

新聞評述比賽

初中組 | 中文

冠軍

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改善旺角紅色小巴違泊情況 須多管齊下

旺角通菜街和花園街一帶的紅色小巴，違泊情況一直為人詬病，令不少司機和途人叫苦連天。警方舉行全港執法行動，雖然派出多位警員和交通警到該處趕車和抄牌，但是下午即故態復萌。香港是一個人多擠迫的地方，交通十分繁忙，若有適當的措施去監管，便能夠令交通擠塞的情況改善。

首先，這是同行的競爭，例如：港鐵的線路越來越完善、的士的加價幅度偏高。小巴司機為了生計，在無計可施的情況之下，才選擇在這站頭接生意。雖然港鐵的線路越來越完善，但是乘客到達下車的地點後，可能仍須步行十多分鐘；的士能夠載乘客到達目的地，但價錢昂貴；小巴既比的士收費便宜，又能令乘客更接近目的地下車，並在一般的交通情況下，車程甚至比前兩者快，所以小巴絕對有一定的需求。

由於小巴擁有以上的競爭優勢，所以會出現站頭堆滿車龍的情況。其次，此站頭有幾十年的歷史，在沒有法律監管底下已經存在，所以這問題並非派警察到抄牌便可解決。再者，網上電召服務非常普及，在此強烈的競爭情況

下，只會令小巴站頭在更多地方出現。到時候，只會令交通更擠塞，空氣污染情況更嚴重，令人多擠迫的地方帶來滋擾，甚至影響社會秩序。

另外，可以從以下三方面處理及改善。第一，在位置方面，運輸署可以物色其他位置作為小巴站，令到不同目的地的小巴分配到不同的地方上落乘客。這樣能夠避免和減低大量小巴聚集在同一個地方接生意，而造成車龍或阻礙通道的情況。第二，在溝通方面，運輸署與小巴工會開會進行商討，而小巴司機多利用通訊器材聯絡，當小巴站有空間泊車，便通知小巴司機，否則小巴司機開車到不阻礙交通的位置等候。第三，在執法方面，交通部安排執法人員在繁忙時間進行交通疏導。

總括來說，紅色小巴車龍擠塞道路的問題十分嚴重，為了控制並改善情況，政府應該成立紅色小巴經營規管，讓小巴司機收入穩定之餘，亦需嚴厲執行道路管制，一方面令小巴司機不需擔心收入不穩定外，更能改善道路出現小巴車龍情況。

評判語錄

郭錦鴻：言簡意賅，理論充分，能扼要指出問題所在，並提出切實可行的建議。



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論新「過渡性居屋」計劃

10月10日左右，新任政府公佈施政報告，當中涉及提到要以「預製組合屋」暫緩現香港房屋供應緊張、居住資源不足的問題，也就是所謂的「貨櫃屋」。林鄭月娥表示公屋覓地和建造需時，難以滿足數量龐大的公屋申請者之需求，遂以過渡性房屋政策舒緩居住環境惡劣之人士的生活困難。

香港公屋供應長期供不應求，私家樓價格日日攀升，數以萬計的人面臨無處落腳的窘境。政府以過渡居屋頑抗房屋問題，本應大加讚賞，但細細一想，此說辭含糊的「貨櫃屋」究竟能否真正完美落實呢？

香港現本已有類似短期居屋的中轉房屋計劃，但中轉房屋普遍樓齡偏高，均是普通住戶不願選擇之「棄屋」，有些甚至要比臭名昭著的「劏房」還要惡劣。因此同樣作為短期居屋的「貨櫃屋」，首要考慮的就是居住環境的問題，要與現供應之公屋環境相匹配，同時租金廉價，住戶才有選擇的意義。不幸的是，現科學院實驗中的「創意斗室」在保證環境優質的同時，租金竟高達8000港元，與現市面普通租屋價格相差無幾。除非政府倒貼或降低品質，否則若以後的實際貨櫃房都已此標準設計，光租金一項就已花去收入中位數為12000的港人的工資8成，實在難以負擔。但倘若降低品質標準，又不免讓人聯想內地郊區空地上印著「x元一天」紅字的破舊貨櫃房。誠然，香港政府肯定不會以那種低下的標準建造房屋，但對於以「家庭住房」以及「改善居住環境」為目標的貨櫃房計劃來說，仍需大量地考量成本以及環境問題。

香港公屋的一個特色就是每當一棟新樓拔地而起，配套設施也會爭先恐後地佈滿四周，比如水電煤排污等基礎

設施，還有交通網絡等便民措施。這些配套往往一跟就是幾十年，聯合組成了香港完善的公共屋村系統。但對於僅為短期用途的貨櫃房而言，這些必要的配套設施真的能跟著完善落實嗎？貨櫃房選址目前有趨向於私人發展商的不發展土地，這些土地往往地址偏遠，原作耕地用途。若用來發展短期住房，就成本而言的確上佳。但既然建造住房了，交通網絡就得跟上，道路建設就得做上，水電煤等基礎民生更要落實。這些配套設施成本往往巨大，與貨櫃房原意「選址彈性、低成本、高建造效率」根本相悖。更甚的是，很多人選擇劏房的一個重要原因就是「位於城市之中，上班出行方便」，而選址偏遠的貨櫃房社區，交通必然不如城中劏房便利，若非環境特好，吸引力根本不足。發展貨櫃房社區，真的現實嗎？

再退一步，貨櫃房本身的質量，更是一個問題。傳統貨櫃多以木材或發泡膠作牆壁填充，火災風險巨大，壽命也嚴重不足，不出數年必定破爛。要符合住房標準，貨櫃的用料必須嚴謹構思，隔音、防風、防火等技術問題都要妥善解決。然而現在香港並沒有針對貨櫃制定針對性的安全條例，管理疏忽，各廠家更沒有生產上佳貨櫃的經驗，技術層面上就已是一道時間坎。若要落實貨櫃房計劃，必須先從法律層面下手，制定好安全條例，立法會的審核又是一道時間坎。這一拖再拖，怕不是要到猴年馬月才能實施。貨櫃房計劃的實施本身就困難重重。

房屋問題已是香港的心腹大患，公屋供應始終不足。但與此同時，全港有整整1200公頃的土地屬於荒廢狀態，若加以利用，房屋問題肯定迎刃而解。政府真正要做的，應該是盡可能加快公屋建造的速度，而不是不停研究杯水車薪的臨時住屋計劃。

評判語錄

陳智傑：文章充份地由質量、配套及安全問題論證「貨櫃屋」的弊端。然而，若能進一步「破」而後「立」，提出改善過渡性房屋的方向，效果更佳。

新聞評述比賽

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季軍

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研究重啟活化工廈審視放寬 低層用途助整合業權重建

葵涌美適工廈 3 死火警再令工廈安全問題惹關注。特首林鄭月娥昨主動提及，工廈隱患一直困擾本港，需以新思維處理工廈用途問題。她已要求發展局從 3 個方向審視，包括研究重新啟動上屆政府叫停的活化工廈政策，並在符合消防安全的前提下，研究放寬工廈低層單位作非工業用途等。

自 1980 年起，香港工業逐漸衰落，經濟結構由工業轉至商業，令空置工廈不斷增加。截至 2011 年底，工廈大廈的總面積約為 1,720 萬平方米，但製造業只需 660 萬平方米的樓面面積，換言之，用作工業相關用途的工廈不足四成。

然而香港現時面對土地不足問題，政府希望善用實用空置的工廈，所以於 2009 年提出活化工廈政策，透過免去業主申請活化所需的補地價，降低工廈在申請強制售賣令的門檻，由 90% 業權降至 80% 等措施，鼓勵業主申請，將偏舊、使用率偏低的工廠大廈進行整幢改裝，將消防等設備重置，令工廈可作其他用途。工廈騰出空間予商廈和其他用途，舒緩香港經濟及社會需要。

目前香港政府已經收到超過 230 宗活化申請，而大部份都要求將工廈改建為寫字樓或娛樂大廈。活化工廈政策亦能在不同方面協助香港社會發展。

第一，釋出更多工廈空間，能改善土地不足問題。政府於 2013 在施政報告中指出，透過活化工廈可提供的土地共約 68 萬平方米的樓面面積，大概為 544 個標準游泳池。根據政府的調查，工廈空置率由 2010 年的 6.7 百分比降至 2015 年的 5.0 百分比。由此可見，活化工廈能夠提供

更多樓面面積，改善香港土地不足問題。

第二，活化可減少違規情況。根據地政總署調查發現，包括新蒲崗中興工業大廈在內等既 11 幢工廈，共搜出 73 宗違規個案。有不少工廈業主因工廈租金便宜，同時希望節省費用，而違反規例，未經申報就將工廈轉為住宅或其他不合法用途。但工廈逃生、消防等設備本身已欠佳，一旦發生意外，租客會遇到大量問題。政府提倡活化工廈後，工廈持有者可向政府申請改，合法地將工廈轉為其他用途，租客將毋須再冒犯法危險將工廈用作違法用途。

第三，活化工廈又可以幫助年輕人創業。行政長官林鄭月娥亦稱，政府一年前已聯絡成功改裝整幢工廈的業主，將部分工廈樓層調至低於市價水平，租予文化藝術工作者或用作現時社會流行的「共享空間」，期望可舒緩現時文化藝術工作者的需求。例如火炭的活化後工廈租金每月每平方米 3-5 元，是乙級商廈的一半、甲級商廈的四分之一。而工廈經過活化之後，可以改頭換面成為多元化建築，例如青年協會有活化後的工廈出租給年青人，當中有不同工作同休憩場地，為青少年提供創業的地方。活化工廈的租金比市區舊樓租金價格更低廉，青少年可以自由發展，將新商廈設置為畫廊、餐飲店、電子器具店或個人工作間等。

活化工廈的延遲及欠缺的市民主動性已釀成不少傷亡，工廈業主卻依然遲遲不申請活化，政府亦不斷拖延活化工程。工廈活化已是一項現時對香港社會的逼切任務，假如業主及政府仍然不正面處理工廈問題，只會有更多的意外發生。政府在如此危殆的局面下卻不斷推延工程，難道還有比活化工廈更有效的政策來解決土地問題嗎？

評判語錄

柯達群：取材有現實意義。全文多個環節運用數據增加說服力。論述活化工廈優點時，能採用點列形式，環環相扣，思路清晰。但對政府的批評，最好用案例說明，否則減弱文章的客觀性。

新聞評述比賽

高中組 | 中文

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談垃圾徵費

近年，香港政府積極研究實行垃圾徵費方案，希望以此計劃來鼓勵香港人減少製造垃圾，推動環保，是次計劃引起社會各界的關注，當中有人支持，亦有人反對。支持的人認為方案有效減少香港的垃圾量，舒緩堆填區的壓力；而反對的人則認為方案的預期成效低，未必能有效減低垃圾量，反而加重了社會大眾的經濟壓力，尤其是基層人士。

垃圾徵費方案的內容

政府於 2017 年 3 月 20 日公佈的都市固體廢物收費的建議實施安排主要分為兩種收費模式，包括「按戶按袋」和「按重量」形式收費。當中的「按戶按袋」形式是指一般市民必須使用政府指定的垃圾袋棄置廢物，而垃圾袋有 9 種容量選擇，由 3 公升至 100 公升不等，價錢為 3 毫至 11 元。而工商界則是「按重量」形式收費，每公噸為 \$365，二如果廢物是運往市區及新界西北廢物轉運站，則需要付 \$395。

為了使此政策推行得更順暢，計劃實施時，政府會在全港約 4000 個銷售點設置垃圾袋自動售賣機，市民亦可於超市、便利店及郵局等購買指定垃圾袋。如果市民不用政府指定垃圾袋來棄置垃圾，將會被罰款 1,500 元，甚至遭受檢控。

方案所帶來的影響

針對市民而言，市民需要為此政策付出更多金錢，而且以後他們棄置垃圾的程序也變得繁複，為他們日常生活帶來麻煩和更重的經濟負擔。垃圾徵費計劃要求市民購買政府指定的垃圾袋以棄置垃圾，儘管

政府提出在許多地方亦會設立垃圾袋售賣點，但對於一些工作忙碌的香港人，甚至是一些知識水平較低的人士，他們可能缺乏時間或知識去理解政府這個方案和購買那些垃圾袋，因而容易以一些不合資格的垃圾袋棄置垃圾，誤墮法網。依照政府提出的方案，三人家庭每月支付約 30 至 50 元，這些金額看似微不足道，但對於一些基層家庭每月只有數千元的收入，扣除了房租後，他們的金錢以所剩無幾，如果要他們再支付這些金額，這將會加重他們的生活負擔，為他們帶來更大的生活壓力。

針對環保意識而言，垃圾徵費有助鼓勵市民減少棄置垃圾，培養市民減廢意識，有助環保人士推廣環保意識予社會大眾。垃圾徵費的推出，有助以經濟誘因吸引市民減少棄置垃圾，轉移將垃圾進行分類，投放予不同的資源回收箱內，進行回收。環保人士亦可借此機會教導市民如何進行環保，使他們能減少垃圾的產生，繼而為他們減輕了昂貴的垃圾費支出。因而在政府政策和環保人士的配合下，環保人士能更易地向社會大眾推廣環保意識，有助將香港建設為一個環保城市。

方案的利與弊

任何一個方案的設立也會為社會帶來不同的影響，當中必定包括好處和壞處，但究竟這個方案所帶來的影響是弊大於利抑或利大於弊呢？

首先，這個方案無疑在某程度上能減少香港垃圾的棄置量，達致源頭減廢，但垃圾徵費細節有執法漏洞，可能與政府本來的政策原意相違背。現時全港很多物業仍是單幢樓，以屋邨或屋苑的形式存在，並由物業管理公司管理，新的垃圾徵費計劃方案會將攤分垃圾收費的責任落在物業管理公司身上，變相由所有業主同時攤分垃圾費，失去了原本希望以經濟誘因的方式去鼓勵市民源頭減廢的效果。再者，徵費的同時亦代表著減廢，鼓勵回收和再用，但是香港的回收設施和教育並不足夠，回收業的發展更是十分緩慢，市民可能會為逃避繳交垃圾費而非法棄置垃圾，當中的鄉郊非法棄置問題更是難以去處理。建基於此，香港如何能成為一個環保城市呢？對於此，我認為政府可以將徵費所得的收益用來補貼香港回收業的發展和進行更多環保教育，這不但可以促進香港回收業的發展，更能從根本去改變市民的環保意識，使他們懂得為自己製造的垃圾負責，日後即使沒有這個徵費計劃，市民也會自動自覺進行廢物分類和源頭減廢。

其次，以經濟誘因去鼓勵市民進行源頭減廢確是會令市民減少製造家居廢物，例如減少廚餘，和逼使他們將家裏的廢物分類以投進不同的回收箱來減少佔用垃圾袋的位置，從而能夠減少經濟支出，而社會亦因而能夠處理更少的廢物，有助解決現時本港堆填區即將飽和的問題。但是香港生活節奏急促，大部份市民也都外出用膳，而亦有資料顯示現時堆填區內最大的廢物棄置量是來自食肆的廚餘，

而非家庭。因而垃圾徵費計劃的預其成效可能較低，市民並不會因此計劃而減少浪費食物，反而是令到食肆的支出增加，即使食肆將費用轉嫁給食客，但市民亦不會因而感受到徵費所帶來的經濟壓力，不會因而減少浪費食物，繼而不能達致源頭減廢的效果。對於次，唯一的解決方法仍是要從根本去改變市民的環保意識，政府可以從學校和社區中加強環保教育，而食肆亦可張貼一些環保宣傳海報和設立一些獎勵去鼓勵市民惜食，從而令到他們減少廚餘的產生。

此外，垃圾徵費的法定金額仍是有討論的空間。有人認為徵費金額並不能過低，否則便失去了以經濟誘因去鼓勵市民減廢的原意。故此我建議政府仍要為基層市民提供資助，因為要他們每個月也要多支出幾十元，這將會對他們本來已經不足夠的生活費造成更大的負擔。我認為政府可以繼續維持這個收費金額，但可能每月也為基層市民免費提供幾個特定容量的徵費膠袋，鼓勵他們也減少製造垃圾，但如果他們的垃圾量超過這些膠袋所能承載時便要自行出資購買政府的徵費膠袋以棄置垃圾。這一方面可減輕他們的經濟負擔，亦可鼓勵他們進行源頭減廢，顧及社會各階層的需要。

我認為這個方案在實際執行和膠袋費金額方面仍可有商討的空間。我認為政府應平衡各方的利益，儘量找出一個平衡點，並以津貼的形式去補貼在這政策推行時最受影響的持份者，從而使這政策能順利推行，並能成功達到其預期成效－提升市民的環保意識，減少製造垃圾。



評判語錄

陳景祥：分析全面，也有提出具體建議，不俗。

新聞評述比賽

高中組 | 中文

亞軍

鄭小曼

順德聯誼總會鄭裕彤中學

共享單車帶來的是利多於弊，還是弊多於利？

共享單車的普及

近期，不斷報導有關共享單車被隨意停泊、毀壞或丟棄的個案，嚴重阻礙公共空間的出入。可見，共享經濟開始在港興起，不僅僅是隨處可見的共享單車，網上的共享平台，還有共享辦公室，然而這些都是顯示和考驗當地的公民素質，其管理模式過分疏忽，便會引起上述的情況。「共享經濟」是指共用人力與資源的社會運作方式，人們將自己擁有的資源「有償」租借給他人，提升整個社會資源的使用效率，其定義主要包括：一、以租賃形式達到充分利用該物品並減少閒置的狀態，二、以科技減少交易成本使更多人能夠共享，擴大租賃市場。共享單車不僅能推動環保及健康活動，亦讓市民享有多元的生活模式，推動以單車代步的社會風氣。香港首間共享單車公司 GoBee.Bike 於今年 4 月起投入服務，租車據點包括將軍澳、坑口、東涌、屯門等地區，用戶只要利用手機程式租用及歸還單車，手續簡單且快捷。單車主要停在公共泊位。推出後幾天，便已經陸續在各地出現單車毀壞，損壞的情況。

單車代步的社會風氣

首先，香港引入新穎的共享單車模式，仿效外國的共享單車模式，其目的以推動單車代步的社會風氣為主。同時，亦為市民帶來更多元的生活模式，市民可用的交通工具亦多了一項選擇。尤其是在早上特別多人的繁忙時間裡，大多人都排隊等候使用交通工具，如地鐵和小巴，但共享單車的引入，為他們帶來了新的一種自行的交通工具，他們快速地租借附近的單車，然後把單車泊在附近的公共空間。這種「周街租、周街泊」使用模式，能讓共享單車的使用範圍更為貼近市民的生活圈，逐漸讓共享單車的範圍變得更为普遍和普及。此外，市民在租用單車的時候有更多的選擇，市民可以不用特意走去傳統的租用單車店舖，浪費車錢和時間。相反，他們可以就近租用附近的共享單車，而當使用單車的方便程度上升時，亦能提升市民是用單車的意欲，有效地推動單車代步的社會風氣。

步行與健康兼顧

此外，踩單車不僅僅是健康有益的運動，還是環保的代步工具。香港市民在餘閒時間裏，亦會以踩單

車為消閑運動，減壓身心，深受市民歡迎。而且有別於其他單車出租公司，共享單車的租還地點和時間均相對自由，如市民只是需要使用幾分鐘左右，共享單車便不失為一個好的選擇，既方便又廉宜。隨着市民的使用次數增加，現今在街道上，共享單車可謂是十分普遍，人們亦有更多的交通工具選擇，除了小巴、巴士、的士外，市民亦可考慮選擇租用共享單車回家，不僅能達到減排的效用，亦能順便做運動，提升市民的身心健康，可謂一舉兩得。

就以上兩點來看，共享單車似乎能為環境和市民的日常生活帶來不少的方便和好處，其實，共享單車亦為市民的日常生活和環境空間帶來了不少的麻煩，並為單車出租公司帶來了不少的競爭。面對共享單車帶來的改變，究竟是利多於弊，還是弊多於利？

不具備完善的環境

第一，香港的條件不足以應付共享單車對環境的需求。現今，在街道上的共享單車的確是隨處可見，從好的方面來看，共享單車更為接近市民的生活圈，方便市民隨時租用；從壞的方面來看，此類現象卻是能造成阻街的問題，嚴重影響道路使用情況。然而，共享單車模式在外國已運行多年，惟來到香港後卻遇上種種問題。當中主要成因是因為香港的共享單車並沒有指定的停泊地點和足夠的泊位，而香港使用者在租用共享單車後，究竟是隨意停泊，還是停泊在公共泊位空間？這個問題亦牽連到香港在城市規劃方面欠缺「單車友善城市」所需條件，包括單車徑和單車泊位的配套不足及空間有限，顯然而見，在單車工具充足的情況底下，卻不完全

具備良好的使用單車環境，例如單車徑連接性不足限制了活動範圍、單車難以登上公共交通工具、使用馬路風險高等，種種困難均會削減市民使用單車的意欲和帶來不必要的麻煩。有人提到共享單車公司佔用公共泊位，亦引起有權運用這公共設施的持份者反對。共享單車以公共泊位作商業用途，阻礙居民免費停泊單車，做法並不恰當，一旦政府繼續疏於監管，單車阻街的情況恐將加劇。現時，香港不少公共單車泊位早已為共享單車所佔據，影響市民的生活之餘，亦讓市民的單車無處可立，損害了市民的利益，就如將軍澳海濱長廊、大圍車站的單車泊位車位早已為共享單車盤據。現今被共享單車佔據公共空間的情況已近猖狂，一但其他品牌的共享單車來港以後，可見單車違泊的問題將會更加嚴重，香港的公共空間亦將無法承載過多的共享單車。

阻礙道路使用情況

第二，共享單車的使用情況相當考驗公民質素。由於香港有別於台灣、英國倫敦、法國、日本等地，香港的共享單車沒有指定的停泊地點，公共泊位亦沒有監察系統，相對的措施亦未及完善，一但發生單車被偷、被破壞等事件時亦難以追蹤。從推行共享單車的數日後，便可以看出見單車被丟棄和破壞，種種的情況都顯示出市民的自律性和公民質素。其實，共享單車的亂象早已在內地便已率先顯然，先有毀車、偷車、廢車，和阻塞道路問題，亦有單車失修事件，香港近月亦有重演趨勢，如多部共享單車遭人扔進近體育

學院附近的城門河，更有全新單車被惡意破壞，還有共享單車掉落在大埔廣福邨對開的林村河內。此外，多部共享單車胡亂違泊在河邊的行人路段，而非單車徑，當然以上違泊情況亦在其他地方甚為普及，嚴重影響和阻礙行人路的使用情況。

行業之間的競爭

第三，共享單車為傳統租用單車公司帶來巨大的競爭力。隨着共享單車在港逐漸普遍，許多不同品牌的共享單車強勢攻港，雖然單車帶來的問題多多，但使用的熱潮仍未冷卻。首批 GoBee.Bike 的 400 架共享單車上周起於新界東投入服務，服務收費每半小時 5 元；另一新營辦商 locobike 近日正式投入服務，而且大打割喉價格戰，每半小時 \$3，按金 \$99，比 Gobee.bike 半小時 5 港元，按金 \$399 港元更低，為了取得市民的歡迎和使用，共享單車的威力一波比一波更為強勢，逼得租用單車公司無處可立。不少傳統單車舖已如臨大敵，如在大圍港鐵站對出的「亞運單車」，他們這一類的傳統單車租賃市場，除了要承擔巨額鋪租、還有員工的薪金，現時又要面對新的對手，嚴重減少他們的生意，對他們的經營情況造成憂慮。面對新對手的處境，共享單車能把借車、還車點設在公共泊位，用公共環境賺錢，與需租用鋪位、地方放置單車的公司截然不同，有公共地方經營牟利的事業，讓傳統租借單車公司大嘆不公平。如若共享單車的使用情況越來越普及，不排除傳統租用單車公司會逐漸沒落，逐漸被取代。

就以上共享單車所引發的影響，似乎處於弊多於利的情況。若只單憑現今香港的環境，仍不足以容納過多的共享單車存在，香港亦未能提供足夠和完善的單車配套，容易引發意外。但是，共享單車亦非洪水猛獸，既來之則安之，政府亦更應即時就現今的問題，作出合適的規管和改善，相信亦能便利市民，改造一個友好的單車使用環境。例如台北、東京政府委托企業提供共享單車服務，亦劃出專屬停泊處，有效避免單車隨處亂拍的問題，當局備受好評。政府大可參考這些地方的經驗，創造一個良好的環境以推動使用單車的社會風氣，讓共享單車有效地發揮其最大的效用。



評判語錄

曹虹：文章對於共享單車和共享經濟對本港的影響、利弊有深入分析，結語有自己的看法。

新聞評述比賽

高中組 | 中文

季軍

屈家禧

迦密主恩中學

國歌法陷阱滿佈難彰其效

近年，在香港足球隊比賽前，球場內不時出現部分球迷在國歌演奏時發出噓聲，甚至途中舉出不文手勢的情況。有見及此，部分建制派人士提出訂立《國歌法》的必要性，以懲罰不尊重國歌的市民，並鼓勵普羅大眾通過對國歌產生敬意而增加其國民身份認同和對國家的歸屬感；另一方面，部分非建制派人士質疑《國歌法》限制了言論自由，有違香港核心價值，也無法真正引起市民的愛國心。

在評論《國歌法》的利弊前，應先了解其目的和具體法規。第一條指出，《國歌法》是「為了維護國歌的尊嚴，規範國歌的奏唱、播放和使用，增強公民的國家觀念，弘揚愛國主義精神」，一方面在情感上增加中國公民的國民身份認同和對國家的歸屬感，另一方面在國家形象上強調國歌是國家代表，需要正式規範。主要針對國民的規條，有鼓勵國民在適宜的場合唱國歌；將國歌融入中小學教育；以及在港具爭議性的，對公共場合侮辱國歌的國民處以拘留及追究刑事責任。

本人認為，雖然香港是中國的一部分，在國旗和國徽相關法律上遵從中國，但訂立《國歌法》定會弊大於利。

《國歌法》中對公共場合侮辱國歌的國民的懲罰難以執行。首先，定義是一大難題。就公共場合而言，一些地方很難定義是否公共場合，如網絡上有一些有關為國歌改詞，或是將國歌進行混音的片段，而網絡是否公共場合有爭議性。更值得關注的是，條例中最重要的字詞侮辱更難定義。以前面提及的網絡片段為例，執法者不可能了解片段創作者的目的是為了博君一笑，諷刺國家以外的事物，如社會不公義，還是真正侮辱國家；當觀賞者在留言欄讚揚作品、收藏片段時，他們這些行為有否違法？又以日常為例，倘若一個市民在街上唱出經改詞的國歌，執法人員應否立刻逮捕他？由此可見，不了解對象的真正目的和什麼行為才算侮辱令法律難以執行。國歌不同國旗、國徽，後兩者均為有形物體，公眾對於破壞有形物體，如燃燒國旗一目了然，犯法界線清晰。相反，國歌乃無形物體，人人可頌，那就增加了市民無心之失的機會。

其次，執法方式和需要的人力難以決定。假設以上噓國歌、改詞等行為真的違法，執法或要花費大量時間和人力。以噓國歌為例，警方在球場何處站崗、在何時逮捕噓國歌的人、如何確保不會誤逮或造成混亂等，成為了難題，且警方不可能浪費警力在執行刑罰較低、難以定義犯法的法律上；改詞的執法方法雖然較簡單，可以派警員根據 IP 地址找到犯法者的住

址，逮捕犯法者，但又引來極大的困難和爭議：警員不可能浪費大量時間人力在掀起犯法者的住址並上門逮捕、難以確定當事人是否真的作出侮辱國歌行為。更重要的是，警方動輒上門逮捕的行為或會引起警權濫用的爭議。

部分建制派人士覺得，《國歌法》有助緩解中港矛盾，因為成立法律後，意圖侮辱國歌的市民因其刑罰的阻嚇性而不敢如此做，令這種煽動仇視中國的行為減少，再加上法律教育尊重國歌的必要性，可以增加港人的國民身份認同和對國家的歸屬感，減少仇視。然而，中港矛盾不少源於港人與中央政府的價值觀衝突，例如港人重視核心價值之一——言論自由，但中央政府不時作出打擊、輕視言論自由的行為，例如通過實名制、懲罰散播謠言者、過濾敏感資訊等方式收緊網絡言論；限制異見人士的人身自由；不少港人渴望高度自治，但近年中央政府作出各種港人認為干預香港管制的行為，或是暗示干預香港管制，如欽點林鄭月娥為現任行政長官；最近習近平在十九大提出「牢牢掌握對港全面管制權」。這些反差都令港人覺得中央政府不尊重港人固有的價值觀，引起他們的不滿，而政府往往代表國家，與國家

有緊密的關係，因此港人在反對中央政府時，有時會以不認同國家的形式進行，而噓國歌正是其中一個例子。打擊違法者和教育市民尊重國歌未能針對價值觀衝突，只會令中港矛盾持續，甚至因為法律打擊市民的言論自由，有違港人價值觀而進一步加劇。

我們固然無法同意激進、不尊重國家的行為，但以灰色地帶極多的法律制衡這種行為，只會因小失大，為香港市民帶來恐懼和對中央政府進一步的不信任，難以解決中港矛盾，更難提升港人的國民身份認同和對國家的歸屬感。始終，愛國是情感上激發的真切激情、忠誠，而非強行捏造、強行套在人身上的軀殼。



評判語錄

沈旭暉：指出了有關法律，雖然立意良好，無可厚非，但執行困難，容易引起混亂和反彈。

Winning Articles of News Commentary Competition

Junior | English Section

Champion

Lau Ching Yu
St. Stephen's College

Bus crash reveals drivers' long working hours

This news is about a serious traffic accident in Sham Shui Po in which three people were killed and thirty people were injured. The driver was then found out to be working for over thirteen hours a day before the crash.

The Citybus head of operations explained that their drivers' driving time is around eight hours and they usually work ten hours a day on average. Citybus General Union states that it is common for drivers to work overtime as their wages are very low. However, should bus drivers use their health as an exchange for money? I totally disagree with that and believe that their salaries and working hours should be reviewed.

Firstly, I think the government should regulate the salary of bus drivers. The salary is only about HK\$15,000 a month for drivers, which is not enough for them to support their families. According to the government announcement, in 2015, the poverty line for a household of three people was \$14,000. An income of HK\$15,000 means that the drivers are struggling near the poverty line. It is common for drivers to work overtime in order to seek for more money. However, if they work long hours, they would become less cautious in driving due to fatigue. Therefore, the bus company should pay them higher salary so as to ensure they can sustain a living without having to work overtime. A government-mandated wage-floor to be set for franchised bus companies is recommended.

Secondly, the government should take an active part in reviewing the bus driver's working hours. When the drivers often work overtime and on shift, they do not have

enough sleep and energy to work. This will in turn affect drivers' performance at work and put passengers' safety at risk. Studies have shown that driving while fatigued increases a driver's risk of involvement in a crash or near-crash by nearly four times. Since the health and cautiousness of the drivers are very crucial to road safety, the government should set laws to cap the current bus driver work hours of fourteen hours per day to a maximum of ten.

Thirdly, the Transport Department should work together with the bus company to implement some measures to ensure that the drivers are up to standard. Bus drivers should be given regular health check-ups and mental health assessments to make sure they are fit for work. Also, regular driving lessons and assessments should be given half-yearly to keep up their driving skills. These measurements can help ensure the passengers' safety.

Some people may think that this is purely an accident caused by the fatigue and carelessness of the driver concerned. However, when you understand the underlying causes accounting for the fatigue of the driver, you can see that it was due to the long working hours and poor compensation to the bus drivers.

In conclusion, this tragic accident reveals the unhealthy working conditions of the bus industry. The government should regulate the drivers' salaries and review their working hours, while the bus company should ensure the professional skills and good health of their drivers to uphold operational safety.

Judge's Comment

Prof. Linda Chelan Li:

Natural style of writing. Good English. Advanced an argument with data and analysis, whilst considers other alternative views.

Hong Kong legislator prepares law to allow girl to donate part of her liver to save her mother

In April, there was a patient named Tang Kwai Sze whose hepatitis has progressed to acute liver failure and desperately needed an immediate liver transplant. Her life would definitely be at stake if there was not a suitable liver for her in a couple of days. Without a second thought, her daughter, Michelle, would like to donate her liver to save her mother. However, Michelle was 3 months shy of the legal age of donation. At the very last minute, a kind-hearted young lady named Cheng donated part of her liver to save Tang. The incident has led the government to consider amending the law to lower the legal age of organ donation in the hope to enable anyone like Michelle to save the life of loved one. At last, the draft of the new law was not submitted to the Legislative Council. The incident has intensely aroused public interests and discussions. Is it really a good idea to lower the legal age of organ donation to 17?

According to the Human Organ Transplant Ordinance section 5D, organ transplant between living person can only be carried out when 'the donor concerned has reached the age of 18 years. The Ordinance was laid to protect children from the consequences of any unintellectual decision. The doctors were against the idea of lowering the legal age of organ donation. According to Professor Lo Chung-Mau, the Hong Kong's top liver transplant expert, suggested there should be a 'deadline' for everything. If the government changed the legal age of donation to 17, what would happen if there is another

case of a 16 years old girl who wants to save her mother by donating her own organ?

From my perspective, simply lowering the legal age of donation cannot provide a solution to the problem. The public, as well as the government, have gone to a deviated discussion. In fact, the government only focuses on how to get the patient's daughter to donate her liver legally, but not dealing with the shortage of organs donated from dead bodies. If there were more organs donated, patients would not have to receive organs from a living person. Even if the government succeeds to lower the legal age of donation to 17 and situation like that of Michelle can be taken care of, there are still thousands of patients and their families facing the same adversity i.e. a long waiting list of organ transplantation. Thus, lowering the legal age of donation just do not help resolve the problem of too few organ donor for too many recipient patient.

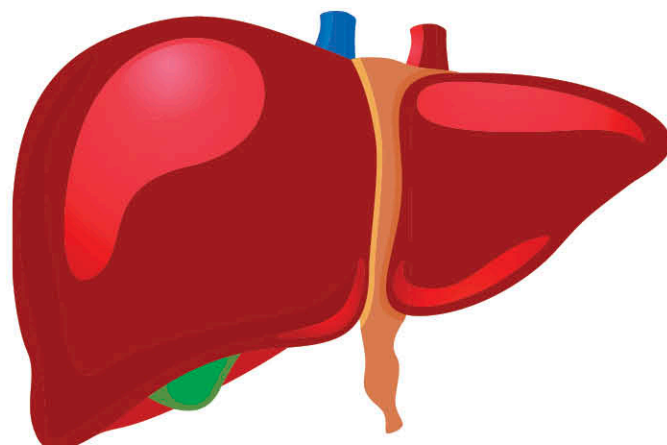
As the case of amending the law has not been submitted, everything is now back to normal, it is time for us to we shift our focus to examine the present status on organ transplantation in Hong Kong. According to the data from the Census and Statistics department, the percentage of organ donation of Hong Kong is extremely low when compare with other countries in Europe. The longest waiting time for patients in Hong Kong to receive an organ can reach as many as 32 years. On

the average, patients have to wait for at least 1-2 years. However, it seems nothing much has been done to reverse the situation. Everyone has forgotten the patients and their needs. Have people ever thought of similar tragic scenario happening to them or their families? What could we do?

In the first place, I suggest the government pay more effort and put in more resources in promoting the idea of organ donation. For instance, they can enhance education to the general public about the benefits of donating organ to save lives. Sharing the stories of the recipients and related activities could be organized for teenagers and adults to learn more about the benefits of organ donations. Advertisements such as short videos and leaflets can also be made so that information about organ donation can reach every corner of the city. The culture of organ donation is surely to be encouraged.

Secondly, the government can consider following the Opt-out policy of European countries. If Hong Kong enforced the Opt-out policy, which means that only those who are not willing to donate have to register, the number of organs being donated would definitely increase. One of the countries taking the Opt-out policy, Spain, is a successful example. The average waiting time for most of the organ transplant cases do not exceed 6 months. The donation rate of Spain is 39.7% which is a really adorable percentage. Opt-out policy is really an effective policy for organ donations.

Although taking the Opt-out policy may not be enforced in the foreseeable future, the public can still give a helping hand by supporting the organ donation scheme. Actually, the public can all take part in the scheme by indicating their wish to donate organ after death. We can spread love by signing up in the Centralised Organ Donation Register (CODR). The Tang's case has reminded us of the adversity that the patients and their families are facing. By taking part in the scheme, the public can definitely help the patients who are struggling in darkness.



Judge's Comment

Prof. Linda Chelan Li:

Very sound arguments with bright ideas. Language good, though a few minor errors.

Live-in rule forces domestic workers to be on call 24 hours a day, court hears

This news is about a Filipino domestic worker, Nancy Almorin Lubiano, challenging the mandatory “live-in” rule imposed by the director of immigration in 2003, in a landmark judicial review at the high court. The live-in rule is implemented through standard employment contracts when the domestic workers applied for visas. Anyone breaking the rule faces administrative sanctions in future applications for visas or employment, as well as criminal prosecution. Paul Shieh Wang-tai SC, Lubiano’s lawyer, argued that the rule heightened the risks of infringing the domestic worker’s rights.

I disagree with the live-in rule. I think the government should not stipulate domestic workers to reside with their employers because this will lead to potential abuse of domestic worker’s rights.

Firstly, we should not interfere with the domestic workers’ personal lives outside of the employment. The domestic workers only come here for work, just like any other jobs, the employment should focus on work related matters about the purpose of their stay or what they intend to do instead of stipulating where they sleep or live as a condition of staying in Hong Kong.

Secondly, there is a tendency for excessive overtime due to the lack of clear separation between the place of work and rest. Domestic workers find it difficult to reject

any employers’ request which falls outside of working hours, forcing them to be literally on standby 24 hours a day. The findings cited by Shieh revealed that an average of 71.4 working hours per week, with more than one in three respondents deprived of their weekly 24-hour rest day as required by law. This will not only affect the quality of work of the domestic workers, but also jeopardise the employment relationship.

Lastly, domestic workers will be subject to a lack of privacy and poor living condition. A recent survey by the human rights organization Justice Centre indicated that about 40 percent of the domestic workers were deprived of independent rooms, some of them exposed to the rest of the household while sleeping in corridor, kitchens and even in toilets. This is commonly seen in Hong Kong with small households in a closely packed community. If either the employee or employer has a choice in the live-in rules, they may both be benefited from the crowded living situation.

As a conclusion, I strongly believe that domestic workers should be given a choice to whether or not to live in with their employers, to protect their rights from suffering from interference of personal lives, minimum segregation of work and rest and lack of privacy.

Judge’s Comment

Prof. Linda Chelan Li:

Fluent language and natural style. But there is no consideration of the other sides of the argument

Should Hong Kong students remain mouth shut about Hong Kong independence?

At the beginning of the new scholastic year, pro-independence banners were found in different university campus. The principal of one of the involved universities, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, stated the posters were violation of the Basic Law and requested the CUHK Student Council to take them off. However, the Council disagreed with the principal's stance and refused to do so. On the 14th of August, 2016, the spokesman of the Education Bureau in Hong Kong stated that the discussion of Hong Kong independence should be prohibited at schools. This brings up the question again: Should discussion of independence be allowed at school campus?

Universities in Hong Kong are known for their academic freedom. The Democracy Wall is one of the platforms for students and teaching staff to express their ideas and arouse public interests toward a certain issue. From the students' point of view, they are given the rights to promote their ideas, including political stances at the campus. Moreover, the Student Council is in charge of the daily management of the Democracy Wall. The executives of the school have no rights to interfere with the content posted on the Wall. As a result, the students didn't remove the poster, which is the requirement of the principal. Thus, they treat the principal's action as suppression of freedom of speech, or even political persecution.

However, Hong Kong independence is an illegal idea in accordance to the Basic Law. It has been clearly stated that Hong Kong is an inalienable part of China. Promoting Hong Kong independence can actually be subject to violation of the Crimes Ordinance. Furthermore, the school has been receiving pressure and criticism from

the public regarding to the consistent pro-independence discussion at campus. The administrative authority of the school hopes to bring an end to the issue. After this incident which has aroused much controversy, it feels the urge to avoid further spread of Hong Kong independence. Therefore, the principal demanded the Council to tear off the posters and reaffirm the School's stance.

The students and administration of the school are definitely poles apart. It is important to deal with conflicts with rational discussion, as what the Chief Executive has been promoting. In order to come up with an effective solution, the two sides should put aside their prejudice and try to understand each other's concerns. Firstly, the school should understand that extremes meet. Strictly ban every single word of independence is against and disrespecting the students' will. This may arouse even more concerns and dissatisfaction in society. Hence, discussion and promotion should be allowed at university campus. On the other hand, students should understand that rights and duties coexist. It is stated that students are not allowed to post any comments insulting any targets. The fact that Hong Kong is a part of China does not change. They should pay respect to the supporters of China and China itself no matter how much they dislike them. In this case, the Student Council should take the posters off or both the Council and the person in charge may face a criminal prosecution.

There is no single solution every problem. When the two sides are fighting like cats and dog, they should learn to consider the needs of the both sides. Sometimes, concession is needed. By opening up our hearts to listen, together we can reduce conflicts and build a more harmonious society.

Judge's Comment

Prof. Linda Chelan Li:

Addressed arguments on both sides and attempted an analysis. Good language, though a bit stiff. Topic theme does not fully align with content.

Opting out the opt-in system

In recent years, organ donation has become the spotlight of media and the public. Headlines of patients passing away before getting organ transplant has sparked off a heat discussion on increasing the organ donation rate. Amid the turbulence, the former Secretary for Food and Health Dr. Ko Wing-Man thus initiated the debate on replacing the current Opt-in Organ Donation System with the Opt-out Organ Donation System.

For the last 20 years, the government's stance on promoting organ donation was quite conservative. Their main focus was to create a more open atmosphere towards organ donation. Nonetheless, Hong Kong's organ donation rate is still currently ranked among the lowest in the world with only 5.8 in every million people in Hong Kong donated in 2015. I believe that Opt-out system might be a way out considering the ineffectiveness of the current policy.

The Opt-out system is a scheme where people's consent to donate their organs after their death is presumed unless they have explicitly said otherwise. Under the current opt-in system, even the person has shown the willingness to donate through registration, the medical professionals still have to get the consent from their relatives. Unfortunately, due to the traditional belief of 'desecrating a corpse', not many of them follow the choice of their beloved one. Often, people who are more liberal and willing to accept the idea of organ donation still find it difficult to persuade their families. Therefore, even though they had indicated their willingness, the relatives

will still strongly oppose it. With the Opt-out system, the choice of individuals will be respected without their family's intervene.

Considering the low donation rate, is it really due to the lack of empathy of Hong Kong people? According to a survey conducted by the Hong Kong Ideas Centre, 43% of the interviewees are willing to donate their organs, while only 13% of them have registered on the Centralized Organ Donation. This great disparity indicates the reluctance of citizens to go through the registration process. It might be a simple process in the eye of the government, but it still become a barrier of voluntary registration. Changing into the Opt-Out System could sweep off this barrier in between. A more fundamental question is that why should the organ donors bear more cost of opting-in instead of letting the others put a bit more effort to opt-out? In our current informed consent system, insufficient consideration is given to the unexpressed wishes of people who are willing to donate.

What I see from the system is the future of an effective organ donation scheme which will ultimately ease the problem of organ shortage. How effective could it be? The story of Spain shows us the possibility of a significant increase in organ donation rate. After practicing the system for years, Spain has the highest donation rate of 39.7 donors pmp among the world. For kidney, liver, heart and lung, the waiting time for transplantation is at most half the time of Hong Kong.

Nonetheless, the success could not be manipulated simply by blindly copying the concept of Opt-Out system. This controversial policy needs to be handled delicately. An interesting point to note is that not every country had a drastic increase after implementing the system. So what makes the difference?

The success of Spain is based on establishing a dedicated authority. Spain formed the National Transplant Organization to coordinate the country's organ donation and transplantation activities. Looking back at Hong Kong, we do not have any specific department handling this issue yet. There are only 9 Organ Transplant Coordinators responsible for organ donation in 41 public hospitals and there isn't any formal communication system among them. An authority must be established in order to better coordinate and support the long-term run of the scheme.

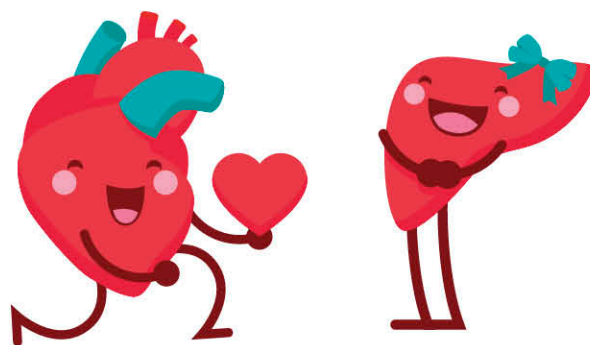
Meanwhile, the failure of Singapore teaches us that public education still holds a crucial position as a complementary element for Opt-out system. As it is a must to make the opt-out process easy, a wave of opting out might occur due to the insufficient understanding towards organ donation. Singapore has implemented the Opt-out system for years but its organ donation rate still remains low. One of the causes is the lack of public awareness which many citizens do not realize the

urgency of donating organs. As a result, many citizens withdrew from the system. Hong Kong must learn from that and strive for a friendly atmosphere for legislation. At the end of the day, the ultimate purpose of the Opt-out system is forming a culture of organ donation in replacement of the traditional set of value.

I believe that with appropriate preparation work and the consent of the public, the presumed consent system could be a resolution in saving numerous lives of patients waiting for organ transplant.

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Judge's Comment

Dr. Fairbrother, Gregory Paul:

This is an excellent essay, with a good set-up of the main argument and position, including with relevant background. The topic is significant but less popularly discussed. The position is stated very clearly. There is very good use of data and evidence to support points. There is a very nuanced understanding of the issue, and the essay demonstrates thoughtfulness. There is a good international comparative perspective to offer alternative solutions. There is very skillful analysis of acknowledging the drawbacks of solutions proposed and offering further refined solutions.

Should we use container houses to contain our housing needs?

Housing problems isn't a recent issue in Hong Kong. Governments over the years have come up with many plans to deal with this problem, but it seems that the problem has yet to be solved. Recently, the Hong Kong Council of Social Services (HKCSS) has proposed a new plan, which is to build container houses, as a short-term solution for the housing problems.

The chief executive of HKCSS, Chua Hoi-wai told a radio program that the container houses they are planning to build will be transformed from shipping containers. They will be between 160 to 320 square feet in size and can accommodate 2 to 5 people. These flats would be considered to be given out to those on the waiting list and single people as a priority. Some developers have even offered a site for development of these houses and will only charge a rent of HK\$1. This proposal has swirled up a lot of discussion in the public, with some saying it would be useful in relieving housing demands and some others concerning the environmental issues. There has been controversies as to whether container houses should be built. Considering the current situation of Hong Kong, I think we should build container houses in Hong Kong because of the urgency and its feasibility.

Firstly, Hong Kong is in dire need for more houses. Up until June 2017, there has been 270 thousand people applying for public housing. Each applicant has to wait for an average of 4.7 years before they could get a house. The government has only planned to build 70,700 housing flats in the coming 5 years, which is far less than the

demand in housing. While these applicants are waiting for their turn, they would have to live in very small houses, subdivided flats, or cage houses, which are the only places they could afford. Not only do these areas have poor hygiene, they are also very dangerous and could lead to fatal accidents, as seen from previous cases. This situations shows how urgent we need to supply new housing. Land in Hong Kong is scarce, but a lot of flats are needed. Container houses can be considered a solution since it could provide a large number of houses in a short period of time. It is estimated that 100 thousand 160-square feet houses can be built with 85 hectares of land. In Hong Kong, we have 1200 hectares of brown field left unused. With reference to similar constructions in other countries, it only took four weeks to build a 220-room hotel in England using the technique of modular building. Using this example for estimation, we can see that it wouldn't take more than a few months for the first container houses to be put into use. This method can bring upon a large number of houses in a short time and can thus temporarily ease the housing problems in Hong Kong.

Secondly, container houses have many advantages over other solutions, such as building long-term housing flats or letting people to continue living in subdivided flats. It is cheap to build container houses. Compared to traditional long-term housing, which uses materials such as cement and tiles for construction, container houses uses old ship containers. Also, considering the site of construction, which are mainly short-term contracts, building container houses also has an advantage over

traditional housing. It is easy to move container houses around, since they are like building blocks stacked together. When the contract term is over, the container houses can be easily moved to another site. However, once a traditional building is built, it cannot be moved. This shows how container houses have an advantage over traditional housing in solving short-term housing problems. Also, all of these container houses have standardized building methods. This means all flats would have a complete structure with rigid walls. As compared to subdivided flats, which are mostly built by removing walls of the original structure, container houses are much safer. Facing the current desperate situation of Hong Kong, we have to build a large amount of safe houses that are safe for people to live in, it is clear that container houses have the most advantages over other options.

However, some people might think that container houses are unsafe and would cause dangers such as fires. Firstly, the safety on container houses are quite high. Before houses can be used for living, they have to fulfill the requirements of the Building Ordinance, which sets a standard for sound, wind and fire-proofing. Container houses that will finally be used for living would have passed these standards and a certain quality will be guaranteed. There has been many successful cases of using container houses in other countries, such as Keetwonen

in Amsterdam and Ladywell Pop-up Village in London. Both places have well-developed container houses that provide a shelter for those in need. These examples show that the concept of using container houses is feasible. Some people might also be concerned of the safety of the residents of these houses, such as getting a heat stroke during the hot summer. This problem can be solved by making minor adjustments to the design of the house, such as installing air-conditioners or fans, to adapt to the climate in Hong Kong.

Although building container houses is a feasible plan to temporarily provide more housing flats, we should not rely on it to solve housing problems in the long run. Apart from building container houses, the government has to also solve the roots of the problem: the lack of housing spaces and the high housing prices. The government has find land for permanent housing as well as set up policies to lower housing prices. If not, the problem will never be truly solved.

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Judge's Comment

Dr. Fairbrother, Gregory Paul:

The problem statement of this essay is clear from the outset: The housing problem in Hong Kong, but could be a bit more precise, as in "Housing Shortage Problem." There is an appropriate set-up and background of the position taken in the essay. There is a logically and clearly organized argument. This is a significant issue of public concern. There is a good international comparative perspective and evidence to support position. There is good application of evidence to the proposed solution. The essay demonstrates strong knowledge of the topic. The topic is significant but not overly popular. The essay presents counter-arguments and then rebuts them with supporting evidence. There are some minor organizational issues.

The tarnished tomorrow — The Rohingya Crisis

Hungry and exhausted, kids carried their aged parents to cross dangerous waters and slippery slopes. Young women mourned for the cold tiny bodies lying in their arms. Overwhelming fear and uncertainties lie in their eyes. Unfortunately, the above description is not taken from a movie excerpt.

The Rohingya is an ethnic group that believes in Muslim. They have lived for centuries in the majority Buddhist Myanmar and are often described as "the world's most persecuted minority". The Rohingya are being deliberately deprived of basic rights and welfare. For instance, they cannot vote, and limits are placed to stop them from entering certain professions like medicine, law or running for office.

Conflicts between the Myanmar and Rohingya are incessant and waves of violence have been occurring for years. They have been facing persecution at the hands of Myanmar's military since the late 1940s. After the killings of nine border police in October 2016, troops started pouring into villages in Rakhine State, where most Rohingya lives. The government put the blame on fighters from an armed Rohingya group. Government troops were accused of an array of human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killing, rape, and arson – allegations that the government denied. It is depressing to see how a strong authority is trying so hard to eliminate a weak community. Instead of starting investigations to detain the corresponding armed group. The Myanmar government has a heart of stone. It opts for abusing the innocent

and carrying out ethnic cleansing, which gives an eerie reminiscent of the Nazi German.

There are a lot of reasons behind the causes of the Rohingya crisis and it is difficult to determine who is right or wrong. In light of the inflammatory situation, three parties are responsible for worsening the survival of Rohingya in general. Firstly, the world is feeble and indifferent of what has been endured by the Rohingya. Though a special Myanmar government committee was appointed to investigate the ongoing violence in Rakhine state, the report issued in January claimed to have found no evidence to support assertions of genocide against the Rohingya, nor to backup widespread rape allegations. This clearly demonstrates that countries are not exerting enough pressure to the Myanmar authority. This issue has already been discussed in the UN Security Council for a long period of time. However, countries are just talking the talk but not walking the walk. The lack of a pragmatic plan and immediate actions lead to a more violent ethnic cleansing. Moreover, close door meetings of the UN Security Council make it impossible for concerned groups to know whether signs of progress are made regarding the issue. Nonetheless, the council can act only if all five of its permanent members agree, and two of those members, Russia and China, are understood to be backing Myanmar's government. In such case, who will expect the United Nation, a generally acknowledged mediator of international affairs, could help solving the Rohingya crisis?

Secondly, the human rights icon of Myanmar remains reluctant to stand up for the suppressed, stirring up uncertainties for the Rohingya's future. What is more disappointing than to see the silence of our beloved Goddess of Democracy – Aung San Suu Kyi? Indeed, she made speeches regarding the chaos. Yet, she spoke no more than covering up the crime perpetrated by the military. After all, Ms. Suu Kyi is just a chess piece for the Myanmar government to bargain with the Western countries. She constitutionally does not control the army or police. Even though she could not stop the military operation in Rakhine, it is undeniable that she is Myanmar's last and best hope for the Rohingya. The ministries that she controls and officials she directly employs are burying the ugly truth for the Myanmar army with appealing lies. That is the same army that has an appalling track record of burning villages and raping women from Myanmar's many ethnic minorities. As a civil servant of Myanmar, Ms. Suu Kyi has the ability to reveal the truth to the public. Yet, she has not made any move to battle against injustice.

The third point is this, the non-united relief work has posed a huge burden on individual country and threats on the Rohingya. When all seems to be lost, the Rohingya managed to grasp a glimpse of hope. Myanmar's neighbor Bangladesh has shown a gesture of goodwill. She has been receiving hundreds of thousand Rohingya to give them food and shelter, but this is nothing more than enough. Although the Rohingya could count on basic security once they made their arrival, the shelter and resources are insufficient. The bulk of the aid effort has fallen to groups of Bangladeshi volunteers. However, just about 900 miles away, India is planning to reject the poor

Rohingya who knocked on her door due to the perceived linkages of some of the unauthorized Rohingya immigrants with Pakistan based terror organizations". There is a population of 40000 Rohingya in India. Let's imagine where they will flee when India's deportation is implemented. The refugees depend largely on the close ties between countries to give them support. Clearly, there is still a long way to go.

The difficult livelihood, violence, and unfairness endured by the Rohingya across decades have sparked a warning that encroachments on humanity are a long-existed problem in Myanmar, and there's no time to sit idle. It needs stronger deterrence from various parties.

First and foremost, the United Nation should immediately set up a special committee investigating the inhumane treatments imposed by the Myanmar government. While the research results and statistics should be made public in order to show progress made. A special team should also be sent to report the genuine situation in Myanmar to prevent the self-justification of acts done by the military. Accusations should be made in order to stop further abuse from happening. While for the international community, they have to push harder for a fair justice system as part of the move to a hybrid democratic government. Moreover, an open session, where member states can clearly articulate their respective positions on the matter, could help ratchet up the pressure on Myanmar. The world can say "yes" to the mistreated Rohingya by simply replying "no" to the malicious acts of the Myanmar government

It is understandable that, due to the rise of terrorism and complication of South-East Asia, countries are reluctant to accept the Rohingya. However, countries should have the realization that without proper help, they are more likely to choose the path of crime in order to survive. So here's the second solution East Asian countries should share quota among one another so that each of them receives a certain number of Rohingya refugees with accordance to their welfare system and GDP. We need more countries to send medical teams and set up camps for the Rohingya refugees. Other East-Asian countries such as Laos and Thailand can open up refugee camps to settle the escaping Rohingya. It is the upholding of human rights, and countries do have the responsibility to defend for the weak.

In the 20th century, the Jewish Holocaust haunted the whole world; last year, we witnessed the Middle East refugee crisis; and today, we see the Rohingya escaping from the suppression of Myanmar government. It is devastating to learn that after all these years, the weak never stops running from the nightmare of war and crime. The Rohingya crisis not only tells us how inhumane they are treated, it pulls us from the unrealistic illusion that we actually lack the sympathy to pray for those who suffer, we lack the courage to stop violence imposed on the minorities, we lack the open mind to accept diversity. Despite all the eye-opening progress made in modern

civilization, the selfish barbarians still live within our hearts.

It is time for all of us to stop living in vain, to stop pretending everything is fine, and to stop believing world issues have nothing to do with our own. Indeed, the power of a person has its limits, but that does not imply that one should turn a blind eye to the unfairness endured by the others. Humans are interconnected in a network if we ignore those who are suppressed, the fire of hatred and fear will soon spread to our doorsteps. Therefore, let us all join hands to put a 'full-stop' to the sufferings of the weak.



Judge's Comment

Dr. Fairbrother, Gregory Paul:

This essay is on a significant topic of international concern. It is somewhat descriptive in comparison to other essays, but still analytical. It is basically answering the question of who is responsible for the Rohingya crisis. There is a well-organized discussion. The essay shows awareness of important details of the main points of the issue. The use of language is somewhat overly-emotive. There is a logical elaboration of factors contributing to the problem, and reasonable solutions are proposed. The essay shows a thoughtful and balanced understanding of the issue.