



社評

弱勢要關顧 逆境更自強

社會福利署昨日發表最新綜援數字，二月份新申領個案較一月份增加四千五百宗，增幅為百分之一點六；其中，又以失業綜援和低收入綜援的增幅最為明顯，兩者均高於平均數。

目前，本港領取綜援的整體數字為二十八萬九千宗，受助人數四十七萬六千三百多人，政府〇七至〇八財政年度的綜援開支為一百八十億元。

自金融海嘯發生以來，本港最新失業率已攀升至百分之五，失業大軍人數達到十七萬，加上開工不足及減薪等因素，作為社會「安全網」的綜援制度不可能不有所反映，求助人數必然大增。而在此困難時期，綜援能夠為一部分失業或低收入人士暫解燃眉之急，有助維繫社會穩定，作用是明顯的。過去曾有人提出所謂「綜援養懶人」之說，只能說是一種憂慮或提醒；事實是本港市民包括大部分新移民，都並非「好食懶做」之輩，只要有工開、有收入就不會心甘情願去領取綜援度日。眼前經濟危機，各個階層自然都有不同程度的困難和損失，但無論如何，基層市民即平日已胼手胝足、手停口停的低收入一群，所受到的衝擊仍然是最大的。李「超人」、郭氏兄弟的損失是財富蒸發若干億、在「福布斯」世界富豪排行榜下跌了多少位，和一些「冇工開就有飯開」的基層貧苦家庭的困境是不可同日而語的。

因此，面對當前失業率持續上升，綜援個案不斷增加的情況，特區政府和各界市民都必須要有最充分的心理準備，就是經濟情況不但不可能在短時間內得到復甦，而且更困難的日子還在後頭。有學者日前推斷本港的失業率年底將會去到百分之七，如果評估屬實，則綜援數字「再創新高」絕非奇事。

在此嚴峻情勢下，特區政府和中央所一再強調的同舟共濟、逆境自強，的確不能再被視作僅僅是一般的打氣說話，而是眼前港人社會要渡過這一場危機的重要依據。而其中，個人在逆境中的心態和取向，是積極、主動去迎接困難、克服困難，還是消極、被動的自怨自艾、怨天尤人，所產生的效果可以是天差地別。同樣是一個綜援家庭，暫時失了業的丈夫可能心情惡劣，但妻子盡量給予諒解，子女更加聽話，幾十元過一天同樣可以是一個溫馨快樂的家庭，做丈夫的也會更努力去再找工作；相反，如果丈夫只知拿打罵子女出氣、妻子一天到晚埋怨丈夫「冇本事」，則發生倫常悲劇也非無可能。同樣，在此場金融危機下，大學生也罕有地成了「畢業即失業」的一群



本港失業率持續上升，綜援個案不斷增加。面對逆境，港人應積極主動、克服困難

，政府千方百計創造臨時、見習職位，提供特別撥款，每月津貼大學生薪酬二千元，並呼籲僱主也給予不少於二千元的薪金；如此大學生就應善用此一機遇，不計工資多寡，但求取得工作經驗和增加歷練，為日後找得更好的工作「鋪路」，但日前竟有小部分大學生埋怨這是政府在「壓低」他們的工資，指責四千元是「可恥的待遇」，還「耀武揚威」的要上街遊行……。這些個別大學生的心態和取向就是很可悲和很失敗的，逆境中如此不知奮發、不知好歹，經濟環境好了，也不見得會有多大出息。

2009/03/19 大公報社評

Editorial

# Striving for self-improvement in adversity

According to the latest statistics released by the Social Welfare Department, the overall Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) caseload in February showed an increase of 4,500 cases over January, representing a growth of 1.6%. In the breakdown, both unemployment and low earning cases showed the largest increases, higher than the average.

Total CSSA caseload at the end of February stood at 289,000 with a total of 476,353 recipients. Total government expenditure on CSSA payments was about \$18 billion for 2007-08.

Since the start of the financial tsunami, Hong Kong's unemployment rate has climbed to 5% with the number of jobless growing to 170,000. This, plus underemployment and salary cuts, would inevitably be manifested in CSSA, with the number of people seeking help from this "social security network" increasing sharply. In the current predicament, CSSA can relieve the urgent needs of some jobless or low earning people and thus help maintain social stability, and in this regard it obviously plays a positive role. The criticism that "CSSA supports lazy people" raised by some critics in past is better read as a worry or reminder. As a matter of fact, Hong Kong citizens including a vast majority of new immigrants are not "greedy and lazy". Few are willing to rely on CSSA as long as they can have jobs to earn an income. In the ongoing economic crisis, all sectors inevitably suffer difficulties and losses to a certain extent. In any case, grassroots people who, even in normal times, have to **live from hand to mouth** with their low income and hard work, are now the worst affected. Losses of "Superman" Li (Ka-shing) or the Kwok brothers are in terms of how much of their wealth has "evaporated" and how further down the ranks on the Forbes list of the richest they have dropped. This cannot be mentioned in the same breath with the predicament facing poor grassroots families who rely for their living on having a job.

In face of the continuous rise in the unemployment rate and increase of CSSA cases, the SAR Government and people in all sectors must prepare themselves for the worst: that the economy is unlikely to recover in a short period of time and more difficult times are yet to come. Some scholars estimate Hong Kong's unemployment rate would jump to 7% by end of this year. If this comes true, it would not be a surprise for CSSA caseload to set a new record high.

In such a tough situation, what the SAR and Central Governments have repeatedly stressed on – that we must "pull together in difficult times" and "strive to become stronger in adversity" – must indeed be regarded as an important guidance for Hong Kong society to ride out the current crisis, rather than simply as words to bolster up morale. In this regard, a person's mentality and orientation, whether he would bravely set himself for and overcome difficulties on his own initiative or take a negative and passive attitude to sit idly grumbling against Heaven and blaming others or himself, will make a great difference. Similarly, in a

CSSA recipient family, the husband who has just lost his job may be in bad mood, but with an understanding wife and better behaved children the family would be a warm and happy one even if there are just a few dozen dollars to spend each day. And the husband would look for a new job more aggressively. On the other hand, it is not impossible for a family tragedy to happen, if a jobless husband were to vent his anger by beating children while his wife complained day and night about his "incapability".

Similarly, under the assault of the financial crisis, university graduates also unusually become "jobless upon graduation". The government has done everything possible to create temporary jobs and internships, allocating a special fund to give a graduate \$2,000 monthly subsidy and appealing to employers to give a monthly salary of no less than \$2,000. In such circumstances, university graduates must care not about the salary but make good use of this opportunity to obtain work experience so that they can find better jobs in future. However, some days ago, a handful of university students complained that by taking these measures the government had tried to keep them "underpaid", saying \$4,000 a month was "a shameful treatment" and even trying to make a big show of their strength by taking to the streets... The mentality and orientation of these few students are very sad and defeatist. He who in adversity does not know how to improve himself and to tell right from wrong is unlikely to be promising either when the economic environment becomes better.

19 March 2009

## Idiom :

**Live (from) hand to mouth** – To spend all one's income on basic needs such as food without being able to save any money.

Examples :

1. My father earns very little and there are four of us kids so we live from hand to mouth.
2. The majority of blue-collar workers live from hand to mouth.
3. There is no way we can even think about going on holiday this year, as we are literally living from hand to mouth.
4. When both my parents were out of work, we lived from hand to mouth.
5. We lived from hand to mouth during the war. Things were very difficult.

通識記憶體

## 領綜援5年新高 衆膳坊供不應求

2008年底爆發的金融海嘯，其影響近月漸見加劇。根據政府最新數字顯示，今年2月整體領取綜合社會保障援助計劃（簡稱綜援）的個案升至289,000宗，受助總人數為476,353人，較1月份上升4500宗，增幅為1.6%，是自2004年最大升幅。其中，失業綜援個案較1月份按年急升3.5%，低收入綜援個案亦升2.8%，兩者均是過去5年來單月最高升幅。

領取綜援的人數按月上升，連帶聖雅各福群會經營的食物銀行「衆膳坊」在過去一年內，求助者大升近2倍，由2008年初每日平均300多人，一年內升至每日平均1000人，當中50%屬於低收入人士。面對求助人數大幅上升，衆膳坊更差點出現「斷糧」。

為應付突然上升的領取食物人士，社會福利署今年1月獲立法會撥款1億元，資助5間非牟利機構營運食物銀行。其中一個受助機構的聖雅各福群會指出，機構除了派發乾糧及快餐店餐券，亦設有飯堂為受助人士提供膳食，申領食物者包括中產階層人士。

而在英國的福利政策，就可讓低收入人士住進價值2900多萬港元的豪宅。一位有8名子女的母親是受惠者，根據政策，當局如不能為所需家庭提供公屋，就要為他們找私人樓。

因此這個大家庭獲分配的大屋，有5房2廳、3個浴室、書房及露台，每月納稅人津貼租金約8.7萬港元。

中文基本功

## 「文質彬彬」古寫作「文質份份」

二月八日（星期日）收聽香港電台《解構經典》，又聽出兩處弄錯：一是把滄臺滅明說成「南昌人」，一是把「文質彬彬」說成又讀作「文質份份」。

先談第一錯。主持人講解《論語》，講解到「子游為武城宰，子曰：女（古汝字）得人焉爾乎？曰：有滄臺滅明者……」這段話時，似乎不理解孔子要學生言偃（子游）薦舉當地精英，因而不悟滄臺滅明是當地人。其實，滄臺滅明是武城人的資料絕不難查，不明白何以把這人的籍貫由山東（武城）扯到江西（南昌）去？稍為研究過當時的地理、文化和政治情況，都會知道長江以南的一個普通人，根本無法「移民」到山東去。

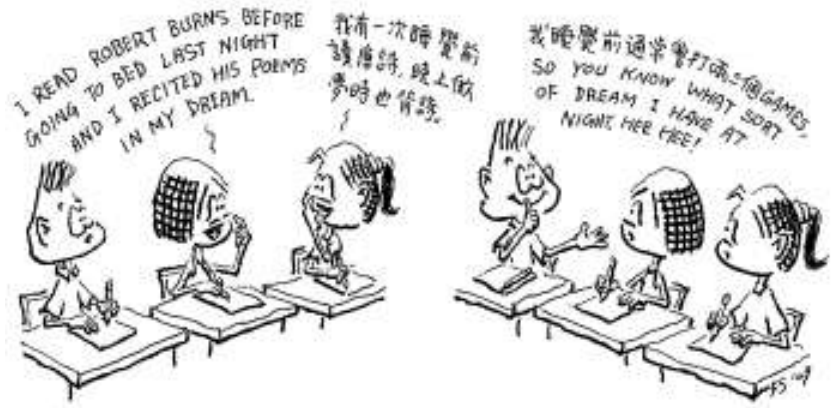
再說第二錯。成語「文質彬彬」，古寫作「文質份份」（見《說文解字》）。今本《論語》及其他同時代典籍，「彬」字是後人追改。今天的

辭典還有說「份」字又讀作「彬」，就因為「份」是「彬」的本字。記得香港回歸前，港英律政署官員和某些「正音」人士，不諳漢字源流，而食古不化，反對身份證的「份」字，要復古為「分」，理由就是「份」字有個「彬」音。殊不知「份」之讀「彬」由於「分」在古時讀「彬」，這是古無輕唇音之故。這一點，不知如何會引起《解構經典》主持人的誤會，把「份」古讀「彬」顛倒為「彬」又讀「份」？既然古無輕唇音，連「分」、「份」都讀「彬」，當時未出現的「彬」字，又怎會讀成當時未有的「份」音呢！

日前我已說過，「解經」也要了解漢字源流，博古通今。這不是開玩笑。但願今後「解經」的人，在這方面補課，做好準備，然後登壇。

容若

五星級英文



## 晚間看英文 清晨練寫作

黑 楊 (yeung@harkyeung.com)

近日看報道，英國有間中學把上課時間推遲到早上11時，原因是校長引述牛津大學教授Russell Foster的研究，說學生10歲開始，生理時鐘會出現變化，平均遲2小時，到20歲後才再回落，55歲才回到青春前期前的水平。

英國教育當局近年用各種方法鼓勵創意教育，又把無法培育有一定水平的學生的學校殺校或全面改造，上述的試驗也應運而生。對於很多香港學生，這無疑是較「友善」的安排。不過，該校仍沒有進一步去探討哪個時間學哪個科目較好。印象中，沒有一間學校研究什麼時間學第二語言最好，或什麼時間上寫作課最好。

很多成了名的作家在寫回憶錄或訪問時都說選擇清晨寫作。《達文西密碼》的作者早上4時起床寫作，村上春樹也是。

很多香港中學都把最早的一節時間用來做周會或閱讀課。聽到有些老

師說，頭一兩堂學生還在打瞌睡，上其他科目效果也不太好。原因是學校8時半上課，學生往往要7時甚至6時起床，晚上有打機習慣的學生未免睡意仍濃。

如果有學校嘗試把早上兩節用來做第二語言的寫作，會是相當有趣的研究。因為這時候學生仍未有很多時間運用母語，理論上受母語影響的機會略低，而且寫作時也不致被當日學來的知識弄得想法多多，可能會較容易集中描寫一個意念。假若該學校再用頭兩節去教母語和用母語寫作，比對一下學生用第一和第二語言的表現，或者可為學習英文提供更多一些資訊。不過，很少香港學校能或選擇做上述的研究。

在法國教英文時，有個學生的家長說，他看到一篇研究說晚上學第二語言，睡眠時會繼續用第二語言思考。因此，要學生晚上看英文書，早上寫英文，或者表現會與平時不同。

社經「數」描

## 旅遊IT人手需求大

金融海嘯後，各行業就業前景將有所調整，但事實是否如此悲觀，又作別論。以銀行及金融業為例，雖云金融機構有裁員，但數目不多，譬如投資銀行或會因結構性的投資服務調節甚至轉型，人力資源當然有變，但是否削減人力資源，倒也未必，在發展、開拓及風險管理方面會有增加也不一定，因為這將有助制定金融海嘯後的策略。至於其他行業譬如餐飲、酒店、旅遊，只聞減價以作招徠，未聞有裁員的消息，反而有報道指，位於港島區的食肆長期缺乏兩成人手。

### 香港仍為亞太樞紐

海嘯之後，香港仍然是亞太區貿

易、展覽、旅遊樞紐。酒店業雖然不會增加人手，但亦未嘗聽見有裁員，況且酒店旅遊前景在未來5年仍會繼續發展，加上郵輪碼頭的興建，行內增加人手似是必然。

至於資訊科技行業，部分已轉型成為其他行業當然支援設施，擁有資訊科技資歷的人不難找到不同行業的工作。未來，資訊科技必成為個人能力的指標之一，又何懼之有。

創意、設計行業的人力資源也不能少，工商業皆需要這類型人才，尤其在金融海嘯後，無論中小企和大企業都要想辦法去開拓，擁有創意、設計的資歷，當是最受歡迎。

專業教育培訓顧問 呂康