



論填海計劃

評判語錄

郭錦鴻：論證嚴密，行文流暢，初中學生有此才華，殊不容易

最近，新任政府發表施政報告，當中提到要在中部水域填出 1700 公頃的人工島，以增加土地供應，改善住屋問題。林鄭特首表示支持填海，填海不只能紓緩房屋問題，同時亦能發展交通、醫療、工業、商業等方面，遂以用填海解決香港的土地問題。

現時香港地少人多，土地供應長期供不應求，加上私人樓宇的價格不斷上升，香港人只好住在環境惡劣的劏房，甚至露宿街頭，政府以填海解決問題，是否真的可行呢？填海又是否一個快速增加土地供應的好方法呢？

首先，填海是需要龐大的開支，政府估算造價最少四、五千億港元，但仍未計算工程成本上漲等變數，開支或會增加最少一、二萬億，這是動用了香港龐大的儲備，令一些同樣重要的民生開支，例如教育、醫療等資源被削弱，資源分配或會失衡，土地問題雖說是非常嚴重和重要，但如果忽略了其他的民生問題，

也很難有一個均衡的發展，並且動用那麼龐大的儲備，會讓一些國際大炒家有機可乘，狙擊港元，到那時候就真的得不償失了。

第二，填海是需要用很長的時間才能完工，未能即時解決香港燃眉之急。政府估計需要十三、四年才能讓首批市民入伙，而且現在還在討論階段，甚麼時候開始動工也不知道，也未能預知香港過了十至二十年後變成怎樣，也許日後有更好的方法來解決土地問題。

第三，政府說在過去開發土地時面對不少障礙，擔心因為司法覆核而無限期拖延興建樓宇的時間。的確，這樣除了浪費時間亦同樣浪費大量金錢，但真的要因為這樣就犧牲我們香港的天然海岸線和海洋生物嗎？雖然填海是一個最直接的方法來增加土地，但政府也應考慮填海是一個會造成永久破壞的工程，開始了就不能回頭，究竟填海是否一個最好的方法呢？





第四，政府提出的《香港 2030+》的發展策略研究，估計至 2040 後發展所需的土地尚欠 1200 公頃。政府本說只填 1000 公頃，但後來無視市民的意見，加至 1700 公頃，這樣難免令市民揣測這次填海計劃是否真的只是為了解決當下急切的住屋問題。

第五，林鄭特首不斷聲稱這次填海計劃能造福下一代，但身為下一代的我不認同她的說法，全球的氣候問題已經非常嚴重，而且填海會令香港西面的熱島效應加劇，氣溫因此而上升，據網絡資料顯示全球平均氣溫再上升一度，會有三分之一地表缺乏淡水，不再適合人們居住，亦會因為很多土地乾旱，導致農作物失收，食物鏈的最低層遭到破壞，整條食物鏈就會徹底被摧毀，到那個時候食物也沒有，威脅人類的生存條件，還要房屋來幹什麼呢？究竟政府為什麼要選擇做一些不能回頭的工程呢？地球已經傷痕累累了，難道香港政府要再多刺一刀嗎？

最後，增加土地供應是不是真的只有

填海這個方法呢？現時的香港的農地、荒廢校舍、粉嶺高爾夫球場等，累計可提供到少一、千公頃的土地，到底有沒有必要填海呢？除了這些土地外，葵青的貨櫃碼頭也是一片適合建屋的土地。深圳、廣州、上海等地方貨物成本比較低，而且非常方便。因為現在很多貨物也是以上的城市所製造的，完成後就立即送出去，既快捷又便利。相反，香港的貨物成本比較高，又不方便，大部分內地設廠的商人也不會選擇在香港出貨，結果香港成為亞洲唯一獲得貨物吞吐量負增長的港口，只要用貨櫃碼頭的土地的三分之一來建屋，就已經能建四萬三千多個單位。其實我認為香港並不是真的非常缺乏土地，粉嶺高爾夫球場就已經是一個好例子，高爾夫球又不是一個普及的運動，只是一班富有的人的其中一種娛樂活動，難道政府覺得一種不普及的娛樂活動比我們香港珍貴的自然景觀還要重要嗎？我衷心希望政府能善用香港現有的土地，並不是透過填海來製造土地。



評判語錄

陳智傑：正反立場兼顧，並能提出政策建議。然而，若能進一步討論香港文化政策能否與個別地區民情磨合，則能使文章更有深度。

論取消旺角行人專用區



最近立法會決定取消旺角行人專用區，此事引起社會廣泛關注，有人認為取消旺角行人專用區能有效降低噪音污染，解決附近居民投訴有關噪音滋擾的問題；另一方面，有人認為此舉會扼殺表演者的表演空間，繼而影響文化多元性。究竟取消旺角行人專用區是否利大於弊？問題是否完全解決，抑或治標不治本之舉？下文將探討有關問題。

就文化多元性而言，取消旺角行人專用區會令表演者失去表演的平台，繼而損害香港的文化多樣性。香港素來被譽為「文化沙漠」，而旺角行人專用區是難得的公共平台給予一眾表演者進行表演，旺角行人專用區亦因此形成獨有的文化生態，行人專用區裡不但有符合不同年齡層的表演者，同時亦有攤販在專用區擺放攤檔。換句話說，表演者與攤販可謂互惠互利，由於被表演者吸引的觀眾有機會同時光顧

攤販，反之亦然。而當中有一大部分的年輕人在該處進行表演，部分人更以此為主要收入來源。取消旺角行人專用區不但令表演者失去表演平台，令年輕人失去就業的機會，更讓香港損失一個文化交流及推廣本土文化的地方。

考慮到市民的娛樂，取消旺角行人專用區讓市民失去一個周末好去處。香港地少人多，而旅遊景點或好去處實在寥寥可數。雖然香港有著名景點海洋公園，迪士尼樂園等，然而對大部分市民來說主題樂園價錢偏高及地點較偏遠，此類地點並非適合各階層的娛樂設施，大部分市民更不會每週或每月都前往主題樂園。反之，旺角西洋菜南街位於市區，前往該處的成本較低，加上行人專用區附近配套齊全，對於民眾有極大的便利性。再者，旺角行人專用區代表著本土文化，喜愛本土文化的民眾自然會視其為聚腳地。由此可見，取消旺角

行人專用區令市民失去一個消遣娛樂的地方。

有人說表演者所發出的噪音會令途人感到滋擾，令途人避而遠之，從而損害零售商的生意額。但我卻覺得行人專用區內的表演者能有助吸引人流，有效地為附近的零售商帶來潛在消費者。旺角行人專用區有助吸引不同年齡層的市民，從而增加該處人流，與此同時，觀眾亦有機會到附近的商店購物。根據報章資料，附近商戶曾表示在殺街後表演者及觀眾有下降跡象。這反映表演者不但未有拖低商戶的營業額，反而為它們帶來更多的生意。

無可否認，旺角街頭表演的噪音令居民無法好好休息，屢屢令居民投訴表演者，取消旺角行人專用區的確減少了一大部分的噪音，令居民能遠離噪音，過回正常的生活。有區議員表示，有居民須服用安眠藥或鎮靜劑才能入睡。可見，旺角街頭表演所造成的滋擾損害了居民的生活素質。然而退一步思考，其實噪音問題在香港並不罕見，普通的噪音問題或可藉消取噪音來源來解決，可就此事而言，其噪音來源中有一部分是具文化價值的表演者利用一刀切的方法處理是次問題，有機會影響真正具有文化價值的表演者的出路，而這又是否上策

呢？

我認為取消旺角行人專用區後問題並沒有解決，只是將問題搬到第二處。前文提到香港本來就不多讓大眾進行文化交流的地方，殺街後有部分表演者改為前往尖沙嘴天星小輪碼頭附近。當天星小輪碼頭變得愈來愈多表演者，旺角西洋菜南街出現的情況又會發生在天星小輪碼頭，例如出現表演位置的糾紛和噪音的情況。由此可見，取消旺角行人專用區並沒有解決問題，只是把問題延伸到第二個地方。

在我而言，旺角西洋菜南街可重新開放，讓表演者和市民繼續享用行人專用區，但又有論者曰當旺角行人專用區回復使用，豈不即故態復萌，和以前的情況別無兩樣？要解決以上問題，我認為政府可以制定政策，規管表演者在特定時間停止表演及限定表演者所發出的聲音不得超過某分貝；同時視表演為一個職業，讓表演者在進行表演之前通過簡單的程序申請牌照，一旦出現違規情況即可作出扣分或撤銷牌照，如此一來，表演者的行為會受到規管，相信此舉會對附近居民的影響減到最低，同時亦可顧及各持分者的利益。





評判語錄

陳智傑：論據和論證過程有力，數據與例子運用得宜。惟標題予人支持大嶼填海計劃之感，不符內文中心思想。

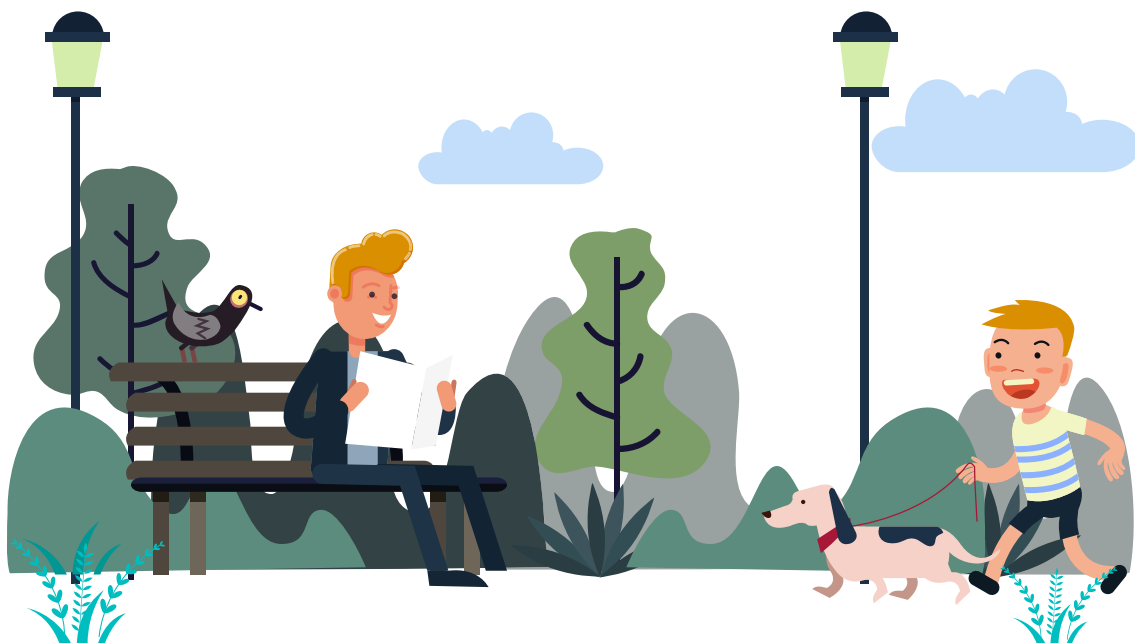
「大嶼」增填海 700 公頃 可提升人均休憩空間

現今香港，樓價高企，房屋供不應求，至使房屋及土地供應成為市民最關注的民生問題。近日，特首林鄭月娥公布任內第二份《施政報告》，當中提出「明日大嶼願景」發展計劃，包括落實東大嶼都會填海計劃，由原定的 1000 公頃擴大至 1700 公頃，預計可容納 70 萬至 110 萬人口，亦會研究長洲南大規模填海。

大嶼山不但是香港最大的島嶼，香港國際機場還坐落於此，待港珠澳大橋通車後，香

港與其他粵港澳大灣區城市的交通將更為便捷，所以政府提出發展大嶼山的願景，涵蓋中部水域交椅洲和喜靈洲附近的人工島、大嶼山北岸和屯門沿海地帶，包括重新規劃後的內河碼頭區和龍鼓灘等多個發展區，並配以一套全新的運輸基建網絡貫通各區，可促使香港經濟發展及改善民生。

我認為這發展計劃並不可行，原因可分為經濟方面、政府監管方面、利益方面、民意方面、環境保育方面。





首先，在經濟方面，政府估算整個大嶼填海項目的造價最少高達 4000 億至 5000 億，佔香港儲備五成，因數目仍未計算工程成本上漲，估計日後每年的基建費都要過千億，令港元可能受狙擊，加重市民稅收負擔。除此之外，政府最快於今年底至明年初向立法會申請撥款，若然屆時的民意表明反對興建東大嶼都會，計劃仍可擱置。民眾批評興建人工島的成本價高、造地時間較長，質疑是否真能改善民生。

加上，政府監管乏力，本港兩項千億基建工程又再超支：其中沙中線最新預算超支 165 億元，主體工程總造價達 873 億元，再加上由政府指派的獨立監察顧問費約 6 億元，總開支達 879 億元，連同前期工程、保護工程及先前的追加撥款，整個項目開支達 971 億元，較最初預計高 22%，成為本地史上最昂貴的鐵路；而港珠澳大橋則需多承擔近 24 億港元。顯然，香港基建工程超支已是常態。政府雖然把監察公共財政和檢討掛在嘴邊，但深究其安排的建造協議，內情卻是鼓勵超資的誘因。此外，有研究揭露，政府大多蓄意低估大型基建的造價，以欺瞞撥款過關。

此外，在利益方面，雖然大規模填海可以解決樓價高企，房屋供不應求的問題，但使地產商的利益受損。社會上有聲音質疑，填海而來的新市鎮建造豪宅，未能惠及劏房居民。李美華指，私樓樓價即使回復十年前的水平，

即新界 400 多呎的單位索價 400 多萬港元，以一般公屋居民的財政能力，仍然是難以負擔。鄒廣榮認為，政府應先規劃基建配套和大致的土地用途，並非大規模進行填海工程。

接著，林鄭自稱重民意，但沒有等 3 個月後的諮詢報告再作決定。研究社成員楊夏至批評林鄭漠視民間反對大規模填海的訴求，堅持興建人工島，而擬建的單位，更與團結香港基金早前提出填海約 2200 公頃，提供 25 至 40 萬伙單位的建議非常近似，批評兩者「一唱一和」。他續指，政府於土地大辯論結束後才突然提出加大填海面積，又提出一併研究長洲南填海，質疑此舉變相令土地小組多月來的諮詢失去意義。

最後，在環境保育方面，世界自然基金會香港分會副總監李美華批評政府無就額外增加的填海面積作解釋。增加填海面積將令海面面積更擠逼，進一步加重海上交通負擔。

另外，由於發展方案毗鄰江豚出沒位置，進一步擴闊填海範圍或增加江豚被撞的風險，影響其生活環境。因計劃規模龐大，又在欠缺評估及研究的情況下，林鄭月娥以長官意志蓋過專業意見，立法會議員尹兆堅指這項目是草率的表現。

總結，從經濟方面、政府監管方面、利益方面、民意方面、環境保育方面來看，這發展計劃並不可行。



評判語錄

郭錦鴻：論述有序，論點亦明確。在一個本來受支持的論題下，應該擺放更多實在的論據，以增加全篇中心思想的說服力。

粵語文化源遠流長 廣東話從不失優勢

近年，學術界經常爭論應以普通話或者廣東話作為中國語文科的教學語言。近日，教育局局長楊潤雄在電台節目談論「普教中」政策時稱，全球的中文發展都是以普通話為主，除港澳地區外，絕無其他人以粵語學習中文，並反問香港以廣東話學中文會否長遠及失去優勢。

首先，「除港澳地區外，絕無其他人以粵語學習中文」並非現實情況。現在，全球以粵語為母語者約有一億二千萬人，除了港澳地區外，使用粵語的地區還有馬來西亞、新加坡、澳洲等等，而且，還有不少外國人學習廣東話，喜歡廣東文化及到廣東省旅遊。楊局長作為教育局之首何以對廣東話的影響力如此不理解？抑或他的眼光只及於本地及祖國？

第二，廣東話教中文是否真的不能長遠發展呢？這一點還沒有被任何專家驗證，就被教育局局長質疑。廣東話在唐朝已經被使用，而且唐宋的詩詞也是用粵語寫的，所以用廣東話讀起來也更有韻味，押韻、平仄亦以廣東話為原則。另外粵語的有九個音，而普通話只有四個音，所以用普通話閱讀重複音調的字也比較多，或理解文章可謂多了一層功夫。港大謝錫金教授做過權威性的研究，證明用普通話教中文不會特別提升中文閱讀水平。那麼為何不用香港人的母語去教中文呢？若想保持香港社會兩文三語的特質，已經被增設的普通話科目還不夠嗎？現時教授中文的

資深老師，自幼亦以廣東話學習中文，若果貿然地改成普教中，那麼這些中文老師就較難揮灑自如地將自身經驗學以致用地傳授給莘莘學子。此外香港，缺乏普通話語境也是一個不容忽視的問題，差不多九成的人都用廣東話作為日常用語，以普通話作為日常用語的人在香港實在不多。如果突然將學校改為普教中，我相信學生們一定不會習慣，也會引致大部分家長反對。廣東話的語法和普通話比起完全是天壤之別。這樣不利於學生的中文發展。難道楊局長選擇視而不見？

假設廣東話真的不能長遠發展，作為正在使用粵語的我們，正應該要去推廣粵語，而不是用另一種語言去取締用廣東話教中文。即使我不是一個土生土長的香港人，我亦感到我能說一口流利的粵語而自豪。再者，從這事看出，現任教育局局長缺乏了儒家思想中的智，即並非一個智者。他身為一名高官，未能做到三思而後行，沒有將要向公眾表達的內容細加研究和分析，只是魯莽地說一些自己認為的事實。古語有云：「言欲遜，遜免禍。行欲嚴，嚴遠侮。」楊局長應意識到自己的身份，對自己要發表的意見要負責，做到謹言慎行與理性分析，以免誤導大眾及引起不必要的社會爭議。

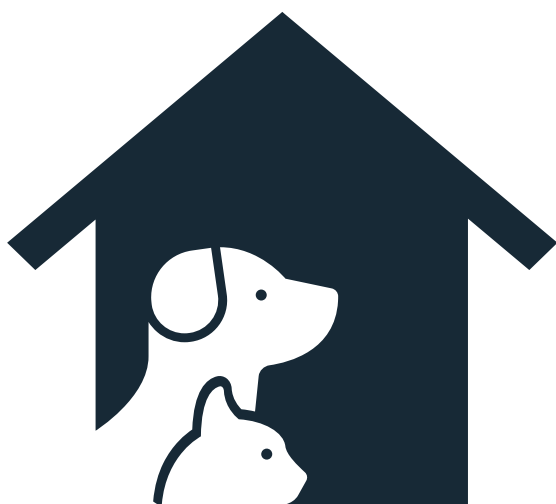
我 ♥
廣東話



評判語錄

陳景祥：這個議題比較冷門，但作者能夠清楚解釋為何要成立動物調查科，加上資料詳盡，令人信服。

香港為何需要動物調查科



虐待動物案件與日俱增

今年四月，銀狐犬小白疑被主人從住所大廈高處墮下，分屍慘死，令人扼腕，讓我們反思警方加強保護動物執法的必要性。悲劇早已埋下伏線，早在去年十二月，小白一曾被遺棄在便利店門前，幸在有心人報警下最終被送回主人家，又在慘死四天前離奇墮海，幸獲水警相救，但萬萬卻沒料到，小白還是脫不離死亡的厄運。小白的主人被拘捕，事件引起社會對虐待動物案件的關注，並揭示了社會虐畜情況日益嚴重。香港飼養寵物比率甚高，每十一個人就有一個飼養寵物，然而遺棄動物的數字高企。過去3年，每年接到懷疑殘酷對待動物的投訴個案接近每日一宗。

香港虐畜案之所以盛行，究其原因有二。首先，很多寵物主人一開始只為滿足慾望就買

了寵物回家，沒考慮自己的能力和時間能否支持。時間久了，他們或許對寵物的情懷轉淡，甚至覺得寵物是包袱，遂視寵物為發洩工具，虐待寵物以換取快感。其次，現時社會監管不足。政府的監管系統比起西方國家落後、鬆懈得多，所以其阻嚇性不足，令虐畜的人常能逃之夭夭。在銀狐犬案裡，主人多次疏忽照顧寵物，但警方一直強調證據不足，調查困難，只把銀狐犬還給主人就罷了。

成立動物調查科的爭議

保護動物的方法眾多，警方應否成立動物調查科的爭議甚囂塵上。動物權益組織堅稱成立調查科才能有效地打擊虐待動物案件，政府則表示現在的調查制度已足夠，毋需成立調查科。筆者卻認為警方成立動物調查科有助彌補制度、執法漏洞，保護動物權益。

現時調查系統的監管不力

本港現時具約束力的保障動物行動寥寥可數，調查香港虐待動物案件的主要機構是政府、漁農署與愛護動物協會，他們推行了「動物守護計劃」。雖說計畫在早於2008年開始，但主要項目仍只限於各警區裡的動物專隊。政府今年把參與的警區從19個擴展至22個，看似積極擴展專隊，然而隊伍執法卻過於寬鬆。

審視世界各地，在荷蘭、美國洛杉磯及美國堪薩斯州地區，動保警察是專職的。荷蘭專屬的動物警察，是由在警察學校受過相關課

程及訓練的警察們，對動物進行救援，其權限與一般警察無異，必要時可以持搜索票進入民宅調查、甚至起訴嫌疑犯或涉事的獸醫師。因此，當地的保護動物風氣盛行。吸取西方多國的經驗，成立動物調查科才能徹底彌補現在調查系統的監管不足，更能長遠地通過教育保障動物權益。由此可見，其實香港現時的動物專隊，以及整個調查機構都和世界相比下明顯不足，甚至可說是漏洞甚多。現在調查機構的主要問題可歸納成缺乏針對性、合作性和成效。

動物調查系統處理案件的針對性飽受質疑，其中動物調查專隊最惹爭議。灣仔區議會楊雪盈指出，專隊並非專職處理動物案件，他們其實是刑事調查隊，略略受過處理虐待動物案件的訓練後，就被予名為動物專隊。除非動物案件緊急，絕大部分時間，專隊都只會負責普通刑事案件，並把動物案件跟其他刑事案件一同排列處理優先次序，而動物案件往往被列為次等，略見名不符實。

還有，調查系統的溝通合作亦明顯不足。如上文述，調查系統包括警方的調查專隊、愛護動物協會和漁護處。但立法會議員陳克勤提出，相關部門常推卸責任。如警方只會在愛護動物協會人員即場判斷動物死因有可疑時，才會立案展開刑事調查，而愛協未經剖驗往往無法確定動物死因，但漁護署只會在警方立案後才會從事剖驗工作，最終一事無成。合作不善的源頭相信來至政府內部溝通不足，本應領導大局的警方專隊其實身兼多職，根本無暇主持大局，最終引致調查機構合作散亂。

缺乏針對性和合作的必然後果是成效低：調查系統的成效一直飽受質疑。專隊運作的未達透明，政府常只公布報案數字，卻不公布跟進或入罪數字，不能反映真實成效。在 2016

年食物及衛生受議員質詢，才公佈有關數字。原來過去三年，漁護署及警方每年接到超過 200 宗懷疑殘酷對待動物的投訴個案，但每年僅不足三十人被定罪，足見成效不彰。

動物調查科能彌補現時調查系統的不足

有鑑於監管不足的現況，動物調查科可針對性地解決動物問題，加強各部門的合作，最終提升成效。

在針對性方面，動物調查科若能獨立成科，代表地位躍升，必能得到更多人力和資源。他們不再和警方芸芸專隊共用資源，反能匯聚人力物力、擴展規模：如開設動物案件報案專線，為該科的警察提供更全面的培訓，甚至請動物界的專人加入調查行列等。當調查模式變得集中時，其性質就自然能更具針對性。

在成效方面而言，當該科對症下藥處理問題時，調查、蒐證、鑒定、起訴工作會執行得更具效率，成效必有所提升。就以美國洛杉磯的動物警察部門為例，他們自動物警察部門運作後，由於處理案件的專職人員有明確分工，執法系統如臂使指，2005 年成立至今已有 31 例重罪及 14 例涉及輕度虐待而遭逮捕的人，成效不容忽視。

在合作性方面，動物案件獨立成科，為調查科帶來更多資源及執法權力。動物調查科可在執法外，配合教育雙管齊下，順理成章地成為調查動物案件的主導，帶領愛護動物組織、漁護處和社會各慈善團體，規劃保育動物方針的藍圖，讓各方相輔相成。在有明確的領導下，調查和保育工作必能更緊密地進行。

動物調查科能長遠地保障動物權益

首先，成立動物調查科標誌著保育動物





這長期鬥爭的起點，打開了社會關注動物權益的大門。警方為動物問題獨立成科，是在向社會大眾發出警告，宣明警方日後必正視虐待動物的問題，甚至有意投放更多的資源，嚴正地處理問題。這舉動，對於那些虐待動物的不法之徒自然能起警戒作用；而對於對虐待動物問題不甚了了的市民，亦能引起關注，讓他們開始接觸到保護動物的重要性，最終塑造保育動物的社風，令動物權益成社會關注議題之一，可說是帶來的象徵意義和實際意義同樣重要。

還有，動物調查科更能成為社會和政府的橋樑，幫助愛護組織爭取更多動物權益。加上社會風氣所趨，愛護動物組織能更容易地說服政府、循序漸進地爭取其它動物權益，如更新規管虐待動物罪行的法例。香港現在防止虐待動物的法例是《防止殘酷對待動物條例》，它以一個世紀前英國 1911 年的動物保護法為藍本，在 2006 年提高罰款外，一直未有進行重大修正，可說條例早已過時，約束力亦是明顯的不足。更新法例能收緊法律約束力，令其更合時宜，讓動物調查科能更帶實權，更嚴正和有效地打擊虐待動物問題。

再者，其實引起關注不過是起點，立法亦只是中途站，教育才是長遠之計。要真正地創建愛護動物的社會，就要教育好下一代。所以，長遠而來，動物調查科的工作能從調查擴展至宣傳教育，成立分隊專門到各學校機構宣傳保護動物的重要性。更理想的是，教育局把保育動物的知識列入中小學必修範圍，讓他們對此問題有基本的認識。

就上述分析可見，成立動物調查科能短期內彌補現今系統監管的漏洞，更有助長期地爭取動物權益。動物問題近年越發嚴重，新聞上或網上流傳的照片令人心寒。就算你本身不是動物愛好者，但相信你看到動物被無辜的虐待時，身為有感情的人類，也多多小小會被勾起同情心，不住問到究竟人類為何要如斯自私殘忍，故意地傷害其他生命。而很多時，只要有更全面的教育和更嚴謹的監管系統，這些案例就能避免，而動物調查科正正是虐待動物問題的解藥只要政府決心改革現時的調查系統，為警方增設動物調查新一科，問題就能迎刃而解。香港貴為國際大都市勇於革新求進，透過成立動物調查科躋身動物權益的先鋒來提高國際地位，何樂而不為？



評判語錄

陳景祥：分析有條理，表達清晰，文筆流暢，全文一氣呵成，很好。

現時政府提出的「一地兩檢」方案是否適合本港？

八年前，特區政府落實興建高鐵香港段，接通中國高鐵網絡，並指會為本港帶來極大經濟利益，而且「一地兩檢」不會是高鐵計劃的唯一方案；八年後，高鐵耗用過千億，面臨「一地兩檢」成為唯一方案，引發社會擔憂及熱烈討論。政府在遊說中指「一地兩檢」能使旅客更方便，且更具可行性，為維持高鐵香港段的重要因素；泛民主人士指一地兩檢為香港司法管轄打開缺口，並且容許內地人員攜帶武器及在香港領土執法會為香港帶來極大保安及人權危機，擔心有更多「被失蹤」案件出現在香港。

簡述現時政府推行的高鐵一地兩檢方案，現階段政府在高鐵香港段香港的西九龍站劃出香港土地成為內地口岸區為乘客辦理通關程序。根據政府公布的方案指，西九龍總站總共有五層，最底下三層都有部分區域被劃作內地口岸區，包括 B2、B3 及 B4 層，其中月台部份即 B4 層更是全層被劃作內地口岸區。B2 層口岸去為乘客辦理中國出境，B3 層為乘客辦理中國入境。凡被劃作中國口岸區的部分都實行中國法律，並且設有羈留室及存放武器的器械室。除此之外，任何運營中的列車，無論是行駛中、停留中抑或上落客期間的列車車廂都屬於內地口岸區。香港政府多次強調一地兩檢是高鐵的唯一方案，其他方案不具可行性，但有傳媒揭發深圳福田站已在興建時預留樓層作

口岸及通關設施，且直至顯示相關樓層仍處於空置狀態。

在政府推出高鐵一地兩檢方案後引發社會激烈討論，不同派別人士都表達出對「一地兩檢」方案的意見。

政府負責擬定「一地兩檢」方案，因此對其表示支持。從政府角度而言，推行一地兩檢可以簡化乘客乘搭高鐵香港段時通關的程序，使乘客可以更方便、快捷地乘搭高鐵，提升高鐵系統的競爭力，長遠為加強本港與中國的聯繫，使本港與中國的交通更為便利，同時亦可促進經濟來往，能有效提升本港競爭力。儘管方案現時面對公眾質疑有關方案是否有損香港司法管轄權，但政府認為有關問題毋須擔心，根據政府新聞處發出的新聞稿，前律政司司長袁國強指實施「一地兩檢」絕對不存在「割地」元素或效果、「有關安排不會改變市民權益、通關程序或適用法律」，而運輸局局長陳帆亦說「一地兩檢」在海外如英、法或美、加兩國之間早有先例，類似安排也在深圳灣口岸實施，運作暢順，是發揮廣深港高鐵最大效益的關鍵」。政府認為現時外國甚至本港都有一地兩檢的先例，市民毋須擔心有關制度在運作上會出現問題，而且更因顧及高鐵的效益，支持「一地兩檢」方案。

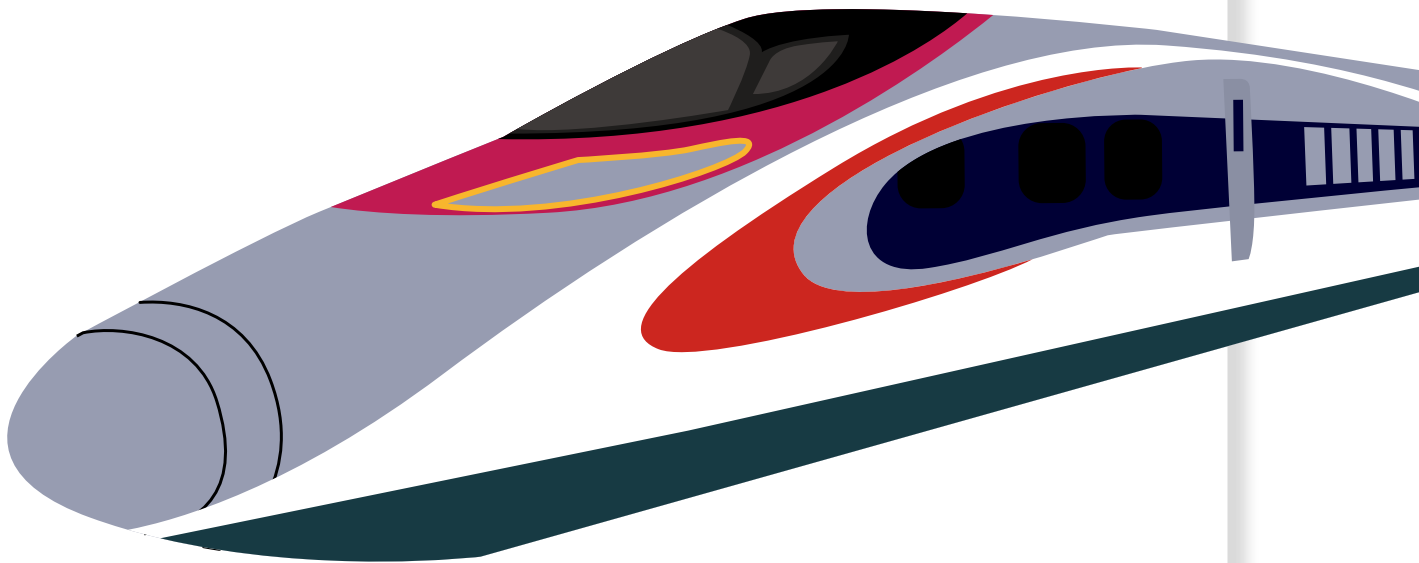
除了政府以外，建制派人士亦都普遍對方案表示支持。建制派議員及人士認為，政府所公布的「一地兩檢」方案是香港的高鐵可以迅速連接全國各地，增加本港與中國的來往，能有效促進香港經貿、旅遊及服務業等等的發展，對本港經濟有極大效益；對於市民而言，方案可以提升市民出行的舒適度及便利度，提升市民來往中國各地的效率，使市民生活更便利及提升出行質素；政府方案對香港旅遊業更有莫大益處，方案可以令中國各地的遊客更方便快捷地抵達香港旅遊，吸引到更多中國遊客選擇到香港旅遊，有助振興香港旅遊業，提升旅遊業僱員的收入及增加更多就業職位。有建制黨派及旅遊業人士更指，內地高鐵網絡繼續發展，根據工聯會網頁貼文指「內地高鐵網絡由最初的『四縱四橫』發展到『八縱八橫』」，越來越多人使用高鐵出行，「明年香港段高鐵開通后，能否發揮高鐵的快捷高效，『一地兩檢』的落實最為關鍵」，認為現時的方案是切實可行亦是維持高鐵快捷高效的必要因素。

儘管特區政府及建制派人士都對「一地兩檢」方案表示支持，但是方案卻遭到為數不少的泛民主主義人士反對。泛民主主義人士普遍認

為，「一地兩檢」方案劃出內地口岸區，實施中國法律，香港無權管轄，有割地的嫌疑，是開了個讓香港土地予中國的先河，十分擔心如後中國亦同樣形式吞併香港的土地，使香港的司法管轄面積減少。另一方面，中國派駐口岸區的人員具備刑事執法權，擔心中國可以藉此拘捕異見人士，更甚擔心中國人員會離開西九龍總站到香港境內及市區將異見人士擄走，破壞一國兩制及有損香港言論自由。根據英國廣播公司 BBC 的報導，民主黨議員林卓廷表示現時方案開下「割地」先例，「客觀效果是一國兩制慘遭踐踏」，「現在容許公安在香港核心地帶越境執法，相信很多香港人都非常擔憂」，認為方案為香港無論法制、政治及治安都帶來危機。

社會上普遍出現的兩種聲音，都反映著「一地兩檢」方案的利弊。但是對於香港整個社會而言，到底現時的「一地兩檢」方案，利弊何者影響更為大呢？

首先，一地兩檢無疑可以是乘客出行更為方便，但是在方便程度上的提升到底是否足夠、是否能夠使高鐵足夠快捷便利？「一地兩



檢」方案，可以令乘客在本港完成香港及中國的出入境手續，在到達中國各地後無需再進行過境程序。但是，有傳媒在實際嘗試後指出，現時廣深港高鐵從香港出發停靠多達六個中途站，且只能到達廣州郊區，從香港市中心出發到達廣州市中心的時間將長於已有過百年歷史的九廣城際直通車，實施「一地兩檢」後所節省的時間遠不能彌補高鐵所延長的時間。那麼在無法縮短廣深港高鐵形成時間的情況下，到底是否真的有需要勞師動眾強推「一地兩檢」方案？我認為沒有必要。

其次，高鐵方案更的確會為香港司法管轄帶來危機。政府表示劃出內地口岸區實為向中國「租」出有關土地，並沒有將土地「割」予中國。但是香港社會最擔心的是，中國政府及香港政府日後否再以同樣「租賃」方式用\$1000 象徵式租金在香港更多地區實施中國法律。若然「一地兩檢」方案成功推行，成為案例，日後要租借土地予中國政府勢必更為容易。難保下次出現如佔中等政治事件時，港府會否以同樣方式在相關區域實施中國法律，再由中國為本港清場。另外，在香港的市中心地帶劃出區域實施中國法律，無疑縮小了香港司法管轄的面積大小，有損香港司法管轄權，儘管政府表示在海外早有一地兩檢的案例，但縱觀各國案例，甚少有國家願意將司法管轄權交予其他國家，以美國為例指授權予其他國家執行過境程序的權利，司法權仍歸美國本土。觀乎外國案例在未有交出司法管轄權的情況下仍能一兩檢良好運作，明顯香港是沒有劃出土地執行中國法律的必要，更沒有必要令香港的司法管轄蒙受危機。

第三，「一地兩檢」方案事實上並非唯一方案，沒有必要強行推出。現時已落成啟用的深圳福田站已經預留樓層辦理通關程序，證實了在深圳實施一地兩檢或在香港及深圳實施兩地兩檢的可行性。並且在深圳實施一地兩檢或在兩地實施兩地兩檢在本港早有先例，如深圳灣口岸等，可以令推行整個高鐵計畫更為

順暢迅速，面對更少阻力及難關。顯示的「一地兩檢」方案在眾多選擇下，明顯競爭力十分不足，為何我們要只聽從政府所說的「唯一方案」而不選擇既可行且又更容易執行的其他方案？顯然現時的一地兩檢方案並不合宜。

第四，一地兩檢方案容許大量中國執法人員在香港執法，有機會增加違反基本法的事件。過去香港出現多宗與中國有關的被失蹤案件，引來傳聞指中國派人到本港擄走異見人士，破壞基本法下劃分的一國兩制。若在香港市中心劃出內地口岸區，將可更方便中國政府人士在香港市區擄走目標任務，且能更快進入中國管轄區域，使本港警方不能及時執法及阻止，且口岸區內更有羈留室及器械室，可羈留人質及存放大量武器，令香港治安及人權受到極大威脅。

第五，現時方案的劃分方式過於複雜，對本港工作人員造成極大不便。根據現時方案，西九龍站月台及列車車廂將被劃入內地口岸區，那麼港鐵職員及服務人員每次到底進入月台或登車工作室都需辦理出入將手續，對職員造成極大不便。除此，一旦列車在本港區域內發生任何事故，儘管行車隧道屬於本港管轄，但消防及救護人員在登車營救乘客時都須先辦理出入境手續或申請相關文件，大大拖慢運作效率，使市民蒙受危機。

有鑑於此，儘管「一地兩檢」方案可以使乘客在選用高鐵出行時更快捷方便，此方案在作更多改進及修訂前仍不適合在本港實行。但無奈至今一地兩檢方案已塵埃落定，高鐵香港段也已經通車，但是我們必須繼續著眼「一地兩檢」方案的實行，留意著以上種種的可能性有否機會真正發生。「一地兩檢」在本港並非完全不可行，政府在制定方案時不單止要考慮中國一方意見，更應著眼本港市民對方案的期望與擔憂，切實解決港人所擔心的問題才能真正提升高鐵的競爭力，繼而再提升香港的競爭力。



評判語錄

陳景祥：分析殺街的正面及負面影響十分全面，關於「改善建議」部分有自己的觀點，對議題的掌握非常清晰，令文章的論述有說服力。

殺街爭議

有 18 年歷史的旺角行人專區於本年 8 月 4 日畫上句號，在「殺街」後的西洋菜南街，有途人和電訊推銷員大讚殺街後耳根清靜，比以往舒適，亦不覺更為擠迫，夠膽帶年幼子女到西洋菜南街逛街；附近商店就指人流與以往相約，對殺街後生意持觀望態度。但是，人車爭路情況再度出現。而一眾街頭表演者則失去了一個推廣藝術文化的公共空間。到底「殺街」的決定帶來的影響是好是壞，「殺街」又是否最好的解決西洋菜街噪音問題的方法呢？

正面影響

首先，無可否認的是廢除旺角行人專用區在某程度上能減低對附近居民的滋擾。自行人專用區啟用以來，因有大量擺賣、推銷攤檔、易拉架等，產生噪音、阻街等問題，後來更因「大媽歌舞」進駐，讓行人專用區更嘈吵，嚴重影響居民生活。街頭表演及賣藝所造成的噪音已被指長期騷擾居民。根據政府的統計數字，行人專用區於去年接到的噪音投訴更高達 1,236 宗，為近 6 年來最高的數字。實際上，去年亦有獨立機構實地測試該處的噪音水平，發現每逢表演日的晚上 7 至 10 時，該處的音量已超過 85 分貝，有位置甚至高達 101.5 分貝。所以，不少人相信取消旺角行人專用區能做到「還街於民」，減低噪音對附近居民精神和聽覺上所造成的傷害，回復社區寧靜。

而且，在殺街前，旺角行人專用區的劣質霸位文化、鬥大聲、外來表演者未能參與、以及表演內容過於單一等表演者個人修養的問

題，都是導致「殺街」的起因。在街頭表演中，不時看到各表演者互不相讓，演出時鬥大聲，誓要用聲量蓋過對手，結果觀眾欣賞不到演出之餘，市民和居民亦感到非常滋擾。旺角地少人多，表演者之間的空間極細，一個細小空間就同時有數位表演者。由於各方的音量會影響到自己的表演，所以對表演沒有要求的表演者會繼續大聲載歌載舞，而真正具質素的表演者或會因為抵受不了嘈雜的環境，選擇離開。剩下的表演就只有配備重型音響，能長時間抵受惡劣環境的表演者，結果就造成大家看見「嘈」、「亂」的旺角。

然而，「殺街」的決定不利於本港街頭表演文化發展，而且不是最佳的解決西洋菜街噪音問題的辦法，因為「殺街」同時殺掉原來



改善行人的安全及街道流通情況的目的。

負面影響

在街頭表演文化發展方面，取消旺角行人專用區在很大程度上抹殺了香港的本土文化發展。事實上，行人專用區能成為街頭藝術表演工作及市民共享的公共空間，當中經歷了十多年的醞釀。這地方除了是不少香港人的集體回憶，亦是不少遊客慕名而來的勝地，皆因此處的表演正正能讓他們切身地體驗香港的本土民情，感受香港的特色所在。「殺街」的決定使香港失去了一個可以讓港人發展街頭表演文化的公共空間，日後難以覓地方重現同樣特色。因此，行人專用區對香港文化藝術發展的貢獻，實在不能忽視。而且，不少反對是次動議的市民認為，行人專用區內不乏水平高的表演者，他們在為本港的文化發展出一分力，所以不應該「一刀切」取消得來不易的公共空間。

再者，廢除旺角行人專用區或會引起該區的其他街道問題。行人專用區恢復行車，禁止表演者再擺檔賣藝。這會隨時讓旺角重現昔日的街道問題。運輸署在 2000 年設立旺角行人專用區，原意是減少路上行車，以改善行人環境及加強道路安全。然而，取消行人專用區，在街頭藝人噪音的問題似是得到解決後，但西洋菜南街附近很大機會再次充斥車輛，回復人車擁擠的情況，以及重現路面車輛所帶來的噪音及空氣污染等問題。這顯然對附近的居民和商鋪而言，亦並非一件好事。

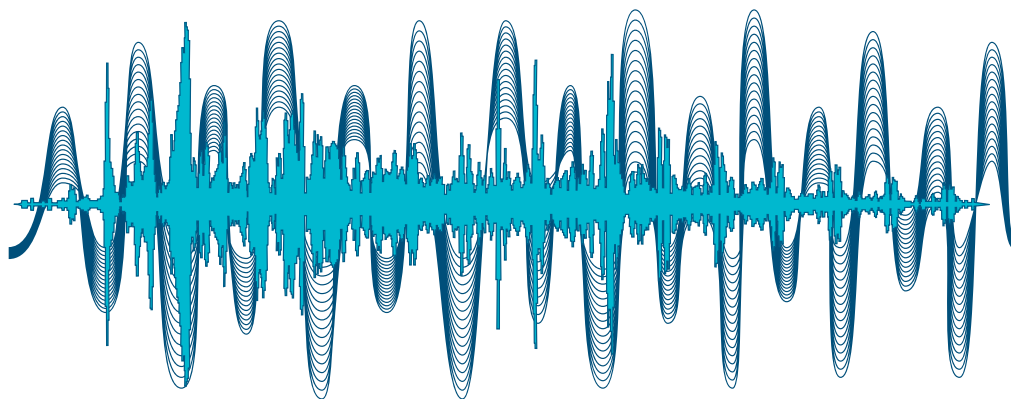
政府沒有在問題變得更嚴重之前採取足夠的行動去規範使用者的行為，尤其是規管表演者帶來的噪音問題，然而「殺街」只是「斬腳趾避沙蟲」的做法。政府應顧及行人專用區

多方面的功能，包括解決人車爭路、改善行人環境、為全港市民提供共享的公共空間，以及保存本土文化等。除了「殺街」，難道就沒有方法可以管理表演者，讓街頭表演者與市民共享的公共空間一直保存嗎？

改善建議

發牌管理或許是一個值得考慮的方法去管理，同時推廣香港的街頭表演文化。先跳出已被「殺街」的旺角行人專用區，現時西九文化區也正推行街頭表演計劃，雖然有人認為此計劃規定表演者只能在西九演出，有違街頭表演的「隨機性」，但若視之為試驗計劃，汲取經驗後將之推廣至全港，亦無不可。事實上，要將街頭表演發展成香港文化，並收拾西洋菜南街的亂局，政府必須對街頭表演多加規管，特別針對於旺角行人專用區出現的問題。其中，制訂專門關於街頭表演的法例，並發牌管理是第一步。政府可於申請牌照的條款中列明表演者所能使用的擴音器類型，以限制表演音量，也可以規定表演者之間須保持合適距離和表演時限，從而避免表演者對其他道路使用者造成騷擾，以及表演者之間的惡性競爭。發牌的目的是在於方便管理，平衡表演者與其他市民間的權益，但不在於篩選，因此當局發牌時應盡量從寬，推行發牌制度後，執法機構不可能再以「行乞罪」驅趕街頭表演者，這也是對他們的一種尊重。

此外，除了制訂長遠的發牌管理政策，政府當前更要修改一些過時、有礙街頭表演的法例，使明顯值得檢討。要釋放公共空間的文化藝術潛能，還須政策配合。不能單單期望街頭藝人自律地表演，西洋菜南街便是明證。





Judge's Comment

Dr. Simon Shen :

The student has a clear stance and he can clearly answer the questions raised in the first paragraph set by the author. The points raised by the author are also valid arguments and could support by evidence. The use of language is also good, and we can see the author have his or her own opinion clearly stated in the topic, so it is overall a well-written article.

Express Rail Link . . . towards nothing?

The Express Rail Link (Hong Kong section), at long last, has inaugurated. Becoming the spotlight of media at once and widely reported, the Link (officially named Beijing-Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong high-speed railway, Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong section) has become a household topic. Citizens quickly divided themselves into two camps. So, what is all that fuss about?

The Express Rail Link (Hong Kong section) is an extension of the already existing high-speed railway in the mainland China. Covering 26 kilometers of Hong Kong soil, it aims to bridge West Kowloon and the Hong-Kong-Shenzhen boundary. Citing a convenient connection to the mainland, boosting the economy in Hong Kong, and environmental-friendly transportation, the Hong Kong government authorized the building of the Link in 2009, envisioning its inaugural in 2015. In addition to the two trains already in service, Hong Kong also built a train to cope with the increasing passengers once the Hong Kong section has inaugurated. The train is named 'Vibrant Express' by one of my fellow schoolmates. However, is the Link too good to be true? I think there is some truth to this.

Firstly, the cost effectiveness is found to be frustratingly low. According to calculations by Apple Daily, going to and from Beijing via mainland airlines is approximately \$1900. However, the Link charges \$2216. That is before we mention the significantly longer travel time. Even if you choose to go to Shanghai, a shorter journey, the cost of going by the Link is only cheaper than the airlines by a tight margin. In short, it is cheaper and quicker for you to visit other parts of China by plane.

Secondly, the Express Rail Link is not as efficient as expected. Criticism towards the Link mainly revolves around its legitimacy. I am no expert of law, but I think the problem that should be of greater concern is that is not very convenient, at least less than what the government promises. The government promises a 48-minute journey from the West Kowloon Station to the South Guangzhou Station. However, it put less emphasis on the fact that there are only 3 of these trains to the South Guangzhou Station, departing from the West Kowloon Station at 10:00, 15:00 and 17:35 respectively. As of this writing, there is even a special arrangement in the weekends (the most likely days that people are going on a trip) that there will be NO trains travelling to any destinations other than Futian. If you consider the

frequency of alternative options, it is no wonder that the Link had a depressing number of passengers. For example, the intercity through train has 12 trains per day and the time to Guangzhou is just 15 minutes more than the Link! And that is before we mention the ¥28 price advantage. It is almost a no-brainer for people to choose which form of transportation to tourist attractions.

Thirdly, the Express Rail Link (Hong Kong section) is a very costly project. The project costs an approximately HKD\$86 billion (over-budget) to build. However, can it live up to its expectations and cover the costs with income, and ultimately turn a profit? If things keep at this rate, I think the possibility is not very high. The government originally planned for the Link to carry 80000 people to and from West Kowloon Station. On the first day, there were 75517 people travelling by the Link. It has since nosedived 21375 on the second day, according to the South China Morning Post. In addition, a worrying portion of passengers said that they were just trying out the Link as a fad. I estimate that the ticket sales of the Link will continue its plunge, and will be a far cry from profit for the seen future.

I understand that there is a significant portion of the society as well as two governments supporting the Link. There main argument is that the Link boosts economy of both Hong Kong and the Mainland by offering a convenient transport to the Mainland in urban areas. However, as we can see, not too many Hong Kong citizens use the Link in reality. The supporters may then retort: then won't it boost the economy of Hong Kong? Theoretically, it would. But do we really want more visitors? Hong Kong already has an overwhelming population density of 6,698 people per square kilometer (Washington D.C.: 4,521). We are already over-crowded, and I am confident that residents near tourist attractions will not take the news too kindly if there are additional thousands of tourists. Remember that scandalous 'Anti-locust campaign'?

In a nutshell, I think the contribution of the Beijing-Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong high-speed railway, Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong section is insignificant. Being over-budget, I believe that its benefits will never outweigh its costs. I hope the government really look into the advantages and disadvantages of an infrastructure project and not make a hasty decision like this one again.



Judge's Comment

Dr. Simon Shen :

The author first presents the ideas from both positive and negative side and then develops the argument according to his or her stance. I am impressed by the author that he or she did not just present opinion, but also policy and measurement suggestions. The author could also support the article with adequate evidence.

Hong Kong's Typhoon Mangkhut response highlights value of community spirit in tackling natural disasters

Hong Kong's altruistic spirit has been strong and vibrant after the typhoon. Students have helped clean up their schools, the tourism sector offered free bus rides to residents in the New Territories, volunteers from one church distributed food to the elderly, to give just a few examples.

Given the massive scale of the destruction, simply waiting for the government to handle the entire clean-up operation would have been unrealistic so it was heartening to witness the involvement of the community. This is exactly how we can leverage community resources to help each other.

Hong Kong has coped well with natural disasters due to the development of better infrastructure. Based on Observatory records, the deadliest typhoons in the city's history were Wanda in 1962, which claimed 130 lives with 53 people missing, and Typhoon Rose, which killed 110 people in 1971. Since then, Hong Kong has managed to survive many storms without major loss of life.

That the number of casualties has been reduced substantially is not down to luck but, rather, the hard work and diligent efforts of many. Sometimes, we do take things for granted. When Mangkhut hit the Philippines, it killed over 100 people. On the other side of the world, Hurricane Florence caused over 40 deaths in the US.

The chaotic situation facing by commuters in Hong Kong after Mangkhut hit is very unfortunate. More than 1,000 road sections were blocked by fallen trees and other debris. Bus services were largely cancelled the next day and train services were disrupted on the East Rail Line. The morning rush hour on September 17 was particularly onerous for many people.

The Education Bureau's decision to close schools for two days after the typhoon was a timely move to avoid further traffic congestion and to ensure the safety of pupils. Our university cancelled classes for a day, but essential services were still in operation to provide necessary support.

The business sector wasted no time in resuming operations after the typhoon. While this speaks of its efficiency, we might

perhaps have been too efficient, as returning to work in the chaotic aftermath of the typhoon was certainly stressful for employees. Sometimes, we need to give ourselves and others more room to recover. Otherwise, we gain efficiency at the expense of the well-being of the whole community.

To be fair, the Hong Kong government did a good job in its early warnings and preparations before the typhoon hit. However, it might have underestimated the amount of damage to be dealt with afterwards. A better surveillance and monitoring system should be set up with the support of the community. The community at large can provide information that helps the government stay updated on the situation in different areas.

A mechanism to gather information would help improve the government's response to natural disasters. Also, a more sympathetic and empathetic attitude from employers would help ease the worries of many who tried to get to work on time. We can all learn from this episode to better prepare for future storms.

Perhaps the coming weeks would be a good time to show our understanding towards each other, including those who might still be struggling in the aftermath with a lack of electricity and water. The hardworking attitude of Hongkongers is admirable, and we should indeed be grateful to those who provide the essential services that keep the city safe and running.

While our sincere gratitude goes to the workers who risked their lives for others during the typhoon – the firefighters, police force and the many others who worked hard to speed up the recovery of the city – we should all play a part in community rebuilding.

I think the government should give the people to have a one day off. It is because the day after typhoon Mangkhut hitting Hong Kong, the road is filled with a lot of fallen trees and there are traffic jams around the territory. The damaged over-head cable of the East Rail Line is the strongest barricade for the hardworking labour of Hong Kong, and many people stuck in the station and go to work very late. I suggest the government to give the people a one day off.



Judge's Comment

Dr. Simon Shen :

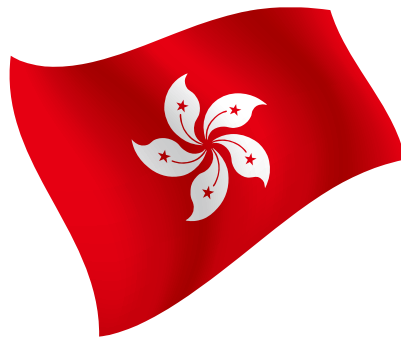
The author could discuss the issue from different perspectives, and the author could observe and analyse the root cause from a phenomenon/ policy to the driving force behind and have some good points developed. Overall is a well-written essay.

National Anthem Law in Hong Kong

First of all, I do understand why the Hong Kong government wants to implement the National Anthem Law in Hong Kong. The reasons are: to bring awareness in Hong Kong citizens that they should be proud and respect the National Anthem law, The March of the Volunteers. Recently, there has been many incidents of HKSAR citizens making fun of and disrespecting the National Anthem; fans started booing and disrespecting the national anthem when it was played at a football stadium at Mong Kok. In my opinion, that was very childish and wrong for them to be that disrespectful. But bear in mind, if the law does get passed, those who continue to disrespect the national anthem will be fined a maximum of HK\$50,000 and face a prison term of up to three years.

Secondly, I think there are a lot of different views on this law. The people who don't support this law may not support it as they do not like China's culture or because they do not like what China preaches or they do not want to be forced to respect the national anthem law because Hong Kong is a city which preaches freedom of speech, they in fact have many reasons. On the other hand, the people who do support this law are happy with the law as they feel proud of China's achievements, they would want everyone to embrace their 'Chinese' background or they do not like the fact that people like to disrespect the National Anthem.

Back to my point, I do not support the law. Hong Kong is a city with lots of people from different countries and cultures, Children who aren't Chinese may not want to feel forced to sing the National Anthem. Also, they may have a difficult time learning the National Anthem law because Chinese might not be their mother tone and because there are schools in Hong Kong which may not place great emphasis on Chinese or Putonghua. Also, I find the fine and imprisonment of three years rather ridiculous, it is way too much. No one should go to prison for 3 years because of this and the fine should be lowered to a few thousand dollars. If a non-Chinese who just came to Hong Kong had no clue of the National Anthem law did not salute or they were talking, they would go to jail for that! That is ridiculous.



However I do think the national identity has decrease among young Hong Kong people. When the football match started, most of the young people were misbehaving and this shows how they do not like their national identity. But I think that this is not all of their fault as the HKSAR government has not put enough effort to make them feel proud of China.

Besides, I think there are many ways to increase the sense of national identity among young people. I think the past or culture of China has not been embraced by many of them. The lyrics of the anthem tell us that China has been looked down upon but would never give up until they won. Sadly, many of us still do not want to learn more about and embrace China. Hong Kong should continue the education about students learning the past of China. Also, more grand celebrations should be held on important days like October 1st and July 2nd, they should have mini game booths for kids and more traditional performances to help increase knowledge of the past of China and their achievements.



Judge's Comment

Dr. Fairbrother, Gregory Paul:

Good use of language to secure the reader's attention in the first paragraph. There is a clear topic statement for the essay at the outset. Good supporting evidence for each main point. Critical analysis of each point raised. Argument is persuasive. Clear outline of the argument with relevant follow-up. It is clear that considerable thought has gone into evaluating the problem and proposing solutions. There is a good conceptualization in the presentation of the solutions. The essay shows a very good understanding of the issue overall.

The blaring alarm of society: Student Suicide

In recent years, the issue of students committing suicide has become a blaring alarm in society. Waves of students have resorted to ending their lives, the most notable period being in February of 2017 where five students took their lives in the span of 17 days. Unfortunately, the Hong Kong government seems to be repeatedly hitting the snooze button of the alarm, only making half-hearted attempts to solve the crisis of students committing suicide. I strongly believe that the Hong Kong government, especially the Education Bureau, holds the responsibility of mitigating the crisis immediately.

The Education Bureau, as the primary mover of the prevention of students committing suicide, has proposed various schemes to combat this increasingly serious problem. For the teachers, they have proposed the Joyful@School Campaign, for example, and they have also put out different resources for the teachers' reference. This includes handbooks for understanding pupils with mental health issues, handbooks to detect the signals when a student is on the edge of suicide, life education teaching materials, etc. As for the students themselves, the Bureau has given them support through hiring social workers in schools, empowering them through the implementation of quite some life planning schemes, etc.

In my opinion, although the Education Bureau has put into effect quite some policies to prevent students committing suicide, they are unfortunately ineffective. As the World Health Organization (WHO) defines it, health is 'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being'. However, it is clear that the schemes proposed by the Education Bureau does not fully commit to this definition. Firstly, the resources provided for the teachers, like the handbooks on detecting students with suicidal behaviours, are not suited for them at all. Teachers are constantly busy with their own work, and they are primarily focused on the students' academic performance. Therefore, it is hard for them to spot students who are exhibiting such symptoms which are outside of academics, and they do not have time to be able to observe each individual student. With so many students that they have to teach on a daily basis, teachers may not be able to detect students who are suicidal at all. As a result, students who may have felt suicidal could feel like their pleas for help have been

ignored, when in reality their pleas were not even acknowledged at all.

As for the students, they have not been treated with suitable and appropriate schemes to prevent their suicides, either. As common knowledge dictates, there is no one reason to suicide. May it be troubles with schoolwork, family or friends, it is hard to understand how one feels before suicide unless the person has had that feeling before. Despite that, the government seems to believe that student suicides are caused by poor life planning skills, and thus promote positive thinking in the face of crisis and centre most of their suicide prevention schemes to promote better life planning skills. As former Education Secretary Eddie Ng once stated, "Poor life planning is the reason why students are taking their lives." Though life planning may be important and could potentially prevent many students from going on this one-way journey when they have thought out their life clearly, it is not the sole reason why students choose to commit suicide. The Education Bureau, in spite of that, chose to focus on that one aspect, providing an abundance of resources like Life Education Teaching Materials for the students, when they are completely overlooking the other possible reasons that would drive students to suicide. Merely focusing on one aspect of student suicide and magnifying it while thinking that the problem is solved is a foolish idea. Furthermore, most students who are committing suicide are in secondary school and university. Students in that period are usually in puberty, where they tend to explore more aspects of themselves and experiment with it. They may be interested in something when they are in junior secondary, but lose interest in it later on. Be that as it may, the current education system essentially forces students to make their life choices in senior secondary, when they have to choose their electives; which in turn have a large impact on what they would study in university. As an illustration, if one opts not to take Chemistry as an elective in senior secondary, you cannot study in the medical field in university. Therefore, it is not a valid argument to suggest that students are committing suicide because of poor life planning, when the education system does not allow them the option of exploring their opportunities, and to choose the best route for themselves on their lives. As the schemes and resources provided by the Education Bureau fail to correctly aim at the needs and



limitations of the roles of teachers and students, the Bureau therefore cannot achieve the WHO's standard of a 'complete' state of mental well-being. Thus, the Bureau is ineffective in its schemes of the increased involvement of teachers, and better life planning.

As the nature of a suicide case cannot be concluded with follow-up procedures, much work on the prevention of suicide is needed. For the students, I believe that schemes should be proposed in the three aspects of universal, selective and indicated level of work. First of all, the universal level of work should be provided to bring general support to all students. The Education Bureau should first promote the mental well-being and health of students. The Bureau should also review relevant aspects in the education system to support and address the developmental and diverse needs of students. As an illustration, the Bureau should review the straitjacket they have strapped students in, for making them choose their career path too early on. Steve Jobs, one of the founders of Apple Inc., was a college dropout, yet could still become one of the most influential people of the 21st century by creating the iconic Apple brand; with its current net worth at US\$1 trillion. This shows that a higher education is not completely necessary to achieving success. Thus, Hong Kong should also review its education system to cater to different students with different talents and needs; and not only force them to go through one form of education. Secondly, the selective level of work should be provided to students who are vulnerable to suicide. The Education Bureau should conduct gatekeeper training for early identification and intervention. They should also develop screening tools and guidelines for at-risk student support.

Additionally, they should enhance the referral mechanism to mental health services. When members of the school, like the teachers, are well-equipped and well-trained to identify students who are vulnerable and know exactly what to do to help them; the process of a student resorting to suicide would be cut short much earlier than it would have, and therefore making it easier and more effective in solving the problem. Lastly, the Education Bureau should establish the indicated level of work to suicidal students. They should establish school-based multidisciplinary platforms for students and to enhance the accessibility to mental health services. With the implementation of a multidisciplinary platform, designers of various, relevant disciplines could utilize their knowledge to devise a solution to lead the student away from the path of suicide. The optimum of the problem is superior in the sense that the design can be found by optimizing each discipline sequentially, since it can exploit the interactions between the disciplines. Also, once the dangerous situation that the student is under is stabilized by the multidisciplinary design, they can be referred to a therapist or a specialist in mental health to further improve the student's position.

In conclusion, the Education Bureau, as the primary mover of the prevention of students' suicides, is currently not doing enough to help students with suicidal tendencies. With the immediate implementation of other, more selective schemes such as the ones I have suggested above, I firmly believe that the alarm will stop ringing, and we can all rise to greet a lovely morning with the sun shining above us.



Judge's Comment

Dr. Fairbrother, Gregory Paul :

Good background to the introductory guiding statement of the argument. The flow of the argument in each paragraph is clear and logical. The points raised are significant and salient. Good use of comparative cases to understand the strengths and drawbacks of different solutions.

Hong Kong in need for a busking licensing system

Angry demonstrators have recently cropped up to fight for the rights of pedestrians and shoppers in Tsim Sha Tsui in response to a nuisance caused by a massive influx of buskers from Mong Kok. Earlier this year, a nearly unanimous vote by the district council and strong disapproval of the locals led to the shutdown of the pedestrian zone on Sai Yeung Choi Street. Sai Yeung Choi Street was originally filled with buskers from day to night at the weekends, where people clap, cheer and chant for the street performers whilst residents or tenants nearby expressed distress and annoyance to the blaring microphones. After the shutdown, they turned to other places also with high flow of people. Amid this turbulence, different voices calling for preservation or banishing the street culture have become more apparent. An association of Mong Kok buskers has even drafted a proposal on licensing to the government. I believe the introduction of a licensing system to curb the social problem is necessary.

Firstly, street performance, no doubt, has been the sole channel for young, budding artists to entertain a crowd by displaying their talents. It gives them opportunity for feedback and improvements on their skills. A complete crackdown on street performance would undermine the potentials of the younger generation - a city's worst fear. Yet, Hong Kong buskers are often caricatured as 'low culture' at the weekends, it is not uncommon to find middle-aged people dressed up in outlandish, brightly coloured clothes dancing off-beat to the music. They display quirky postures which only some of the pedestrians find it amusing. If a group of young talents wants to showcase their art there, the fact is, it is sadly impossible. These older street performers have the entire street to themselves; they have specially "reserved" spots to perform. Others who wish to join the rank have to pay in order to rent a spot. This adamantly deters young people to share their creative work as paying unreasonable fees is required. Compared to ten years ago, when this pedestrian-zone-scheme was launched, the intended free pedestrian space has pretty much dwindled. The zone should restore its initial purpose of a traffic-free area to improve the convenience of pedestrians and prevent a cohort of singers rivalling each other. To protect the spirit of freedom of space where every pedestrian and artist can share, licensing systems should be set up to ensure the opportunities of the young, forthcoming talented and regulate the number of performers on the streets.

Secondly, the lack of a licensing system has caused great disturbance to tenants and residents nearby. Performers now own large, powerful amplifiers to fight to be the loudest, turning the streets into an unsightly battle for volume. The cacophony, loud enough to inundate voices for others cause economic loss for Laneige, who owns a shop adjacent to two rivalling performing "stands". Due to slack-growing sales as customers had been deterred to visit the shop, they erected a noise barrier. With the barrier, it has allowed the salespeople to speak to the customers for the first time. Reports have shown that the average volume around the area ranges from 80 to 100 decibels, which can likely bring about hearing problems after prolonged exposure. Moreover, nearby residents have reported symptoms like depression, anxiety and insomnia to district councilors, some of which could not bear any longer and moved. Similarly, in Tsim Sha Tsui, a newsagent complained about that the newcomers from Mong Kok outcompete the veterans and has raised voice levels to an unbearable extent. Other original buskers claim they are not accustomed to sharing the space among others, causing unnecessary annoyance. No doubt, street performers, who believe performing as their right and freedom, has not been fully aware of the consequences they may bring. In fact, it has already an offence to play loud music on the street as it is enshrined in the Summary Offences Ordinance and Noise Control Ordinance. However, the Police can do only so much to prohibit the performers by verbal warning or a fine. Once they have left, the volume is turned up again. Considering the enactment of law is virtually non-existent, more stringent regulations must be imposed to restore order and harmony between buskers and act as a deterrent to offenders who produce too much noise.

What I see from this phenomenon is that an implementation of a licensing system will be the inevitable. The story of Singapore shows us the possibility of increase in the number of buskers, contrary to beliefs of many. According to the National Arts Council (NAC), which oversees the licensing of buskers in Singapore, over half of the estimated 300 buskers are below the age of 35. By comparison, only one in 10 of the estimated 140 buskers around in 2008 were similarly aged.

Nonetheless, the introduction of a licensing policy would be a

controversial move, raising concerns on whether screening tests will hinder creativity and originality. Research must be done beforehand to truly understand the genre of acts buskers perform.

In Singapore, applicants have to go through an audition. During the audition, applicants are given an estimated 5 minutes to demonstrate busking act and abilities to create rapport. Successful ones are granted a busking card, which allows them to only busk at designated spots. Performance times and sound level generated are also strictly manipulated. Buskers are also prohibited to solicit for gratuity and sell merchandise, a rule that can effectively prevent unlawful hawking. A much more all-round example would be the Street Performer Program from the port authority of San Francisco. Performers who apply for the programme benefit from being able to schedule their performances at designated locations and perform for longer time periods on an previously selected time slot for each performer. This is useful for preventing clashing between groups who want to occupy the same space. Unscheduled performers are also welcomed but have to follow a first come first serve basis. Prestigious places like Covent Garden in West End, London restrict any playing

of instruments and usage of amplifiers. Performers have to be vigorously screened and allowances are predominantly are given to variety / circus acts with a structured show. All in all, the common goal of these policies are to ensure fair and equitable access for all performers, discouraging rivalry and prevent any interference of other stakeholder's rights and maintaining a pleasant environment for everyone to share. Hong Kong must learn from these successful examples and bring vibrance to the streets of this cultural desert.

I believe through the concerted effort from different parties and extensive consultation of opinions from the public, the suggested licensing system could be a resolution to the disorderly manner of busking and encourage talents of the new generation.





Judge's Comment

Prof. Tso Hung, Scarlet :

The main focus of the theme is to inspire the readers to rethink some social issues that the public should be aware of. The author has suggested some solutions to the government that seem quite practical and worth considering.

It is time we reflect on the termination of Sai Yeung Choi Street South

On 4th August, the Yau Tsim Mong District Council terminated the pedestrian zone on Sai Yeung Choi Street South, putting an end to the street performances that have accompanied Hong Kong people for years. That was, after a spike in noise complaints of Mong Kok residents. The Hong Kong government could not solve this problem, and termination seemed like an easy solution. But are there really no other ways to resolve the problem?

The pedestrian zone was initially set up to provide a safe environment for people to do shopping because there was overcrowding on both sides of the pavement.

Over the years, Sai Yeung Choi Street South has become a place where commerce, art and culture comes together to form a prominent landmark. Anyone visiting the spot will be soaked in the warm and friendly atmosphere the locals create.

With its large variety of street performances, Sai Yeung Choi Street South is a major spot for the promotion of performing arts and Hong Kong culture. In this lively corner where creativity is unlimited, performers are free to express themselves through various art forms and put on all sorts of shows. Some prefer singing with live musicians, playing the guitar as accompaniment. Some prefer playing magic. Others enjoy demonstrating their acrobatic or miming skills. There are also some, like the Mong Kok Lady Gaga, who love dancing in front of numerous audiences. If you have had a stroll in the street, you would definitely be able to spot passionate performers showcasing their talents, and a couple of happy faces surrounding them. Unfortunately, this scene will forever be gone, as we watch our collective memories mercilessly burn to ashes.

Some may argue that if we keep the pedestrian zone without tending to the residents' complaints, it will no longer be a zone for entertainment, but a public nuisance. Therefore, I would like to suggest the following solutions corresponding to the problems raised.

The first and the most severe problem of all would be the noise levels, an issue causing the residents to hit the roof and scream for termination. According to the survey commissioned

by the Liberal Party, the performances on Sai Yeung Choi Street South on Saturday nights were as loud as 101.5 decibels. We also know that sound levels of 85 decibels can already cause hearing loss and tinnitus (which is a ringing or buzzing in the ears or head), as stated in the thematic report of the European Agency for Safety and Health at work. The health effects caused by prolonged exposure to that environment can then be imagined.

It is clear that this is a problem residents cannot resolve themselves, so it is high time the government comes to the rescue. One of the most effective ways would be to set up a law to ensure performers keep their sounds at an acceptable level. However, if the law were not enforced properly, it would just be a useless regulation that is laid down but forgotten. Then it would be up to police patrols like irregular 'snaking' operations to guarantee the effectiveness of the law and any offenders be put under arrest as soon as possible.

As for performers, there may be quarrels among themselves as there is keen competition for the best spot. Some may also point out that they have been using this location for years, and no one should trespass their territory.

For this, the government should fulfill their obligation to protect the people in Hong Kong. The solution to this is straightforward --- to give people what they want. Performers squabble just to secure a place for their shows. Thus, the government can provide designated regions to each group of performers. Then there would be no reason to quarrel anymore.

Another issue would be the safety concerns, and Mong Kok shoppers are the first to be affected. In case anything, for instance a fire, happens, people will not be able to leave in time, because of the severe overcrowding and lack of regulation in the area.

No worries, the government can help as well. Once performers have their own 'territories', it will be easy for the government to safeguard people's lives --- simply by adding in escape routes to the plans above.

It seems that numerous ways can be proposed to solve



the above problems to reduce the negative impacts to the residents but preserve the pedestrian zone. Why wouldn't these measures be adopted? Let us put away our magnifying glass for a moment and take some time to screen through the whole picture. You would probably discover that a deeper, tougher problem lies behind. At this point, it is clear that the government has turned a blind eye to the underlying problem---not giving way for the development of local street culture.

Currently, performers are scattered in places like Mody Road and Star Ferry Pier in Tsim Sha Tsui, or even the Times Square in Causeway Bay. Scrapping the pedestrian zone simply reflects that our rash, illegitimate government has completely underestimated the consequences of putting an end to the cultural realm. The truth is that when one site is shut down, another will emerge. There the problems persist. Instead of terminating the pedestrian zone carelessly, shouldn't the government be thinking about better ways to solve the problem? But that is not all.

As Hong Kongers, we are always proud to be living a fusion of Chinese and Western culture. But isn't it ridiculous that such a world-recognized modern city lacks the incentive to preserve its own precious culture? By shutting down the pedestrian zone, the government has successfully drained an oasis in the middle of a cultural desert. Sai Yeung Choi Street South was a unique public space for people to pursue their dreams, giving them an opportunity to unearth their potential and perform in front of audiences from different social and economic classes. There, modern art and creativity takes over, dissolving age, race and even religious borders. Is Hong Kong really not spacious enough to accommodate this small artistic corner?

Many countries have already got policies in place so that they can securely but surely provide a healthy environment for

the nurture and development of their own street culture.

For instance, in Taipei, the licensing system for streets performers took effect on 27th April 2005, where they can perform in specified open locations like the Taipei City Mall, Zhongshan Hall, the Taipei Water Park, the Taipei Rapid Transit System, and 22 more.

Some countries even took a step further to facilitate the development of local culture. In the city of Edinburgh, a special festival is held once a year, usually from 2nd to 26th August, just to conjure street performers, serving as a unique channel for artists to showcase their talents.

Hong Kong can do the same with a licensing system and better planning. Like the hawkers licensing system, a similar arrangement should be implemented for street performers. They can be invited to an audition where professionals can assess if their performance context is appropriate to be kept on the streets. This can surely and effectively eliminate the number of misbehaved performers. The Hong Kong government should have the ability to control the street performers, given the fact that Hong Kong, and thus the area under jurisdiction, is small, and there are plenty of examples for us to learn from. If street performances are well-managed, it may even become a tourist attraction, like the annual Fringe festival in Edinburgh.

The government has the obligation to make Hong Kong a better place. The pedestrian area in Sai Yeung Choi Street South is worthy for keeping, and may even, under the right hands, develop as a new attraction, bringing bliss to Hong Kong. This is why we should not let one rotten apple spoil the barrel by closing down the whole area. Scrapping the pedestrian area should just be a decision made as the last resort.