CDC. (In comparison, the number of Hong Kong cases in the first quarter of 2015 is the second highest it has ever seen.)

Aids Concern, a non-governmental organization dedicated to eliminating AIDS in the city, discovered that **unprotected sex** ④ was the main reason for HIV transmission. It found in **a year-long study** ⑤ that 41 percent of gay men do not use condoms during sex. (It is hard to understand why people are risking their lives by such reckless behavior.)

It is worrying to see that the numbers of HIV cases in this city is increasing year after year. The figures totaled 139, 154 and 173 in the first quarter of 2013, 2014 and 2015, respectively. There is **no sign of** ⑥ this declining.

Between 2005 and 2013, **AIDS-related deaths** ⑦ globally have decreased by almost 40 percent across all age groups. However, deaths of children aged 10 to 19 have not decreased, according to UNICEF.

Indeed, it is sad and worrying to see more Hong Kong young people becoming **HIV-positive** ⑧. Government figures released this month reveal that eight males aged between 17 and 19 years old **were infected with HIV** ⑨ in the first quarter, a terrible record for the 10-19 years old age group in a single quarter. (It is to be hoped that teenage males will have the courage to tell their sexual partners to **practice safe sex** ⑩ or say no to them if they don't wear condoms.)

HIV and AIDS prevention campaigns in Hong Kong should be expanded to spread the message about safe sex. Both government health authorities and concern groups are encouraged to step up efforts to prevent

the spread of HIV which can still develop into the potentially deadly AIDS stage of infection. Hong Kong citizens are persuaded to generously support those concern groups. It is indeed worrying that teenagers are falling victim to the disease. But now the official statistics are indisputable. Sadly we have to accept the reality.

Prevention is always better than cure.

 註釋

- ① **Full-blown** = 完全，full-scale，full-sized，total，out-and-out。
- ② **Sexual contact** = 性行為。
- ③ **The most common route of transmission** = 最普遍的傳播途徑。
Route = course，path，means，method。On route = 在途中。
- ④ **Unprotected sex** = 沒有採用保護措施的性行為。Unprotected = undefended，vulnerable，unguarded，exposed，unshielded，沒有防衛的，不設防的。
- ⑤ **A year-long study** = 為期一年的研究。The fiscal year = 會計年度。
The academic (school) year = 學年。Old in years but young in vigor.
= 年紀大但精力不衰。We had not met for years = 我們好幾年沒見面了。
- ⑥ **No sign of** = 沒有迹象。Sign = indication，symptom，warning，clue，hint，形迹、痕迹。Talk in signs = 用手勢表達想說的話，打手勢語。Signs and wonders = 奇蹟。Sign and countersign = 問答口令；暗語問答，暗號。Signed, sealed, and delivered = 【法律】已簽名蓋章交還，決定。Sign in = (使) 簽到 (報到，登記)。
- ⑦ **AIDS-related deaths** = 愛滋病引起的死亡。
- ⑧ **HIV-positive** = 對愛滋病病毒抗體呈陽性反應 (即受到愛滋病病毒感染，將來可以發展成為愛滋病)。Positive = 呈陽性反應，確實的，明確的；確定的，積極的；建設性的；肯定的。Are you sure? Yes, I'm positive = 真的嗎？當然了。
- ⑨ **Be infected with HIV** = 受愛滋病毒感染。Infected = affected，influenced，inspired，overwhelmed。His courage infected the followers. = 他的勇氣激勵了後來人。Be infected with = 感染，沾染上。

- ⑩ **Practice safe sex** = 實踐安全性行為。Practice = perform，apply，observe，實行，實踐，實施；實際；實用。A plausible idea, but will it work in practice? = 主意倒好，然而能實行嗎？A common practice = 風氣；常例。Bureaucratic practices = 官僚主義作風。The old practices = 過去的一套，老一套。The doctor has a large practice. = 這個醫生病人很多。A matter of common (daily) practice = 尋常的事。

AIIB should look to SAR for skilled staff

《亞投行應在香港招攬人才》

About 60 countries and regions have agreed to join the Beijing-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). The bank is expected to publish its rules of administration by June 30 and become **fully operational** ① by the end of 2015.

The bank needs to recruit skilled staff to develop strategies and manage routine business such as **evaluating** ② infrastructure projects. Beijing should **look no further than Hong Kong** ③ when searching for such skills. The SAR has a large pool of financial, engineering and political experts. More importantly, Hong Kong people can communicate easily in English with overseas members of the AIIB.

AIIB officials have indicated that the bank will recruit from worldwide. Beijing has promised not to **fill the ranks** ④ of the bank's management with mainland officials. No doubt Asian and Western countries have considerable talent pools, but such experts may not **have Beijing's interests at heart** ⑤. In contrast, most Hong Kong people are patriotic.

The establishment of the AIIB will **no doubt** ⑥ undermine **the dominance of** ⑦ the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, institutions greatly influenced by the United States. The advent of the AIIB signals a geopolitical eastwards power shift. Political issues must be handled sensitively. Fortunately, Hong Kong's eight universities have established dozens of think tanks and research centers specialized in the

analysis of international and Asian affairs. For instance, Hong Kong Baptist University has a European Union Academic Programme (EUAP) which specializes in European issues.

Southeast Asia's infrastructural project funding needs are estimated to be about \$800 billion a year. Hong Kong's financial and banking experts can negotiate with AIIB's European and English-speaking member states to obtain such funding. Of course, I am not saying Europe has no such experts. Hong Kong people will usually balance the interests of China and those of Western countries which have joined AIIB. I am not sure whether a French employee of AIIB would put China's national interest ahead of France's.

There is no denying ⑧ that appointing Hong Kong people to AIIB's management, think tanks and junior positions is **analogous to nepotism** ⑨ - or offering jobs to one's family members. What about accusations of cronyism? This is not a problem. Worldly people realize Hong Kong is free of corruption. Hong Kong people employed by AIIB will be unlikely to **turn a blind eye to** ⑩ unfair or problematic dealings among member states.

Another advantage of using Hong Kong people is the city's proximity to the mainland. In order not to leak sensitive information, mainland officials could meet Hong Kong bank employees in person in Shenzhen (hence no electronic devices would be involved). This is a city that Beijing officials can visit in two or three hours. Shenzhen borders Hong Kong.

I make no apology for promoting Hong Kong. This region has many talented people, educated locally or in the West. They could fill senior and junior positions at the AIIB. Should there be any conflict of interest, potential foreign employees of the bank would protect their own countries'

interests, not China's. Hong Kong people's interests are in line with Beijing's. This is why I am sure skilled Hong Kong people have much to offer the AIIB.

 註釋

- ① **Fully operational** = 完全運行。Fully = completely, copiously, wholly, effusively, totally。The whole system will be fully operational by December 2017. = 整個系統將於 2017 年 12 月全面投入使用。
- ② **Evaluating** = 評估, 評價, assessing, appraising, estimating, gauging, weighing。
- ③ **Look no further than Hong Kong** = 不妨看看香港。Look no further than the unfolding Eurozone saga for confirmation of this rule. = 只需看看正在上演的歐元區危機, 我們就能證實這一規律。
- ④ **Fill the ranks** = 加入。People of all ranks = 各階層的人們。Break ranks = 落伍; 走出隊伍, 出列。Close the ranks = 1. 使隊伍靠攏。2. 【比喻】緊密團結。Fall into rank = 排隊, 列隊。Humanitarian and international governmental agencies deplore the recruitment and abduction of children by armed groups looking to fill the ranks of their fighting force. = 人道主義者和國際政府組織譴責招募和誘導兒童加入軍事力量組織。
- ⑤ **Have Beijing's interests at heart** = 關心北京的利益。We have your interests at heart. = 我們會把你的利益放在心上。
- ⑥ **No doubt** = 毫無疑問。A shadow of doubt = 有一點懷疑。Have grave doubts about = 對……有嚴重懷疑。Beyond (past) (all) doubt = 毫無疑問。In doubt = 感到疑心, 拿不準。Doubting Thomas = 疑心重的人, 多疑的人。No doubt it is very absurd. = 這無疑是十分荒謬的。

14

Investment opportunities
abound on mainland

《內地投資機會處處》

The mainland offers huge investment opportunities to foreign investors. Foreign companies, as well as those in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, should **grasp this extraordinary chance** ① to **set up shops on the mainland** ② and profit from it.

Beijing announced on April 20 that three new free trade zones (FTZs) in Guangdong, Fujian and Tianjin would be established on April 21. The rules for those zones will be similar to the ones in the Shanghai FTZ. Last time when China established special economic zones was in the early 1980s, when the late **paramount leader** ③ Deng Xiaoping pronounced the opening-up of several coastal cities, including Shenzhen, Zhuhai and Xiamen to foreign investment.

I wrote numerous articles on the special economic zones for The Wall Street Journal newspaper in the 1980s. I was the first non-mainland journalist to **set foot on** ④ Pingtan Island in Fujian province, the mainland's closest point to Taiwan. Pingtan is open to foreign investment under Beijing's April 20 announcement.

Despite the good news, one area Beijing might consider relaxing is the so-called "negative investment list", which covers areas off limits to foreign, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan companies. The State Council might consider, for instance, allowing non-mainland companies to have a minority stake in business areas such as publishing, news and banking. There is apparently no state security issue involved if that is what Beijing

- ⑦ **The dominance of** = 佔主導地位。Come under the dominance of = 淪於……的統治之下。Over the centuries we have fought to prevent Europe from falling under the dominance of a single power. = 幾個世紀以來，我們為防止歐洲被一個大國主宰而奮鬥 / 戰鬥。
- ⑧ **There is no denying** = 不可否認的是。There is no denying that courage is playing an important role in one's life. = 不可否認的是，勇氣在我們生活中扮演著重要角色。
- ⑨ **Analogous to nepotism** = 類似裙帶關係。Analogous = similar, equivalent, parallel, comparable, consonant。
- ⑩ **Turn a blind eye to** = 對……視而不見。Be blind to = 不明，不看(事實)，對……是盲目的。He was blind to all arguments. = 和他有理也講不通。Why did the officials turn a blind eye to the crime? = 為何官員對此罪行視而不見？

is **concerned about** ⑤. This is because foreign companies are permitted to only have a maximum of 49 percent interest in a joint venture. Having joint-ventures in these areas will only improve efficiency and **enhance productivity** ⑥.

Beijing's "negative investment list" comprises 122 areas, which is down from the 139 put in place when the Shanghai FTZ was established in August 2013. The 12 percent improvement (from 130 to 122 investment areas) is a big encouragement to potential foreign companies. It is hoped the negative list will be shortened again soon.

The three new FTZs in Guangdong, Fujian and Tianjin have areas ranging from 116 square kilometers (in Guangdong) to 120 square kilometers (in Tianjin). All together the three zones have a total area 30 percent the size of Hong Kong. The total size of the zones demonstrates Beijing's commitment to open up the country to foreign investment.

The National Bureau of Statistics in mid-April announced a 7 percent year-on-year gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the first quarter of 2015, slowed from 7.3 percent in the previous quarter. It just hit the official annual target for this year - widely seen as the Beijing leadership's **bottom line** ⑦ for tolerating a slowdown. **Fixed-asset investments** ⑧ climbed 13.5 percent in the first quarter compared with the year before as property investment growth slumped to 8.5 percent; and industrial output rose 5.6 percent. All three economic gauges fell to their worst levels since the global financial crisis in 2008. China's retail sales growth also declined in the first quarter.

Beijing officials aren't **shy about** ⑨ the timing of the three FTZs' establishment. Mei Xinyu, a researcher at the Ministry of Commerce's International Trade and Economic Cooperation Institute, was quoted by

China Daily as saying that "adding more of them (FTZs) can help China to realize its steady growth targets under the current global economic situation."

Foreign companies, as well as those from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, should waste no time **jumping on the investment bandwagon** ⑩. The four zones in Shanghai, Tianjin, Guangdong and Fujian are welcoming foreign investors with open arms. It might take another 30 years before investment rules on the mainland are liberalized further.

 註釋

- ① **Grasp this extraordinary chance** = 抓住這個特別的機會。Grasp = grip 'hold 'clutch 'clasp 'clench。Grasp the nettle = 迎着艱險上，挺身應付難局。
- ② **Set up shops on the mainland** = 在大陸設立商店、據點。
- ③ **Paramount leader** = 最高領導人。Paramount = supreme, dominant, principal, overriding。
- ④ **Set foot on** = 踏上。This is the first time I have left my country and set foot on foreign soil. = 這是我第一次走出國門，踏上異國土地。
- ⑤ **Concerned about** = 關注。Everybody is concerned about the future of his country. = 每個人都關心自己國家的前途。
- ⑥ **Enhance productivity** = 提高生產率。Enhance = improve, boost, augment, heighten, 增加(價值、價格、力量、吸引力等), 提高; 增強。It could greatly shorten design cycle and enhance productivity by applying reverse technology. = 通過逆向設計可以大量地縮短設計週期，提高生產率。
- ⑦ **Bottom line** = 底線。She says £95,000 is her bottom line. = 她說 95,000 英鎊是她的底線。Sit at the bottom of the table = 坐末席。At the bottom of one's heart = 內心深處。
- ⑧ **Fixed-asset investments** = 固定資產投資。China's roaring economy has been powered for years by high inflated fixed-asset investments. = 多年來，高度膨脹的固定資產投資拉動中國經濟快速發展。

- ⑨ **Shy about** = 遲疑。Shy = cautious, nervous, fearful, reluctant, wary。Once bitten, twice shy = 一回遭蛇咬，十年怕井繩。He isn't the man to shy at difficulties. = 他不是困難面前畏縮的人。She was shy two months of her nineteenth birthday = 她差兩個月就是十九歲的生日。More important, he is not shy about assailing what he regards as false interpretations by other historians. = 更重要的是，如果他認為其他歷史學家的解讀是錯誤的，便會毫不遲疑地對之進行攻擊。
- ⑩ **Jumping on the investment bandwagon** = 跟上投資浪潮。Bandwagon = movement, cause, trend。

15

Loan defaulters must no longer be treated leniently

《向政府借錢讀書的人應該定時還錢》

About 13,000 people who borrowed money from the Hong Kong government in the past three years to study full- or part-time university courses have **defaulted on their loans** ①. The amounts involved amount to HK\$200 million. These irresponsible people should be **shamed** ②. This would deter other borrowers of taxpayers' money from shirking their legal and civic responsibilities.

The Ombudsman said these defaulters have the money to repay their loans, but choose to **neglect their legal obligations** ③. The government's threat of legal action does not appear to be working. The Education Bureau, which is responsible for overseeing the loan scheme, would be well-advised to refer the defaulters' bad credit information to the city's **credit-reference agencies** ④. This would serve as **a deterrent to** ⑤ existing and potential future non-payers.

Effective strategies must be adopted. Policies must be implemented to encourage defaulters to take responsibility for their actions.

Many defaulters simply regard the government's threats of legal action as "a final notice" to pay up. However, if information about their unpaid loans were to be passed to credit-reference agencies, they might **have second thoughts about** ⑥ neglecting to settle their debts. If their credit standing were undermined as a result of their defaults on government loans, they might not be able to get cheap loans from other institutions, such as credit card companies and banks.

Threats to "expose" them to credit-reference agencies might work because loan defaulters would simply **have too much at stake** ⑦.

Who are these shameless people who try to get away with taxpayers' hard-earned money? About 30 percent of them are university graduates who financed their educations with government loans. The remaining 70 percent are citizens who exploited a non-means-tested plan, known as the "extended scheme", to borrow government money to enroll in part-time vocational or academic programs. Each citizen is entitled to borrow up to HK\$325,700 at below market rates.

The Ombudsman in late March said the defaulters "have the ability to repay their loans, but choose not to. One of the reasons is that there is negligible deterrent effect". Let's not hesitate any more. Let's fight the defaulters with a strong, effective deterrent. This might finally help the government win the "loan-defaulting war".

In the battle against potential loan defaulters, applicants for government loans should be more **carefully vetted** ⑧. In 2012, the Education Bureau agency responsible for approving loans interviewed (as part of a vetting process) less than 1 percent of the applicants under the "extended scheme". Interviewing less than 1 percent of total applications? Come on! Civil servants can do better than that.

The government should also be **tougher with** ⑨ university graduates who fail to repay loans used to finance their tertiary education. It is understandable that "money in my pocket is always better than in yours". But borrowers should not be allowed to entertain such thoughts. The government's threats of legal action are not working because many graduates simply regard its legal notices as "the final notice" to pay up.

A deterrent is the only way to force these people to repay their loans. If they were **threatened with** ⑩ the possibility that their negative credit information would be handed to the credit-reference agencies, they might wake up to reality.

Many fresh graduates do not need to apply for credit cards, home loans and other credit facilities. Many defaulters would pay up – out of fear that financial uncertainties stemming from negative credit information could damage their chances of getting loans elsewhere.

Clearly, the best strategy to get our taxpayers' money back is to “shame” loan defaulters.

 註釋

- ① **Defaulted on their loans** = 拖欠貸款。Default = nonpayment, nonattendance, evasion, 不履行; 違約; 拖欠。Judgment by default = 缺席裁判。
- ② **Shamed** = 感到羞愧。Shame = disgrace, dishonor, humiliation, embarrassment, ignominy。Flush with shame = 羞得臉紅。A burning (crying) shame = 奇恥大辱。A life of shame = 賣笑生涯。What a shame to treat you like that! = 那樣對待你實在太不應該了。Her son's affair had humiliated and shamed her. = 兒子的事讓她感到難堪和羞愧。
- ③ **Neglect their legal obligations** = 忽視他們的法律義務。
- ④ **Credit-reference agencies** = 信貸資料機構。
- ⑤ **A deterrent to** = 起到威懾作用。Deterrent = warning, restraining, constraining。Death penalty is a deterrent to violent crimes. = 死刑對暴力犯罪起到威懾作用。
- ⑥ **Have second thoughts about** = 重新考慮。However, foreign funds also sometimes have second thoughts about investments in Chinese companies after closer examination of their books and operations. = 然而，外國基金在對中國公司的帳目和業務狀況進行更仔細的研究後，有時也會對投資重新加以考慮。
- ⑦ **Have too much at stake** = 代價太大、處於太危急的情況。Tether a horse to a stake = 把馬拴在木樁上。Pull up stakes = 離開; 遷址。
- ⑧ **Carefully vetted** = 仔細審核。Vet = examine, scrutinize, inspect, assess, evaluate。New policemen are carefully vetted = 新加入的警員受到仔細的審查。A vet = veterinarian (獸醫); veteran (退役軍人)。

16

Anti-suicide efforts should focus on deprived districts

《防止自殺工作應集中在貧窮地區》

For the first time in Hong Kong's history, a scientific study has determined that the suicide rate of deprived areas in Hong Kong, including Shum Shui Po and Kowloon City, can be twice as high as in other districts.

Armed with these findings ① the SAR government would be well advised to allocate further resources to these areas and prevent suicides.

The research was carried out by two Hong Kong and two Taiwan scholars including Paul Yip of Hong Kong University, an expert on suicide. The findings were published in the March issue of the **well-respected** ② Journal of Social Science and Medicine. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, this is the first detailed small-area analysis of suicide in an Asian city.

In summary, their research reveals that the geographic distribution of suicide shows **distinct patterns** ③ in Hong Kong.

High suicide rates were found in areas that are both densely populated and deprived. Suicide rates are also associated with deprivation and **social fragmentation** ④. Suicide rates in the most deprived areas such as Shum Shui Po, Wong Tai Sin and Kowloon City are 2.3 times higher than in least deprived areas.

About 6,000 people committed suicide in Hong Kong between 2005 and 2010. I am sure there is more the government could do to prevent suicide.

- ⑨ **Tougher with** = 強硬應付。Congress is already pushing for the White House to take a tougher line with Beijing. = 美國國會已在敦促白宮對北京方面採取更強硬的立場。
- ⑩ **Threatened with** = 受到威脅。Threaten = frighten, scare, coerce, terrorize, terrify。There's no snake known that will habitually attack human beings unless threatened with its life. = 除非自己的生命受到了威脅，已知的蛇中還沒有習慣性地攻擊人類的。

The research states that the “city center” of Hong Kong, a generally non-deprived area, shows mostly below average suicide rates. However, there are high rates concentrating in some **socioeconomically deprived** ⑤, densely populated areas. It says there are greater geographic variations in suicide rates for males than there are for females - except for among the elderly age group. The research finds that suicide rates are **associated with** ⑥ indicators of socioeconomic deprivation (populations with non-professional jobs and low median household incomes), and social fragmentation (proportions of unmarried adults and divorced/separated adults).

Gender ⑦ and age groupings have different associations with suicide rates, the research reveals. Areas in the most deprived quintile have a suicide rate more than twice as high as the least deprived, the research shows. It notes that the association between suicide and deprivation is stronger in males than females and more **marked** ⑧ among the youth when compared with the elderly.

The spatial distribution of suicide ⑨ in Hong Kong shows distinct patterns and a stronger association with incomes compared to findings from Western countries, the scholars suggest. They add that suicide prevention strategies (perhaps led by government officials) should consider **tackling** ⑩ the marked socioeconomic gradient in suicide and high risk of suicide among young and middle-aged males living in deprived areas.

The study finds that high suicide rates appear in clusters in some inner city areas of Hong Kong Island (near North Point) and Kowloon (Sham Shui Po, Wong Tai Sin, Kowloon City and Kwun Tong). The highest suicide rates are in Sham Shui Po and Kowloon City (both in Kowloon), the study finds.

In males in the 10 to 44 and 45 to 64 age groups, suicide rates in the most deprived areas are more than three times higher than the least deprived areas, the study reveals.

Based on these findings, perhaps the Hong Kong government should target young and middle-aged men living in deprived areas of Hong Kong including Sham Shui Po and Kowloon City, which show a particularly high rate of people at risk of committing suicide. The scholars suggest programs supporting education and work opportunities in this group could be considered. “We should also consider how to make good use of resources within the community to help vulnerable members of the community,” the scholars recommended.

 註釋

- ① **Armed with these findings** = 擁有這些發現。Armed robbery = 武裝搶劫，持械搶劫。Armed forces (services) = 軍隊；海陸空三軍。
- ② **Well-respected** = 深受尊敬。Respect = admiration, deference, esteem, reverence, veneration。Give one's respects to = 向……致候。Have respect for = 尊敬；尊重，重視。Hold in respect = 尊敬。In all respects = in every respect, 無論從哪方面(哪一點)來看；在各方面。In that (this) respect = 在那一(這一)方面。Send one's respects to = 向……問候。Win the respect of all = 處處受人尊敬。
- ③ **Distinct patterns** = 不同的模式。Distinct = different, dissimilar, discrete, diverse, distinctive, 清楚的，明顯的；明確的；顯著的。A neat distinct handwriting = 字迹清楚。A distinct pronunciation = 發音清晰。A distinct improvement of living conditions = 生活條件的顯著改善。
- ④ **Social fragmentation** = 社會分裂。Fragmentation = disintegration, shattering, crumbling, breakup。
- ⑤ **Socioeconomically deprived** = 社會經濟上受剝奪。An accident deprived him of his sight. = 意外的事務使他失明。Be deprived of = 失卻。I was deprived of education at ten. = 我十歲時就失學了。
- ⑥ **Associated with** = 有關聯。Associated = related, allied, linked, connected, concomitant。The Associated Press (略作 A.P.) = 美國聯合通訊社(簡稱美聯社)。
- ⑦ **Gender** = 性別。The masculine (feminine) gender = 陽(陰)性。
- ⑧ **Marked** = 明顯，Noticeable, Obvious, Discernible, Distinct。A marked man = 嫌疑分子；【美國】累犯；名氣不好的人；有異常才能的人。A marked difference = 顯著的差別。

- ⑨ **The spatial distribution of suicide** = 自殺的空間分佈。Commit suicide = 自殺，自盡。A suicide squad = 敢死隊。
- ⑩ **Tackling** = 解決，undertaking, attempting, attacking, facing, confronting, challenging。

The SAR must protect retirement incomes

《政府要保護市民退休後的入息》

Thousands, if not millions, of **salary-earners** ① in Hong Kong put the 5 percent of their monthly incomes **required by law** ②, into the Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) retirement fund.

Fund members can withdraw their funds from the age of 65.

Since Hong Kong's fund industry is relatively **unregulated** ③, **irregularities** ④ are common. Many salary earners are told their investment funds have 3 percent annual returns. But there is a **caveat** ⑤. After "management fees" and hidden fund company charges have been deducted, people's returns can sometimes be negative.

What a shame! Something should be done about this!

After many complaints from the retired and those close to retirement - this is when people commonly start paying attention to their retirement provisions - the government finally plans to **address the issue** ⑥. However, the new legislation will not **take effect** ⑦ until the end of 2016.

Many would argue that this is not soon enough. Why can't the government provide some direction? Or why can't the Mandatory Provident Fund Authority, regulator of the industry, issue guidelines and implement the proposed plan immediately?

The current schedule calls for the new legislation to become effective by the end of 2016. This scheme focuses on a "default fund", comprising simple portfolios of blue-chip stocks and A-grade bonds. To the relief of

many MPF contributors, the fees charged by fund managers won't exceed 0.75 percent. In future, Hong Kong people's MPF money will be invested in these relatively safe "default funds". (Before March, the default funds were referred to as core funds.) **Savvy investors** ⑧, of course, have the right to switch some of their savings to more risky investments. Many would argue that the MPF industry should not delay implementation of this approach. We should offer protection to our citizens immediately.

Government officials and **conscientious** ⑨ fund managers should take the lead. They have a moral responsibility to protect our hard-earned retirement money. Act today, please!

The government did a survey in early March seeking responses from MPF scheme members and fund managers. Over 80 percent of MPF scheme members (i.e., salary earners) favored the default funds scheme. But opposition from investment managers and trustees, unsurprisingly, was "almost unanimous". Fund managers from 19 fund houses involved in the MPF scheme argued that the fee cap would mean they must turn to a passive, index-based investment approach for the "default funds" to **trim costs** ⑩. This would mean fewer incentives to encourage innovation, they argued.

Also regarding the MPF, the government should consider banning a current practice by employers in order to protect salary earners. This practice, despite widespread criticism, allows employers to offset their contributions to workers' long-term service and severance payments with contributions to their MPF schemes.

The practice reduces employers' operating costs. Should they go out of business, however, employees cannot collect any long-service or severance payments. This is because the "money" is already embedded in

their MPF schemes. Why can't we change this practice because it works against the interests of employees?

Employers might argue that changing this may affect Hong Kong's business environment because it will increase operating costs. But again, it is the government's moral responsibility to ensure workers can enjoy a happy retirement. Company profits may decline slightly, but a happy workforce would mean increased productivity.

 註釋

- ① **Salary-earners** = 打工一族，薪水收入者。
- ② **Required by law** = 法律。Required = obliged, compelled, forced, commanded, anticipated。He requires medical care. = 他需要治療。All passengers are required to show their tickets. = 所有乘客都必須出示車票。If circumstances require = 遇必要時。It requires that... = 有……的必要。
- ③ **Unregulated** = 不受管制，Loose, Unfettered, Tolerant。
- ④ **Irregularities** = 不規則，不正規的事物，違法亂紀，非法行為，Indiscretions, Wrongdoings, Misdeeds, Anomalies, Loopholes, Abnormalities。
- ⑤ **Caveat** = 警告，Warning, Caution, Admonition, Forewarning, Proviso。
- ⑥ **Address the issue** = 解決問題。Address = tackle, concentrate, focus, deal with。An inaugural address = 就任致辭 (演說)。An address of thanks = 謝辭。Pay one's addresses to a lady = 向某女士大獻殷勤。
- ⑦ **Take effect** = 生效，奏效，見效，有效用，應驗。Effect = result, consequence, outcome, upshot, 效能，效果，效力，效應，作用，功效；影響。Cause and effect = 因果。Curative effects = 療效。Household effects = 家產，傢俱雜物。Personal effects = 私人財物，手提行李。Sound effects = 音響效果。Three-dimensional effect = 立體感。Come (go) into effect = 開始實施 (生效)。

18

HK must address its shortage of doctors

《香港要解決醫生荒》

- 8 **Savvy investors** = 精明的投資者。Savvy = Shrewdness, Perception, Know-how, 理解力; 處事才能, 機智; 精明; 本領, 專門技能。
- 9 **Conscientious** = 認真 / 有良心的, 誠實的, 正大光明的, 耿直的, meticulous, painstaking, reliable, diligent, punctilious, scrupulous。Far from conscientious = 很不認真。
- 10 **Trim costs** = 修邊成本。Trim = prune, decrease, shave, reduce, truncate。Into trim = 使成為適宜的狀態。Out of trim = 未準備妥當, 情形不好, 有毛病。Trim one's nails = 剪指甲。Trim off the edges of a photograph = 切齊相片 (四邊)。Trim one's sail = 見風轉舵, 隨機應變。

Government figures show Hong Kong residents generally have to wait two years to receive specialist medical services at government clinics or hospitals.

This doesn't sit well with Hong Kong's image as a rich, modern, efficient and caring city. With billions of dollars already in government reserves, why do people have to wait so long to receive medical treatment? Some die if their illnesses can't wait that long.

The answer is obvious: There is a **chronic problem** ① - a shortage of doctors. Increasingly the intake of medical students in local institutions, as health officials recently suggested, doesn't resolve the doctor shortage problem.

To tackle the shortage, Food and Health Bureau Secretary Ko Wing-man told local press on March 4 that the government planned to increase openings for medical students. The combined number of graduates produced by the medical schools at Hong Kong University and the Chinese University of Hong Kong will total 420 by 2018, up from 250 in 2014.

Ko admitted that the increased numbers of medical student intakes **wouldn't resolve the shortage** ②. "A shortage would persist over the years," he was quoted as saying. Money, meanwhile, doesn't seem to be the issue. This year the government's Hospital Authority (HA) funding will total HK\$49 billion - up 50 percent from 2010.

At present, there are some 5,500 doctors working in the HA. In 2012, 2013 and 2014 the number of doctor vacancies in public hospitals was around 250, 310 and 340, respectively. There are currently 13 non-local doctors employed by the HA, who serve in the fields of anesthesia, emergency medicine, pathology, family medicine and internal medicine.

The low number of foreign doctors working in Hong Kong is **pitiable** ③, and worrying.

Currently, the Medical Council of Hong Kong may approve the registration of doctors who possess only qualifications for practicing medicine outside Hong Kong. After one year in Hong Kong, these overseas doctors need to pass an examination and undergo a year-long **mandatory internship** ④ if they want to continue working in the city. Some overseas doctors are reluctant to become interns either because of the **meager salaries** ⑤ or because they are already specialists in their hometowns. Some inevitably choose to return home.

Why experienced overseas doctors should be treated the same as local medical trainees (recruitment is conducted annually to recruit medical graduates of local universities and other qualified doctors fill the trainee-posts and for specialist training provided by the HA) is **beyond me** ⑥. Many overseas doctors can be coaches/tutors to recent graduates from local medical schools. It is **insulting** ⑦ for them to have to undergo a year of mandatory training and work alongside local graduates. This partly explains why Hong Kong now has only 13 overseas doctors when it has 340 doctor vacancies.

To resolve the problem of a shortage of doctors in Hong Kong, experienced overseas doctors should be **exempted from** ⑧ undergoing this humiliating year of “training”. To draw an academic analogy, it is similar

to asking me, a teacher of master’s-level courses of eight years standing, to take the same courses as my students or my teaching contract will not be renewed. That would be absurd!

Dr Ko, I believe Hong Kong’s medical professionals should be less “**protectionist**” ⑨. For the benefit of Hong Kong citizens, more overseas doctors should be employed by the HA. As long as they have the training and experience required overseas, they should be **allowed to practice** ⑩ in Hong Kong.

The thought of citizens having to wait two years before seeing a specialist concerns me greatly.

 註釋

- ① **Chronic problem** = 慢性、長久問題。Chronic = long-lasting, lingering, continuing, enduring, lasting, prolonged, protracted。A chronic disease = 慢性病，痼疾。A chronic grumbler = 一年到頭牢騷不停的人。A chronic liar = 說謊成癖的人。
- ② **Wouldn't resolve the shortage** = 不能解決短缺問題。Resolve = solve, settle, find out about, 決定；決議。
- ③ **Pitiable** = 可憐。I resolved to give up smoking. / I resolved that I would give up smoking. = 我決心戒煙了。It was resolved that... = (會議) 議決……。A man of resolve = 剛毅的人。
- ④ **Mandatory internship** = 強制實習。Mandatory = obligatory, compulsory, required, fixed, 命令的，訓令的；委任的，委託的。
- ⑤ **Meager salaries** = 微薄的薪水。Meager = scanty, insufficient, inadequate, paltry, skimpy, measly, 粗陋的，貧弱的；思想貧乏的；枯燥的。
- ⑥ **Beyond me** = 超越自己，不明白。Far beyond the sea = 遠在大海那邊。A mile beyond the town = 離城一英里以外。Beyond possibility = 不可能。
- ⑦ **Insulting** = 侮辱。Insult = affront, abuse, offense, disrespect, 凌辱。Add insult to injury = 傷害之外又加侮辱。Put up with (swallow (down), pocket, take) an insult = 忍受侮辱。
- ⑧ **Exempted from** = 豁免。Exempted = excused, released, spared, relieved。Commodities exempt from taxes = 免稅商品。
- ⑨ **Protectionist** = 保護主義者，isolationist, nationalist, xenophobe。Protection = 保護，保衛，防禦，掩護，包庇，照顧。Protection against moths (lightning) = 除蟲，避(雷)。Under the protection of = 在……保護下，受……保護。

- ⑩ **Allowed to practice** = 允許工作。Practice = 實行，實踐，實施；實際；實用；做法，技術。A plausible idea, but will it work in practice? = 主意倒好，然而能實行嗎？A common practice = 風氣；常例。In practice = 實際上，事實上。

Mentoring scheme will face difficulties



The Hong Kong government's Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged is to be **launched** ① in September. But it is likely to **face some tough challenges** ②. Government officials will need to have more imagination and **creativity** ③ to push it through.

The HK\$400-million scheme, with half of its funding being contributed by big business in the city, was reported by a local newspaper in early February. The fund is intended to help 10,000 primary-school to junior-high-school students from **grassroots families** ④ each year.

Government officials have made the purpose of the scheme very clear. Mentors, not private tutors, according to government officials, will stay at homes of **underprivileged** ⑤ students from 4 pm to 9 pm on weekdays. Their jobs are more than simply preparing meals, helping the poor children with their homework or playing computer games with them. They are mentors and **role models** ⑥ and are expected to **broaden the children's horizons** ⑦ and fortify their intellectual abilities.

To be more specific, these mentors will help strengthen the students' motivation to learn, self-esteem, emotional skills, interpersonal skills and **resilience to adversity** ⑧, according to government officials. They must have successful life stories to share with the children. Young people, including university students and fresh graduates and high school students, I am afraid, are not considered qualified to apply to become mentors.

Where will managers of the Partnership Fund for the Disadvantage find 10,000 mentors? The mentors will supposedly be professionals such as accountants and lawyers; and accomplished business executives with something to offer the underprivileged and disadvantaged children. Government officials should be more than happy if they can find 1,000 qualified mentors, **a fraction of** ⑨ what the fund aims to recruit.

The government makes no secret about its hidden agenda in launching the HK\$400-million fund for the disadvantaged. Its opaque goal is to release some of the 500,000 female homemakers to join or rejoin the workforce as Hong Kong's aging population puts pressure on the labor supply. Hong Kong will face a labor shortage problem in a few years' time.

To guarantee the success of the mentorship scheme, the government would be well-advised to work with professional groups and business chambers in the city to create a cohesive, caring and international-looking society. How to persuade professional groups and big business **to come onboard** ⑩, will be an uphill battle but it is one worth fighting.

Government officials must realize that it will not easy for big business and professional firms to release experienced staff to become mentors between 4 and 9 pm, which means they would probably have to leave the office by 3 pm, between Monday and Friday. One suggestion perhaps would be to arrange a "barter trade". If a professional or commercial firm successfully hired a female worker from one of the underprivileged families, it should be obliged to provide a mentor to take care of this new worker's child at home.

Meanwhile, the government should set an example to big business and professional firms in the city. Various government departments, perhaps, could nominate some experienced staff as mentors, to bring the fund to

an auspicious start. Retired officials, many of them are mentally agile, should be encouraged to serve as mentors. They do not need to work for money any more. With tons of insightful stories to tell, their participation in the mentorship scheme would mean a lot to many of Hong Kong's underprivileged school children. Giving back to society is a spirit cherished by all.

Government officials are encouraged to develop similar schemes to the “barter trade” suggested here in order to ensure the success of the high-sounding Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged.

註釋

- ① **Launched** = 開辦，開始，發起。
- ② **Face some tough challenges** = 面臨着一些嚴峻的挑戰。Face = confront, tackle, meet, challenge, handle, combat。A sad face = 愁容。A smiling face = 笑臉。Save one's face = 保全面子。Lose one's face = 丟臉。With a smile on one's face = 面帶笑容。Fall on one's face = 臉朝下倒下，(徹底)失敗。Fly in the face of = 悍然不顧；公然抗拒。Hide one's face from = 不理睬。
- ③ **Creativity** = 創造力，originality, imagination, inspiration, ingenuity, inventiveness。Creative = 有創造力的，創造的；造成的。Creative power = 創造力；創作力。Creative talent = 創作的才能。
- ④ **Grassroots families** = 草根家庭。All flesh is grass. = 人盡如草，終必枯亡。While the grass grows the horse (steed) starves = 【諺語】遠水不能救近火。Be out at grass = 在牧放中，闲着(休假，失業)。Let no grass grow under one's feet = 不錯過機會，說幹就幹。
- ⑤ **Underprivileged** = 貧困的；社會地位低下的，disadvantaged, deprived, poor, neglected。
- ⑥ **Role models** = 模範。Role = 角色，任務；作用。The leading role = 主角。Fill the role of = 擔負……的任務。Play an important role in = 在……中起重要作用。
- ⑦ **Broaden the children's horizons** = widen one's horizon, 開闊孩子的眼界。Horizon = prospect, skyline, possibility, perspective, 眼界，視界；範圍，見識。

20

Filibustering tactics are destructive

《政治拉布破壞性強》

The “pan-democrat” legislators have adopted **filibustering tactics**

① to block the government’s proposal to establish a **much-needed** ② Innovation and Technology Bureau. To say this is regrettable is an understatement.

It is wrong to **indiscriminately** ③ block government initiatives and policies beneficial to Hong Kong’s economic development. The “pan-democrats” should **take a hard look** ④ at themselves. It is never too late to admit your mistakes.

The “pan-democrats” must realize that without an Innovation and Technology Bureau, the city will suffer. It will be unable to compete with Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand. Hong Kong’s role as China’s financial center could decline in favor of Shanghai if technological development here does not **keep pace with** ⑤ financial and economic development.

The opposition’s filibustering tactics blocked government proposals for funding the new technology bureau on Feb 14. This will seriously delay establishing the new bureau.

People realize the SAR needs to improve its technology sector to boost economic growth and create jobs. The “pan-democrats” should realize we live in a high-tech world with **no room for complacency** ⑥. Hong Kong’s Science Park in Sha Tin, Cyberport in Pok Fu Lam and technology-related institutes all need government leadership and support. That is a no-brainer.

- ⑧ **Resilience to adversity** = 抵禦逆境，抗逆力。Resilience = pliability, flexibility, elasticity, bounciness, 跳回，彈回；彈性；恢復工；精神恢復(力)。
- ⑨ **A fraction of** = 小部分的。Fraction = portion, segment, part, section, division, 一些，一點兒。A fraction closer = 稍微靠近一點。In a fraction of a second = 一轉眼的工夫。
- ⑩ **To come onboard** = 共同參與，involved, committed。

The behavior of the “pan-democrats” is foolish.

When Hong Kong people’s livelihoods are **under threat** ⑦, “pan-democrat” legislators should think twice about **arbitrarily** ⑧ blocking government initiatives. They owe Hong Kong people an explanation.

Disliking Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying is one thing, hurting Hong Kong’s economic development is quite another. The “pan-democrats” should reconsider their actions before **permanent damage** ⑨ is done to Hong Kong’s economy. Their actions could affect millions of people’s livelihoods.

Between 1998 and 2002, under the leadership of former chief executive Tung Chee-hwa, the then Information Technology and Broadcasting Bureau did a good job at the height of the dot-com boom. However, the bureau was absorbed into the Commerce, Industry and Economic Development Bureau in 2007 when Tung’s successor Donald Tsang Yam-kuen was in power.

Under the government’s current plans, the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the Innovation and Technology Commission would be moved into the new Innovation and Technology Bureau, providing “pan-democrat” legislators allow it. The new Innovation and Technology Bureau will have more power and resources. It will be able to do a much better job than the existing institutions combined.

At a Feb 14 Legislative Council (LegCo) meeting, the “pan-democrats” attacked government officials who were asking for **a start-up fund** ⑩ of HK\$35 million for the new bureau. Come-on legislators, even janitors, security guards and ordinary people know that the Innovation and Technology Bureau stands for promoting innovation and technology in

Hong Kong! There should be confidence that important new initiatives can be unveiled when the new bureau is formed.

The cynical “pan-democrats” might believe that the new technology bureau would be used to create new political posts for Leung Chun-ying’s allies. But they should not let these concerns delay the establishment of an important bureau which is vital to the city’s future.

No matter how “pan-democrat” legislators justify their actions, indiscriminately blocking vital government initiatives and policies is unintelligent, wrong and misguided.

 註釋

- ① **Filibustering tactics** = 拉布戰略。Filibuster = 用冗長的發言妨礙會議的議員；會議妨礙行為。
- ② **Much-needed** = 急需。There is no need for (of) hurrying. / There is no need to hurry. = 不用着急。There is a great need of money. = 急需要錢。A friend in need is a friend indeed. = 患難朋友才是真朋友。If need be = 如果必要的話。In case (time) of need = 在緊急的時候，萬一有事時。
- ③ **Indiscriminately** = 任意地，濫用，不加區別的，不分青紅皂白的，arbitrarily，haphazardly，aimlessly，erratically，chaotically。Be indiscriminate in making friends = 亂交朋友。
- ④ **Take a hard look** = 仔細審視。Look sick = 顯得有病的樣子。He does not look his age. = 他看上去不像是這個年紀的人。He looks very tired. = 他好像很疲倦。He looks every inch a worker. = 他沒有一處不像工人。
- ⑤ **Keep pace with** = 跟上，並駕齊驅，保持同步。At a good pace = 相當快地；活潑地。At a snail's pace = 爬行，慢吞吞地走。Set (make) the pace (for) = (給……) 作步調示範。Pace up and down the corridor = 在走廊裏踱來踱去。
- ⑥ **No room for complacency** = 不能自滿。complacency = smugness，satisfaction，self-satisfaction，contentment，gratification，滿足，【特指】驕傲自滿，自得。
- ⑦ **Under threat** = 受到威脅。Threat = danger，risk，hazard，peril。The threat of flood has been relieved. = 洪水的威脅解除了。I won't be intimidated by a threat against my life. = 對生命的威脅是嚇不倒我的。

- ⑧ **Arbitrarily** = 武斷地，任意；姿意，擅自，randomly，subjectively，illogically，capriciously，indiscriminately。
- ⑨ **Permanent damage** = 永久性的損害。Permanent = enduring，perpetual，lasting，everlasting，long-lasting，持久的，經久的。
- ⑩ **A start-up fund** = 啟動經費。A start-up = 新辦的企業。Start from scratch = 【美國】赤手空拳地開始。Start from tow = 【美國】白手起家。Start with a bang = 【美俚】一開始就順利，旗開得勝。To start with = 首先。

HK must crack down on money-laundering

《香港要打擊「洗黑錢」活動》

I was almost tempted to apply for a position I saw advertised in a local newspaper on Jan 31. Its main duties involved conducting the on-site examinations of anti-money laundering controls in financial institutions. This was to identify system deficiencies, suspicious activities and evolving trends.

On the same day, a Hong Kong newspaper, quoting figures from the **little-known** ① Joint Financial Intelligence Unit of the Hong Kong government, reported that money-laundering cases in Hong Kong in 2014 totaled 37,200 - up 13 percent from the 32,900 cases reported in 2013. The 2014 figure was double that of five years ago (2009).

What a shame ②! The Pearl of the Orient, as Hong Kong is sometimes known as, is no longer full of pearls but “black dots”. The government would be well-advised to **clamp down** ③ on **money-laundering** ④. There is no room for leniency in combating such an evil.

Most money-laundering cases in 2014 involved banks. But money-launderers also used insurance companies, security firms and real estate brokerages to “clean” their ill-gotten gains. The number of suspected cases involving real estate brokers rose 140 percent between 2013 and 2014. Perhaps the “dirty” money was one of the reasons behind Hong Kong’s **property boom** ⑤ in recent years.

The Hong Kong stock market rose sharply in the last several months.

The Hang Seng Index jumped more than 2,000 points to close around the 24,400 level in early February 2015. Whether or not some of the large transactions were conducted by money launderers is anybody’s guess.

Other **easy channels** ⑥ for laundering dirty money include auction houses and dealers of precious products. There have been news reports about secretive purchasers paying large sums of money for Chinese cultural relics at auctions in Hong Kong. It would perhaps be advisable from now on for auction houses operating in the city to be required, as are banks, to insist that potential customers (or bidders) identify the sources of their funds.

Basically, there are **two principal factors** ⑦ contributing to the surge in money-laundering cases in Hong Kong. One is evidently the mainland’s crackdown on corruption. Such a crackdown has forced corrupt officials to transfer their money to Hong Kong or Macao. Casinos in Macao, however, have recently come **under Beijing’s scrutiny** ⑧.

The other factor in the rise in money-laundering cases in Hong Kong is less obvious, but nevertheless significant. Over the past 12 months, Indonesia, Malaysia and Australia have tightened their grip on Islamist terrorist groups since the United States and its allies began its campaign against the Islamic State in the Middle-east about a year ago.

Some terrorist groups in the region may have moved their money to Hong Kong - which remains a largely free economy, facilitating a free flow of capital.

It is time the Hong Kong government **tightened up** ⑨ on suspicious funds flowing in from Southeast Asia and Australia. Hong Kong definitely does not want to be **named as a haven** ⑩ for terrorist money. Hong Kong

people would hate to see the city labeled a money launderers' paradise.

People living in the special administrative region want it to remain a shoppers' paradise.

If money-laundering is permitted to flourish in Hong Kong, the city's image as a world financial center will be tarnished. Consequently, foreign investment might flow to Shanghai and Guangzhou but not to Hong Kong. The international image of the city could be damaged by a lack of action on this issue by our officials.

The government should recruit more experts to tackle money-laundering. It is an economic crime. Hong Kong must remain a "clean" city, in every sense of the word.

註釋

- ① **Little-known** = 鮮為人知。Little known writers = 不大出名的作家，無名作家。Think little of = 不重視，不在乎。
- ② **What a shame!** = 真遺憾。Shame = disgrace, embarrassment, humiliation。
- ③ **Clamp down** = 箝制，強行限制，鎮壓，onslaught, get tough。
- ④ **Money-laundering** = 洗黑錢。Launder = wash, decontaminate, clean。
- ⑤ **Property boom** = 房地產繁榮。Boom = expansion, development, growth, escalation。A building boom = 建築業的興旺。
- ⑥ **Easy channels** = 簡單的方法。Easy = simple, trouble-free, straightforward, effortless, uncomplicated, unproblematic, 舒服的，安樂的，大方的；寬裕的；(衣服等)寬鬆的；懶散的，散漫的。Be easy! = 放心好了。Easier said than done = 說來容易做來難。Easy does it! / Go easy = 別急。Take things easy / take it easy = 從容不迫，別急。
- ⑦ **Two principal factors** = 兩個主要因素。Principal = main, major, chief, primary, prime, key。The principal actor = 主要演員，主角。Principal sentence = 【語法】主句。
- ⑧ **Under Beijing's scrutiny** = 在北京政府的審查下。Scrutiny = examination, analysis, inquiry, enquiry, 覆查，徹查。Demand a scrutiny = 要求(重新)檢查(選票)。Make a scrutiny into = 細查；徹查。
- ⑨ **Tightened up** = 收緊。Tighten = strengthen, increase, intensify, stiffen, 收緊，拉緊，抽緊；繃緊；固定。Tighten one's belt = 束緊褲帶；節省支出。
- ⑩ **Named as a haven** = 被譽為天堂。Haven = refuge, sanctuary, shelter, safe house, 避難所；安息所。

Plan to cut energy consumption is worthy of praise

《節約能源計劃值得讚賞》

The Hong Kong government announced on May 14 that it has **set a target ①** for cutting energy consumption in the city by 6 percent from 2012 levels over the next decade. Such a determined plan **deserves praise ②**.

Such a reduction would be equivalent to trimming carbon emissions by about 2,340 kilotonnes per year in the city. The new plan is more ambitious than the one adopted at the 2011 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum. Hong Kong's latest scheme, which should be welcomed by **all sectors of society ③**, is part of an effort to respond to a United Nations' conference on climate change that will be held in Paris in November.

To achieve **this impressive goal ④**, the government has also introduced a range of measures, including reviewing building energy codes once every three years (to make sure buildings are not using more energy than stipulated). Also, energy consumption will be further reduced by 10 percent in government buildings in two phases, and future public housing estates will be required to attain at least a "good" rating under the existing green-building assessment scheme. Meanwhile, **incentives ⑤** will be offered to the private sector to build more green (or energy-saving) buildings.

It is a no-brainer that carbon pollution (particularly when electricity is generated by coal consumption) is **a key cause ⑥** for illnesses such as

lung cancer and respiratory infections. Pollution has **pushed up ⑦** Hong Kong's medical costs and hurt people's quality of life.

Air pollution has caused more than 3,000 premature deaths and monetary losses of HK\$39 billion in 2013 to Hong Kong, according to a study by University of Hong Kong (HKU) researchers. Researchers from the HKU's school of public health estimated that 3,069 people died prematurely in 2013 due to air pollution and 151,300 were hospitalized for pollution-related illnesses.

In fact, the government can reduce carbon monoxide in the air (and hence reduce the number of pollution-induced deaths) by limiting private vehicles on the roads. Politically it will not be easy for the government to interfere in the use of cars. This is because car owners are often rich and famous people and middle-class white-collar executives. But this does not mean the government can afford to be **complacent ⑧** - no matter how sensitive the issue is. The interests of the public **carry more weight ⑨** than those of privileged people.

On May 11, the Friends of the Earth and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology released a year-long study on air pollution in Hong Kong's Central business district. The study finds that the level of tiny particles polluting the air in Central is 104 percent higher than the World Health Organization's stated safety standard. This is shocking!

The key culprit ⑩, to no one's surprise, was the number of private cars clogging up the roads, which in turn causes higher levels of pollutants to be emitted from buses. Private cars block bus stops and occupy tram tracks, slowing traffic, the study shows. The environmental group's call for public transport to be given priority in using roads in Central is worth supporting. Such a "public-transport first" policy should also be adopted

in other busy districts such as Mong Kok and Causeway Bay to reduce air pollution and deaths caused by it.

Disappointingly, the government's response to the Friends of the Earth's plea was non-committal. A spokesperson from the government's Transport Department was quoted by a local newspaper as saying: "Traffic arrangements must be able to fulfill the needs of different users. Current transport arrangements are balanced and fulfill different users' needs."

註釋

- ① **Set a target** = 樹立一個目標。Target = aim, goal, objective, focus。Target practice = 打靶, 射擊演習。Hit a target = 達到定額 (指標)。
- ② **Deserve praise** = 值得稱讚。Deserve = Merit, Earn, Warrant, Justify, 應受, 該得, 值得。Deserve attention (sympathy) = 值得注意 (同情)。He deserves his fate. = 他命該如此。Deserve to be rewarded (punished) = 理應獲獎 (受罰)。
- ③ **All sectors of society** = 社會的各行各業, 各方面。Sector = section, slice, division, fragment, portion。
- ④ **This impressive goal** = 這個令人欽佩的目標。Impressive = inspiring, striking, remarkable, extraordinary, exciting, 給人深刻印象的, 令人難忘的, 令人感動的。Impressive ceremony = 給人深刻印象的典禮。
- ⑤ **Incentives** = 激勵; 獎勵; 誘因, inducement, enticement, motivation, encouragement, spur。Many incentives to work hard = 很多努力工作的動機。
- ⑥ **A key cause** = 主要的原因, a main reason。Key = important, main, critical, decisive, imperative, 關鍵, 線索, 秘訣; 解法。A key to one's success = 成功的秘訣。The key to a riddle = 謎底。Hold the keys of = 支配, 控制。A key point = 要點。A key position = 據點; 要職。
- ⑦ **Push up** = 增加; 提高; 向上推。Push = impel, urge, force, induce, exhort。Push one's claims = 竭力要求。He pushed me to pay. = 他逼我付款。Push past = 擠了過去。Be pushed around = 被擺佈; 被支使; 被欺負。

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Giving locals boarding priority is inadvisable

《容許本地人有優先權並不明智》

New World First Ferry Services plans to allow Cheung Chau (an outlying island in Hong Kong) residents to board ferries first on public holidays. The next public holidays in Hong Kong are the Buddha's Birthday on May 25 and Dragon Boat Festival on June 20.

New World First Ferry, jointly owned by Chow Tai Fook Enterprises and NWS Holdings, is **setting a dangerous precedent** ①. The **top brass** ② at the ferry company and officials at the government's Transport Department would be well-advised to **call a halt** ③ to this discriminatory practice. It simply sounds crazy to allow some people in Hong Kong to have more rights than others. (Just imagine if one day rich people said they had the right to board taxis first!)

Cheung Chau, about an hour away from Hong Kong Island by boat, is **a popular tourist spot** ④, for local and overseas travelers. The island features pirate caves dating hundreds of years, green hills and sandy beaches. No cars are allowed on the island.

The discriminatory plan can be seen **from a broader perspective** ⑤. Hong Kong climbed two places to 13th in a survey of the competitiveness of its tourism industry in countries around the globe. The survey results, released on May 5, were conducted once every two years by the World Economic Forum.

The rankings measure the competitiveness of 141 countries and

- ⑧ **Complacent** = 自滿的；得意的；滿足的，Self-satisfied，Satisfied，Unworried，Contented。We must not become complacent over any success. = 我們決不能一見成績就自滿。
- ⑨ **Carry more weight** = 承擔更大的分量，受到更多重視。Weight = influence，power，credence，substance，significance，重要性；影響力，勢力。A paper weight = 紙鎮。Under the weight of = 在……的重壓下。
- ⑩ **The key culprit** = 主要嫌疑人。

economies based on 14 criteria. This includes the business environment, travel and tourism policies, communication networks, infrastructure quality and natural resources. In travel and tourism policies, Hong Kong is **well-known** ⑥ for its fair treatment of tourists. New World First Ferry's plan may change tourists' perceptions of Hong Kong.

By the same token, if New World First Ferry's plan remains unchallenged, bus companies in Aberdeen can use the same argument to allow Aberdeen residents to board buses before passengers from other districts are allowed to board. This would **turn people's lives into chaos** ⑦. Just imagine the messy situation when North Point residents have the right to board the MTR trains at the North Point station first. These are **hypothetical examples** ⑧, but they should emphasize the point I am trying to make.

On public holidays, New World prepares to reserve 80 to 100 seats per ferry for Cheung Chau residents. A spokeswoman was quoted as saying "the trial will last three to six months to see if residents are happy with the arrangement". This is surely **a misguided idea** ⑨.

I am sure local Cheung Chau residents would be happy with the policy but tourists and people from other parts of Hong Kong will not. Hong Kong residents who are not from Cheung Chau will definitely find the move annoying, if not discriminatory. Tourists, if they are turned away from the ferries, they may relay their unhappy experiences to their friends and family at home. It could become **a public relations disaster** ⑩ for Hong Kong, long known as "a tourists' paradise".

No matter how we look at it, the policy to please local Cheung Chau residents doesn't seem to make sense. If there are too many visitors coming to the island on public holidays, First Ferry and other ferry companies, can

run more services. If the ferry pier is saturated, a new pier should be built. For the island's long-term development, constructing new facilities seems to be an intelligent move.

Let's hope common sense prevails; they don't launch the policy of allowing local residents the right to board ferry first. Establishing such a precedent is extremely dangerous.

 註釋

- ① **Setting a dangerous precedent** = 開了一個危險的先例。Precedent = example, model, pattern, practice。Without precedent = 無前例的，空前的。Have no precedent to go by = 無先例可循。
- ② **Top brass** = 高級軍官，要員。
- ③ **Call a halt** = 命令停止。Halt = stop, pause, cease, terminate, freeze, 暫停前進，止步。Bring to a halt = 使停止。Call (cry) a halt = 命令停止。Come to a halt / make a halt = 停止。Halt between two opinions = 拿不定主意。Halt in one's speech = 講話吞吞吐吐。
- ④ **A popular tourist spot** = 一個受歡迎的旅遊點。Spot = place, location, site, corner, point, 場所，現場；部位；位置；職位；地位。A tender (sore) spot = 容易觸痛之處，不願別人提起的事情（問題）。Hit the spot = 【口語】正合要求；恰到好處。
- ⑤ **From a broader perspective** = 一個更廣闊的觀點。Perspective = viewpoint, standpoint, view, perception, angle。See things in perspective = 正確地看待事物。
- ⑥ **Well-known** = famous, 著名的，出名的，renowned, eminent, recognized, celebrated, distinguished, illustrious。
- ⑦ **Turn people's lives into chaos** = 將人們的生活帶入混亂中。Chaos = disorder, confusion, bedlam, anarchism, mayhem。
- ⑧ **Hypothetical examples** = 假設性的例子。Hypothetical = assumed, theoretical, imaginary, supposed, conjectural, suppositious。Follow the example of = 照……的榜樣，以……作模範。Give (set) a good example to = 以身作則。

- ⑨ **A misguided idea** = 一個誤導人的想法。Misguided = mistaken, foolish, ill-advised, unwise, erroneous, injudicious, 被帶錯的，搞錯的；誤入歧途的。
- ⑩ **A public relations disaster** = 一個公共關係的災難。Disaster = tragedy, adversity, catastrophe, cataclysm, misadventure, calamity, 天災，災害；不幸，事故。Disaster movie = 災難電影。

Time to rethink trade-off between speed and cost

《要權衡速度和成本的關係》

The latest government estimates, according to **well-placed sources** ①, that the bill for constructing the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link will increase 30 percent to HK\$85 billion from the original HK\$65 billion. It is now time to rethink the **trade-off** ② between speed and cost.

We can use the HK\$20 billion saved to build more day-care centers to release full-time mothers to rejoin the workforce, as Hong Kong will face **a shortage of** ③ skilled office and other workers in 10 years' time, or increase allowances for the needy, underprivileged and the aged. We can also use this handsome sum of money to build more medical and educational facilities, including after-school programs for students from poor families.

Since the return of Hong Kong to the motherland in 1997, the SAR's economy and the mainland's have been **tightly integrated** ④. In a sense, we are "one family". Hong Kong people can simply take the local train to Lo Wu, cross the border to Shenzhen and take a 72-minute bullet train from Shenzhen to Guangzhou. The Shenzhen-Guangzhou trains run at intervals of every 10 to 20 minutes. This is so convenient we don't need to build another **high-speed rail** ⑤ in Hong Kong. We should **leverage** ⑥ our proximity to Shenzhen and make use of Shenzhen's advanced train facilities. There is nothing shameful about this.

Some Hong Kong people may complain that it takes too long to cross

the Lo Wu-Shenzhen immigration checkpoint. Little do they know that things have improved since the thousands of Shenzhen-based "parallel traders" were allowed to visit Hong Kong once a week (starting in mid-April) instead of several times a day. Even when people take the current Guangzhou-Kowloon Through Train (departing from Hung Hom in Kowloon), they still need to go through customs and immigration in Guangzhou. The same would apply to local travelers on the high-speed rail - should it be built.

Under **current projections** ⑦, the Hong Kong section of the high-speed rail will not be completed until 2017 - **two years behind schedule** ⑧. The 30 percent jump in construction costs was blamed on difficult ground conditions and problems in boring tunnels. **Administrative feuds** ⑨ also caused the delay. Internal disputes between the MTR Corporation (MTRC) and the government led to the early and abrupt departure of then MTRC chief executive Jay Walder in August 2014. He was replaced by a local Chinese.

I personally believe it is advisable that the rail project is scrapped to save taxpayers' money. The money already spent might be absorbed by the MTRC, the Hong Kong government and the constructors. (The constructors can then be compensated with future projects.) It simply **does not make sense** ⑩ to build a parallel high-speed rail from Hong Kong to Guangzhou when an existing one from Shenzhen to Guangzhou can serve the purpose of many Hong Kong-based travelers.

The Hong Kong government has ordered a comprehensive review of the high-speed rail project. The review will be completed by the end of June, 2015. The government and MTR, shareholders of the project, will then discuss how to settle the increased budget.

Government officials should have the mettle to call a halt to construction of the Hong Kong-Guangzhou high-speed rail project. Taxpayers' money can be used wisely in other areas.

 註釋

- ① **Well-placed sources** = 權威消息人士。Source = 來源，源頭，水源，源泉。The source of wealth = 富源。Trace to its source = 追根尋源。
- ② **Trade-off** = 權衡；交易；交替使用。
- ③ **A shortage of** = ……的短缺。Shortage = absence, nonexistence, deficiency, dearth。Owing to shortage of staff = 由於人員的缺少。Cover (make up for) the shortage = 彌補不足。
- ④ **Tightly integrated** = 緊密組合的。Integrated = united, unified, combined, assimilated, incorporated, amalgamated。An integrated oil company = 大型石油(聯合)公司。
- ⑤ **High-speed rail** = 高速鐵路。
- ⑥ **Leverage** = 手段，影響力，influence, force, control, clout。Leveraged buyout = 【經濟學】槓桿收購(一小批投資者借鉅款收購下一家公司，再以該公司收益還債)。
- ⑦ **Current projections** = 當前的預測。Current = present, recent, up-to-date, contemporary, modern。Current expenditure = 經常性支出。Current expenses = 日常費用。The current issue (number) = (雜誌的)本期。
- ⑧ **Two years behind schedule** = 滯後計劃兩年。Schedule = agenda, timetable, calendar, plan, roster, 預定日期, 預定計劃。A train schedule = 火車時刻表。According to schedule = 按照預定計劃(時間表)。Behind (ahead of) schedule (time) = 比預定時間晚(早)。Supper is scheduled for six o'clock = 晚餐預定六時開始。

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Hong Kong must reverse falling English standards

《我們要扭轉英語水準下降的勢頭》

While Hong Kong people are focused on the Shanghai-Hong Kong stock “through train” they seem to be unaware that the English language proficiency of our citizens has dropped significantly. We must do something. **Complacency** ❶ is Hong Kong’s worst enemy.

A recent poll conducted by Education First, an international language learning company, shows that English proficiency in Hong Kong falls behind Taiwan, Japan, Shanghai and Indonesia.

The findings, released in mid-November, emerged in a poll of 750,000 adults in 63 countries and territories worldwide where English is not the native language. Hong Kong is ranked 31st, a sharp drop of 19 places since 2011 (the last poll), when it was ranked 12th.

This isn’t a decline. It is a **significant drop** ❷. Hong Kong people should therefore be seriously concerned.

An Education First executive has tried to **downplay the seriousness** ❸ of the situation. He said the poll results were only an “indication” and did not comprehensively represent the proficiency level of a country or territory. Nevertheless, the fall in rankings **sounds alarm bells** ❹ to all who cherish Hong Kong’s role as a major world financial center.

Of the 13 countries and regions polled in Asia, Hong Kong ranks eighth. It scored 52.5 points, behind Malaysia (59.73), Singapore (59.58), South Korea (53.62), India (53.54), Japan (52.88), Indonesia (52.74)

- 9 **Administrative feuds** = 管理的不和。Feud = dispute, argument, quarrel, grudge, vendetta, strife, row。Be at feud with = 與人不和。Deadly feud = 不共戴天之仇, 世仇。Sink a feud = 盡釋前嫌; 捐棄舊怨, 言歸於好。Spend one’s time feuding with the neighbors = 經常和街坊爭吵。
- 10 **Does not make sense** = 沒有道理。Sense = sagacity, logic, judgement, comprehension, 意念; 觀念; 意識。A sense of duty = 責任感。A sense of honor = 名譽心。The moral sense = 道德觀念。

and Taiwan (52.56). The alarm bells sound even louder when the survey uncovers the fact that English proficiency levels in Shanghai (53.75), Beijing (52.86) and Tianjin (52.73) are also higher than Hong Kong.

Denmark, Holland and Sweden are the top three places for English proficiency among the world's non-English speaking countries.

The Education First report noted that the **gap** ⑤ between the mainland and Hong Kong's scores had narrowed from 6.82 to 2.35 points since the last survey in 2011. As an international city, it is surprising that Hong Kong's English Proficiency Index score has slipped so much.

Indonesia, Vietnam (51.57) and Thailand (47.79) have shown the fastest gains in English proficiency since these countries have invested heavily in reforming their language education system to strengthen English learning, notes the Education First report.

The reason for Hong Kong's decline in English proficiency is **commonly known** ⑥ - but nothing has been done about it. One of the reasons cited for the decline of English proficiency is that Chinese has been used as the teaching medium since shortly after the handover in 1997. We all agree Hong Kong is a Chinese city, **an inalienable part** ⑦ of China, but its role as an international financial center should not be undermined. High levels of proficiency in English will help Hong Kong and the mainland to develop and thrive.

Government officials and lawmakers should change our education system to adopt English as the medium of education. Hong Kong wants to survive on its own strength and doesn't want to become a burden to the mainland. If our jobless rate surges, the **negative impact** ⑧ will be felt across the Shenzhen River. We do not want to survive solely on Beijing's

generous and special policies.

Apart from ⑨ pleading with government officials and lawmakers to return the teaching medium to English, I hope local tycoons will **refrain from** ⑩ donating millions of dollars to American and British universities. Instead, perhaps the money should go to local universities to provide incentives for young Hong Kong Chinese to improve their English speaking and writing skills. The money would be well spent. Hong Kong's citizens would undoubtedly be most grateful to these tycoons.

There is no time for procrastination. People with a vision must act now to change our education system and help Hong Kong thrive.

 註釋

- ① **Complacency** = 自滿。
- ② **A significant drop** = 顯著下降。Significant = hefty, noteworthy, momentous, substantial, cumbersome, 重要的, 重大的, 值得注意的。A historically significant meeting = 一次有歷史意義的會議。
- ③ **Downplay the seriousness** = 淡化嚴重性。Downplay = restrain, soften, modulate, tone down。Soften = 減輕, 減弱(抵抗或反對)。Be softened into tears = 感動得流淚。Soften up = 【美俚】(用恭維話等)軟化。
- ④ **Sounds alarm bells** = 響警鐘。Sound = resonance, hum, echo, reverberation, crash。Sound argument = 有充分根據的論點。A sound policy = 健全的政策。A sound opinion = 合理的意見。A sound analysis = 中肯的分析。Sound and fury = 喧囂吵嚷。His voice sounds as if he had a cold = 他的聲音聽起來總像是傷風似的。His story sounds incredible. = 他的故事聽起來難以使人置信。Strange as it may sound = 也許聽起來奇怪。The plan sounds good. = 這個計劃聽着不錯。How does this proposal sound to you? = 你以為這個提案怎樣?
- ⑤ **Gap** = disparity, difference, divergence, inequality, imparity, disproportion, 齟齬, 分歧; 隔閡, 距離, 差距。Credibility gap = 信用差距。Generation gap = 代溝(不同代的人之間的思想隔閡)。Bridge (close / fill / stop / supply) a gap = 填補空白, 彌補缺陷。
- ⑥ **Commonly known** = 眾所周知。Commonly = normally, generally, frequently, regularly, universally, 普通的, 通常的, 尋常的, 平常的。By common consent = 全場一致, 無異議。

- ⑦ **An inalienable part** = 不可分割的部分。Inalienable = absolute, unchallengeable, unassailable, indisputable, undeniable, immutable。Inalienable rights = 不可剝奪的權利。An inalienable part of the territory = 不可分割的領土。
- ⑧ **Negative impact** = 負面影響。Negative = undesirable, adverse, harmful, damaging, destructive, deleterious, 反面的; 消極的。Negative criticism = 消極的批評。The answer is in the negative. = 回答是「不」。Two negatives make an affirmative. = 兩個否定等於肯定, 負負得正。
- ⑨ **Apart from** = 除了。Apart = separately, not together, away from each other, at a distance, spaced out, 分離。New York and Tokyo are thousands of miles apart. = 紐約和東京相距幾千英里。Come apart = (精神)錯亂, 渙散。
- ⑩ **Refrain from** = 避免, 抑制, 忍住。Refrain = desist, refrain, withdraw, suppress。Refrain from (smoking) = 戒(煙)。I cannot refrain from laughing. = 我忍不住好笑。Refrain from unprincipled argument = 不作無原則的爭論。Refrain oneself = 抑制自己, 忍住。

Prevention better than cure in fighting Ebola

《打擊伊波拉病毒—預防勝於治療》

The Ebola disease has killed about 5,000 people in Africa. **The highly contagious disease ①** has spread to Europe and the United States, killing people **along the way ②**.

Hong Kong authorities, while focusing on the “Occupy Central” movement, would be well advised to **take precautionary measures ③** against this deadly disease.

I would hate to see a repeat of the SARS outbreak in Hong Kong in 2003.

We cannot be complacent. The reason I may sound alarmist is that in my neighborhood in Sham Shui Po, I see scores of African men regularly gathering in the evening around street corners, drinking beer.

These are asylum seekers from Africa. Every year thousands of African nationals, mostly men, land in Hong Kong via other places. Many go to mainland first and enter Hong Kong through Lo Wu or Lok Ma Chau. Once they claim political persecution (from their own African governments), our immigration officers at the border **have no option ④** but to allow them in.

I think it's time we ran routine medical checkups on these asylum seekers (many of whom are simply looking for a better life in - Hong Kong, or elsewhere) before the Ebola disease spreads to our city.

The Ebola virus disease (EVD), Ebola hemorrhagic fever (EHF) or

simply Ebola, is a disease found in humans and other mammals caused by ebolavirus.

The signs and symptoms of the disease typically start between two days and three weeks after exposure to the virus. They include fever, **sore throat ⑤**, muscular pains and headaches. As of Oct 14, 9,216 suspected cases have been reported, resulting in the deaths of 4,555 people. The largest outbreak to date is the ongoing West African Ebola outbreak, which is currently affecting Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia.

Efforts are **under way ⑥** to develop a vaccine - but one does not yet exist. China may have developed a vaccine, but reports from the country remain **low-key ⑦** about this.

A brief scare in Hong Kong on Aug 10 highlighted the risk of an outbreak in the city. A Nigerian man, who arrived from Nigeria, was rushed to hospital with vomiting and diarrhea which are early symptoms of the virus. However, test results were negative.

While health experts believe Hong Kong is unlikely to see an Ebola outbreak, they have stressed the need for vigilance, given the city's role as **a transport hub ⑧** and its proximity to Guangzhou, home to Asia's biggest African community.

The Nigerian man was first taken by ambulance to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Ho Man Tin, before being **placed in isolation ⑨** at the Hospital Authority Infectious Disease Centre at Princess Margaret Hospital in Kwai Chung for tests. He was the second person to test negative in the city after a local woman, who fell ill on her return from Kenya tested negative in early August.

The US government has bolstered its response to Ebola after its initial

efforts were criticized as being **insufficient** ⑩. Earlier last week, President Barack Obama ordered the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to prepare rapid response teams for deployment in the event of new cases.

The administration has also added a new layer of screening for air passengers arriving from Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone, where the disease has taken its greatest toll. We in Hong Kong should do the same.

Obama and his team came under greater pressure after a Liberian man arrived in Dallas with Ebola. Two nurses who cared for him at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Dallas subsequently contracted the disease. Obama has appointed former administration aide Ron Klain to coordinate the government's Ebola efforts amid mounting pressure to step up the US response to the virus.

Prevention is always better than cure. It is high time Hong Kong took extra precautions against Ebola.

註釋

- ① **The highly contagious disease** = 高度傳染性疾病。Contagious = transmissible, transmittable, spreadable, infectious, 傳染病的；傳染性的；會蔓延的，有感染力的。A contagious ward = 傳染病房。
- ② **Along the way** = 沿途，一直。Come along = 跟我來。Walk along = 向前走。Along with = 與……一道。
- ③ **Take precautionary measures** = 採取預防措施。Precautionary = protective, defensive, cautionary, preventive, prophylactic, anticipatory。
- ④ **Have no option** = 沒有選擇。Option = selection, possibility, alternative, choice, 取捨，選擇權，選擇自由；可選擇的東西。Imprisonment without the option of a fine = 不能用罰款代替的禁錮刑。There are three options in our college. = 我們大學裏有三種選科。At one's option = 任意，隨意。Have no option but to (do) = 除……外別無辦法。Make one's option = 選擇。
- ⑤ **Sore throat** = 咽喉痛。Sore = painful, uncomfortable, stinging, aching, 痛的，疼痛發炎的；(一碰就)疼痛的；受了傷的，皮膚擦破了的，發腫的，生着瘡的。A sore subject = 使人難堪的話題。In sore need of = 極端需要……。Old sores = 舊傷；舊恨，難過的(傷心的)回憶(等)。
- ⑥ **Under way** = 正在進行。Under cover = 在掩蔽之下。Under the sun = 在陽光下；天下，在世界上。Under the British government = 隸屬在英國政府之下。Study under Dr. Eliot = 在埃利奧特博士指導下研究。Under medical treatment = 在治療中。Children under twelve years of age = 未滿十二歲的兒童。Under the mask of friendship = 借友誼為名。Under the law = 根據法律。Under age = 未成年。

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“Occupy Central” protesters should beat the drum of retreat

《「佔中」分子應該打退堂鼓》

I went to church on Sunday morning. My 600 fellow **congregants** ① and I spent 15 minutes praying for the safety of the students taking part in the street protests in Hong Kong. Since I am a part-time university lecturer and some of the demonstrators are my students, I was **somewhat emotional** ② as I prayed.

Since a few days ago when **scuffles** ③ occurred in Mong Kok, in the heart of Kowloon, I strongly believe that **the tide has turned** ④ for the demonstrating students. The student leaders, and three academics who initiated the “Occupy Central” movement, should **beat the drums of retreat** ⑤. There is no other option without bloodshed and casualties.

In a way, the students have already succeeded in making their demands known, not only to Hong Kong people and central government leaders, but to the world audience. The smart tactic now would be to walk away, go home and continue their studies to become **all-rounded** ⑥ citizens.

The demonstrating students should be well aware that there is no possibility of Beijing overturning the resolution that National People’s Congress Standing Committee has passed with regards to Hong Kong’s 2017 electoral system. What the students can hope for, and I pray that they have wisdom to understand this, is for reform, perhaps five years on from 2017, of the methods for nominating and electing the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong SAR.

- ⑦ **Low-key** = unglamorous , unspectacular , understated , subdued , restrained , unpretentious , 低強度的 ; 低調的 ; 放低的 , 有節制的。
- ⑧ **A transport hub** = 運輸輸紐。Hub = center , pivot , core , focal point , 中心 , 中樞。A hub of industry (commerce) = 工業 (商業) 中心。The hub of the universe = 宇宙的中心 , 世界的中心。Up to the hub = 深深陷入 , 給……完全纏住。
- ⑨ **Placed in isolation** = 放置在隔離區。Isolation = separation , segregation , remoteness , seclusion , sequestration , 隔離 , 分離 ; 孤立 , 單獨。Fight in isolation = 孤軍作戰。
- ⑩ **Insufficient** = Inadequate , Deficient , Scarce , 不夠的 , 不足的 , 不充分的 ; 不適當的。

Any **clear-headed** ⑦ Hong Kong citizen should well know that there is **next to no chance** ⑧ of Beijing changing its mind.

Once a policy is established, we should expect Beijing to **carry it out** ⑨. Meanwhile, central government leaders also need to consider how Taiwan pro-independence elements and Xinjiang separatists are likely to react if the central government backs down with regards to the demands of Hong Kong students. I believe the chances of Beijing giving in are zero.

I also strongly believe that Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying will not resign unless Beijing tells him to. The central government simply would not **countenance such a move** ⑩, period. The demonstrating students are simply too naive to even consider that Beijing would let Leung resign.

China has become a strong, powerful state. Totally different from the Qing dynasty, Beijing will not “kowtow” to the threats or demands of Western powers.

If anything, what is happening in Hong Kong is most certainly China's internal affairs. World governments should keep their own council.

Foreign governments need to trade with China, they would not risk their business interests by condemning Beijing's handling of Hong Kong demonstrators. They have too much to lose.

It would cause Hong Kong's economy and foreign investment in the city to decline, not to mention the inconvenience many Hong Kong commuters have to suffer, if the demonstrations continue. It is high time protesting students and other demonstrators beat the drums of retreat. It is an intelligent choice, and the right one.

註釋

- ① **Congregants** = 聚會人士。
- ② **Somewhat emotional** = 略為感性。Emotional = touching, poignant, exciting, arousing, 容易激動, 易動感情的, 感情脆弱的。Somewhat = 一點兒, 稍微, 有點, 多少。He answered somewhat hastily. = 他回答得輕率了一點兒。
- ③ **Scuffles** = fight, brawl, fray, mêlée, 扭打, 亂鬥, 混戰。
- ④ **The tide has turned** = 潮流已經倒轉。At high (low) tide = 處於高(低)潮。Attempt to go against the tide of history = 倒行逆施。Catch the tide = 抓住時機, 趁機。Full tide of pleasure = 歡樂的絕頂。Go with the tide = 隨大流, 趕潮流, 順應潮流。
- ⑤ **Beat the drums of retreat** = 打退堂鼓。Beat = strike, bang, hammer, thump, pound, 打, 拍, 敲, 連打。Beat a man black and blue = 把人打得青一塊紫一塊。You won't easily beat that record. = 你恐怕不容易打破那個記錄。That beats me. = 那就叫人啞口無言(認輸)了。
- ⑥ **All-rounded** = 全面, 廣博的, 多方面的; 萬能的, 多才多藝的。An all-round athlete = 全能運動選手。All-round education = 圓滿的教育。An all-round magazine = 綜合雜誌。
- ⑦ **Clear-headed** = 清醒, lucid, sober, able to think, fully conscious。
- ⑧ **Next to no chance** = 幾乎沒有機會。Next door = 鄰家, 在隔壁; 隔壁的。He lives next door to me. = 他住在我的隔壁。Next of kin = 【法律】最近親。Next of skin = 【美國】親戚。Next to impossible (nothing / none) = 幾乎不可能(等於沒有, 很少)。
- ⑨ **Carry it out** = 進行。Carry a gun = 帶着槍走。The motion is carried. = 這一提議業已通過。

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Educational Internationalization
crucial to Hong Kong's success

《教育國際化對香港有利》

Hong Kong higher education leaders are to be congratulated for their success in internationalizing our education system.

This is attracting more foreign students to pursue an education in our universities.

A recent survey by QS Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), a London-based institution assessment agency, ranks Hong Kong the 5th best place worldwide for foreign students, up from 7th place a year earlier.

The survey measures indicators such as the affordability of tuition fees, personal safety and quality of life. One thing Hong Kong people **can be proud of ①** is that this city is relatively safe. People can walk the streets at night without fear.

Kudos ② for this goes to the government. The government has relaxed immigration policies to allow non-local students (most of them from mainland) to stay in the city after graduation to look for work. Meanwhile, the portion of non-local students in the eight government-funded universities has increased from 15 percent of the total student population to 18 percent. These policies **have now borne fruit ③**.

Hong Kong is ahead of Boston, Tokyo, Montreal, Toronto and Seoul, which are ranked from 6th to 10th, respectively, in the QS ranking of best cities for international students. The best city in the world for foreign students is Paris, which maintains its **top spot ④** since the previous survey

- ⑩ **Countenance such a move** = 鼓勵這樣的行動。Countenance = tolerate , allow , approve , approve of , 獎勵；鼓勵；縱容；支援，贊助。Countenance 亦指面容，臉色，顏色。

in 2013.

Hong Kong retains, and continues to improve its competitiveness over mainland cities including Beijing and Shanghai, and Asian counterparts such as Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. This is because our city emphasizes an international outlook. Foreign companies are keen to establish themselves here. Hong Kong people are **open-minded** ⑤ about their cultures and can speak English in a business setting.

Moreover, the Hong Kong government and educators should encourage local students (perhaps with some incentives) **to mingle with** ⑥ international students on Hong Kong university campuses. Young people are well advised to make friends with foreign students to learn more about their cultures. (I teach a master's level course at Hong Kong Baptist University, in which there are two students from Vietnam and India among a class of 20. I always encourage the two foreign students to share their home experiences with other students.)

While it is a good idea to attract more international students to our campuses, it is also forward thinking for the government to finance outstanding students to study overseas. When they return to work in Hong Kong, their international outlook will benefit our workforce and economy. Furthermore, foreign companies like to employ these returning students, as they are **familiar with** ⑦ other cultures and politics.

For example, I am sure any local students studying Arabic overseas will find it easy to get jobs when they return to the city. Their language skills will be **in great demand** ⑧.

Under this government scholarship scheme (the first batch of 100 outstanding young men and women will head to top universities overseas

in September 2015), the government will provide scholarships of about HK\$250,000 a year each, for up to three years.

Scholarship awardees, as a condition of acceptance, have to return to work in the city for two years after graduation. This is reasonable because Hong Kong taxpayers expect their money to be well spent.

The 100 scholarships per year awarded to enable our **most outstanding** ⑨ young people to study at universities such as Cambridge, Oxford or Harvard, seems **inadequate** ⑩.

Local tycoons such as Li Ka-shing and Lee Shau-ki have been encouraged to match the government's offer by providing another 100 scholarships, so more of our exceptional young people can study abroad. They will help Hong Kong's economy (and perhaps Li and Lee's companies) when they return to work here following graduation.

 註釋

- ① **Can be proud of** = 可以感到自豪。Proud = satisfied, gratified, thrilled, flattered, 有自尊心的, 自重的; 有見識的。He is too proud to ask questions. = 他太驕傲, 總不問人。A proud father = (因有好兒子而)得意的父親。It will do me proud. = 這將使我很滿意。Do oneself proud = 幹得漂亮, 有面子; 得意。
- ② **Kudos** = 名譽, 光榮, 榮譽, glory, praise, credit, fame, esteem, admiration。Fame = 名聲, 聲望。A house of ill fame = 妓院。Ill fame = 污名, 惡評, 醜聞。
- ③ **Have now borne fruit** = 得成正果。Fruit = 結果, 效果。Forbidden fruit is sweet. = 禁果分外甜 (被禁止的東西更加吸引人)。Fresh (dried) fruit = 鮮 (乾) 果。Preserved fruit = 果脯。Bear fruit = 結果實, 發生效果。The fruits of one's labor = 勞動果實。
- ④ **Top spot** = 首位。At the top of = 在……最高地位; 用最高 (最大) 的 (速度、聲音等)。Come out (at the) top = 得頭名, 佔首位。Come out on top = 賽贏, 比賽得頭名; 獲得大成就。
- ⑤ **Open-minded** = 開放態度, 虛心的, 沒有偏見的, unbiased, unprejudiced, liberal, tolerant, impartial, broad-minded。
- ⑥ **To mingle with** = 混在一起; 參加, 加入。Mingle in (with) the crowd = 混入人群。They mingle very little in society. = 他們很少交際。
- ⑦ **Familiar with** = 熟悉……的, 精通……的。Familiar friends = 親密的朋友。A familiar song = 流行歌曲。A familiar phrase = 慣用詞句。Things familiar to us = 我們所熟悉的事物。

- ⑧ **In great demand** = 有大量需要。Demand an interview = 要求會面。She demanded that we let her in. = 她要我們讓她進來。Supply and demand = 供給和需要。Present one's demands = 提出要求。
- ⑨ **Most outstanding** = 最優秀的, 顯著的; 凸出的, 傑出的。An outstanding figure = 傑出人物。An outstanding debt = 未償債務。
- ⑩ **Inadequate** = 不適當的; 不充足的。

Support for co-habitation detrimental to social ethos

《同居是不良社會風氣》

The government's four-month consultation on **anti-discrimination laws** ① ended on Oct 31. Responses were received from 100,000 Hong Kong citizens, emphasizing the sensitivity of equal rights in the city.

However, the government's support for **co-habitation** ②, stated in the consultation paper, is **misguided** ③. Hong Kong is a Chinese society and people respect the institution of marriage.

The Equal Opportunities Commission's (EOC) paper suggests that equal rights should be extended to unmarried couples (both straight and gay couples). This is a **dangerous and unethical idea** ④. This recommendation, if passed into law, would only encourage more young people to cohabit rather than getting married. The deep, mutually shared commitment to marriage would disappear.

Some people, of course, would argue that **as long as** ⑤ people love each other, they don't have to get married. But do they think about their children - if they plan to have any? How will their children face their playmates in the knowledge they are **illegitimate** ⑥? It is simply too selfish and naive to believe co-habitation is acceptable. The government is making a huge mistake in promoting this idea.

Moreover, the EOC is exceptionally unreasonable to attempt to foist this foolish idea upon private enterprises. It recommends that enterprises extend current benefits offered to spouses of employees, to partners of

couples in "de facto relationships".

This would encourage employees to abuse the policy to cover the medical bills of their "girlfriends" and "boyfriends". This is because it is difficult to prove whether these "de facto couples" actually co-habit or not.

The abuse, or lack of it, would invariably increase the cost of running a business in Hong Kong. It would reduce its competitiveness as it would increase operation costs, caused by increased provision of benefits and extra paperwork. Any proposal that would hurt Hong Kong's economic prosperity and prospects is a **non-starter** ⑦.

The EOC's other suggestion, that "equal pay for work of equal value", would eliminate pay inequality between men and women doing similar work with similar levels of responsibility. In theory this is a good idea. But in reality, **Rome wasn't built in a day** ⑧.

According to statistics from a women's group, discrimination against women persists in all walks of life. In 2013, the median monthly employment earnings of women with post-secondary education were HK\$22,000, lower than the rate for men which is HK\$30,000. The median monthly earnings for those with elementary education is HK\$7,500 for females compared with HK\$9,000 for their male counterparts.

Female leadership in Hong Kong, in the public and private sector, **lags behind** ⑨ that of other developed countries, statistics from the women's group revealed. It said only 9.6 percent of directors in the top 50 companies in the city were women, compared to 17.3 percent in Australia and 20.4 percent in Britain. The same disparity is seen in the Legislative Council where only 15.7 percent of lawmakers are women, compared with 41.1 percent in the parliaments of some European countries.

The **disparity** ⑩ in incomes between men and women stems from cultural, historical and other reasons. Chinese traditions accept that women care for the family while men work to put food on the table. Some women are happy to receive a lower salary as long as they can return home a little earlier to take care of their families. Men tend to spend more time in the office.

Any pay discrepancy is undesirable but it might take some time to rectify this disparity. Implementing equal pay across the board seems to be a bit rushed and would add a considerable burden to many local enterprises. Perhaps it would be better to fully implement the concept of equal pay for men and women over a period of 10 years. This gradual approach would cause less disruption to the operation of Hong Kong enterprises. Employers would have more time to prepare for the transition.

“More haste, less speed.” Let us all learn from this motto.

註釋

- ① **Anti-discrimination laws** = 反歧視法。Racial and religious discrimination = 種族和宗教歧視。A man of discrimination = 有眼光(見識)的人。A policy of discrimination against foreigners = 排外政策。Bombing without discrimination = 疲勞轟炸。
- ② **Co-habitation** = 同居。
- ③ **Misguided** = 被帶錯的，搞錯的；誤入歧途的，mistaken，ill-advised，unwise，erroneous，indiscreet。
- ④ **Dangerous and unethical idea** = 一項危險和不道德的提議。Unethical = unprincipled，immoral，mistaken，erroneous。Immoral = 不道德的，道德敗壞的，邪惡的。
- ⑤ **As long as** = 只要。
- ⑥ **Illegitimate** = 非法的，違法的，私生的。
- ⑦ **Non-starter** = 不應該開展的計劃。Non sequitur = 不合理的推論，不根據前提而下的論斷。
- ⑧ **Rome wasn't built in a day.** = to emphasize that you cannot expect to do important things in a short period of time，羅馬不是一天建成的；偉業非一日之功。
- ⑨ **Lags behind** = 延遲，逗留，落後；慢條斯理地走。Lag = trail，dawdle，linger，hang around。Japan lags U.S.A. in developing computer technology. = 日本在發展電腦技術方面落後於美國。A time lag = 時間滯差，時滯。
- ⑩ **Disparity** = 不同，不等，不一致，不相稱；懸殊。Disparity in rank = 身份懸殊。Disparities between men and women = 男女差別。

Solving Hong Kong's labor shortage problem

《解決香港的勞工荒》

By 2041, according to government estimates, about a third of Hong Kong's population will be aged over 65, up from the current 14 percent.

Healthcare and welfare costs will rise as civil servants and other workers retire. The city's economy will suffer as the workforce **contracts** ①. The problem of labor shortages **looms large** ②. Hong Kong government officials must act now. It is not too soon to develop and implement solutions.

Importing talented people from the mainland and elsewhere could help, but it remains a sensitive political issue. Many working adults and young people fear their jobs may be **under threat** ③ from mainlanders and foreigners if immigration policies were to be relaxed. They do not see the long-term benefits imported labor can bring Hong Kong. The government should **put more emphasis upon** ④ educating our working population to understand that imported laborers **pose no threat** ⑤.

Apart from importing talented people from the mainland, Asian cities and developed countries in North America and Europe, there are two other things the government can do to solve the labor shortage problem.

One policy the government could implement immediately would be to extend the civil service retirement age from the current 60 to 65 (for firemen and firewomen, from the current 55 to 60). As Hong Kong citizens have the **highest life expectancy** ⑥ in the world (over 80 years old for

both sexes), many of them remain physically fit and **mentally sound** ⑦ in their 60s.

If the government took the lead, other semi-official bodies such as educational institutions, NGOs and private enterprises could be expected to follow suit. Lecturers in all eight government-funded universities in Hong Kong, under current regulations, must retire when they reach 60 years old. Many of them could, and are invariably willing to, teach until age 65, or even longer. Forcing them to retire when they reach 60 is **an outdated approach** ⑧. It is also a waste of their talents and abilities.

The other solution would be to release young mothers tied to their kids. This would encourage them to join the workforce to improve their families' living standards. This would bring smiles to many low-income and middle-class families and help to solve the labor shortage problem.

The government could play an active and passive role in tackling this issue. The passive role would be to subsidize privately-run childcare centers so that many low-income families in new housing estates could afford to place their children there. When mothers are not tied to young children, they can join the workforce. Many of them might possibly enjoy this **newfound freedom** ⑨.

Meanwhile, the active role would be for the government to build and run childcare centers with government funding. Hong Kong practices a "**non-interventionism**" ⑩ philosophy. However, with a major issue such as labor shortage, the government must intervene to correct the imbalance. The dual approach will encourage mothers to work and help strengthen Hong Kong's workforce.

If young women in Hong Kong know there are subsidized or

government-run childcare centers in the localities where they live and work, they would be encouraged to produce more children. It is not a laughing matter. It could be a big step towards solving Hong Kong's low birthrate problem, while also helping address labor shortage issues in the long term.

Government officials would be well advised to act immediately.

註釋

- ① **Contracts** = diminishes , shrinks , narrows , withers , 招 , 患 (病) , 染 (惡習) 。 Contracted a bad cold = 得了重傷風。 Contracting parties = 訂約雙方當事人。 Contract one's brows = 皺攏眉頭。
- ② **Looms large** = 愈來愈明顯。 A ship loomed (up) through the fog. = 一隻船在霧中隱隱出現。 Trifles loom large to an anxious mind. = 顧慮多的人，草木皆兵。
- ③ **Under threat** = 受到威脅，恐嚇，威嚇。 The threat of flood has been relieved. = 洪水的威脅解除了。 I won't be intimidated by a threat against my life. = 對生命的威脅是嚇不倒我的。
- ④ **Put more emphasis upon** = 重點放在。 Emphasis = 強調，着重，重點，重要性。 Lay (place, put) emphasis on (upon) = 着重在；強調，加強（語氣）。
- ⑤ **Pose no threat** = 沒有威脅。 Pose = present , create , establish , proffer 。
- ⑥ **Highest life expectancy** = 壽命最長。 Expectancy = 預期，期望，期待， expectation , anticipation , prospect 。
- ⑦ **Mentally sound** = 精神狀況良好。 Sound = firm , unassailable , reliable , sensible , 健全的；強壯的，正常的；完好的，無疵的，沒有腐爛的。 Sound argument = 有充分根據的論點。
- ⑧ **An outdated approach** = 過時的作法。 Approach = 探討；看待，對待，處理。 Approach one's home = 快到家。 Approach completion = 將近完成。 Approach the manager with a suggestion = 向經理提出建議。
- ⑨ **Newfound freedom** = 重獲的自由。
- ⑩ **Non-interventionism** = 經濟不干預主義。