



外國疫情兇猛 防控須適時調整

Adjusting prevention and control measures in good time as the Pandemic runs wild in foreign countries

本港昨日新增六宗個案，看似情況緩和，但實則暗流湧動。過去一周，世界各地出現新一波的疫情反彈，單單印度一國三天就新增一百萬宗個案。面對新的疫情形勢，特區政府須做好「外防」工作，適時調整抗疫政策，以防變種個案湧入香港。

原以為經過長期奮戰，全世界的抗疫形勢有望得到扭轉。但從歐洲、南美洲再到南亞，新增個案以驚人的速度上升。印度更是連續四天破了世界紀錄，至今已近一千七百萬宗個案。當地醫療體系面臨崩潰，死亡人數之多就連火化場都不堪重負，情況在未來一周恐還將惡化下去。不單是印度，歐洲的德國、土耳其、法國，南美洲的阿根廷、哥倫比亞，以及亞洲的日本等國，感染個案亦至數月以來的新高。

顯而易見，全球疫情迎來新一波大反彈，稍有不慎，香港都可能會被波及。必須考慮採取更嚴格的措施，尤其是在「外防」輸入方面。儘管過去一段時間特區政府已經因應需要，停止來自印度、菲律賓及巴基斯坦的航班來港，但形勢的突變，既定的政策不能墨守陳規，而須主動出擊、「想先一步」。

其中一個關鍵在於，「熔断機制」須因應新增的高危地區作出有針對性的限制。現行的做法是，若在七天內共有5名或以上乘客經抵港檢測確診並帶有N501Y變種病毒株，即禁止所有該區航班來港14天。正如輿論所指出的那樣，等發現5宗變種病毒個案是否已經太遲？是否應當收緊到3宗以內？這麼做或許會影響到香港與其他地區的商貿人員往來，但當斷不斷，後果恐更加嚴重。另一方面，鑒於一宗社區變種病毒個案或來自於隔離酒店，應當考慮降低酒店的入住密度，或根據入境國家的疫情嚴重程度進行區別安排。

只要疫情一日不受控，經濟也就一日不可能恢復。昨日財政司司長陳茂波指出，在外圍環境好轉帶動下，本港出口已連續四個月回復增長，單計今年首兩個月貨物出口增幅達到37.5%，相信明日公布的本港三月份出口數字勢頭可持續。但印度的嚴峻情況說明，全球疫情很可能不會在短期內結束，經濟復甦亦可能要被迫往後推移，形勢不能想得太樂觀。香港當前除了「嚴防死守」、加緊擴大全民疫苗注射之外，亦需考慮如何做好內部經濟的「小循環」。

目前政府的許多抗疫舉措都是相互獨立運行的，缺乏整合。例如「安心出行」僅僅是出行的記錄，功能單一，成效大打折扣。如今是時候考慮作升級，加入疫苗注射記錄以及政府抗疫政策的通知功能，猶如「安心碼」作用，既方便市民出行、推動內部消費，亦可為下一步與內地或澳門的「通關」作好準備。

外防輸入是當前最大挑戰，有序放寬內部防疫措施則是經濟走出困局的必要之舉，主動積極作出政策調整，才能把握住戰勝疫情的先機。

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There were six new confirmed cases of [Covid-19] infection in Hong Kong yesterday. The situation is seemingly easing but in reality there are dangerous undercurrents. In the past week, a pandemic rebound has been witnessed in various places in the world. India alone has reported one million new cases in three days. In face of the new situation, the SAR Government must do a good job to prevent the virus from entering the territory from other places and adjust the anti-epidemic policy to prevent cases of infection with new variants of the virus from **rushing into** Hong Kong.

Supposedly, the global anti-pandemic situation should have hopefully been **turned around** following such a hard battle for such a long time. However, from Europe, South America to South Asia, new confirmed cases are increasing at an astonishing rate. India even breaks the world record in four consecutive days, with nearly 17 million cases of infection in total reported so far. India's healthcare system is on the verge of collapse, and so many people died of the disease that the country's crematoriums are overwhelmed. Yet the situation there is still expected to worsen in the coming week. Not only in India, in other countries such as Germany, Turkey and France in Europe, Argentina and Columbia in South America or Japan in Asia respectively, the number of infected cases also sets a new high in months.

Obviously, there is a new wave of outbreak sweeping the world. Hong Kong could possibly be affected simply out of a slight carelessness. Hence more strict measures must be considered particularly to prevent the virus from coming in from other places. In response to the changing pandemic situation, the SAR Government has suspended flights from India, the Philippines and Pakistan in different periods of time. But the situation may change in a sudden, so adopted policies must not stay **in a rut**. Rather initiatives must be taken by thinking one step ahead.

A vital factor in this regard is that the "circuit breaker" must be adapted to make targeted restrictions on [visitors from] new high-risk places. The existing practice is that if five or more arrival passengers from a location test positive with the N501Y mutant strain of the coronavirus over a period of seven days, then all inbound flights from the location will be banned for

14 days. As pointed out by public opinion, would it be too late until there are five cases of infection with the mutated virus strain? Should it be tightened to three cases? Tightening the measure may affect business personnel exchanges between Hong Kong and other places, but indecision may have even more serious consequences. On the other hand, since a case of infection with the viral variant found in a local community might come from a quarantine hotel, it had better consider lower the occupancy density of hotels or make differentiation arrangements for passengers from different countries given their different degree of risk.

As long as the pandemic situation is not brought under control, there cannot possibly be economic recovery. Financial Secretary Paul Chan Mo-po pointed out yesterday that, supported by improving overall environment, Hong Kong's exports have been gaining ground for four consecutive months with growth rising to 37.5 per cent in the first two months of this year. And he expected similarly strong figures for March, which will be unveiled tomorrow. But the tough situation in India indicates that the global Pandemic is unlikely to **come to an end** in a short period of time, and economic recovery may well be put off. One must not become too optimistic in this regard. Right now, in addition to taking strict precautionary measures and speeding up universal vaccination, Hong Kong also needs to consider how to boost the "small circulation" of the domestic economy.

At present, many anti-epidemic measures seem to be independent of each other in implementation. There is a lack of integration. For instance, the LeaveHomeSafe app is just to record a user's whereabouts. With just such a single function, its effectiveness falls short of expectation. Now it is time to consider giving it an upgrade, such as adding into it the users' vaccination records and notifications of government's anti-epidemic policies, so that it could function like some "peace-of-mind code" to facilitate citizens' **getting around** and boost domestic consumption, as well as to prepare for reopening border checkpoints with the Mainland or Macao.

Preventing the coronavirus from entering the territory is the biggest challenge right now, while orderly relaxing

internal anti-epidemic measures is a necessary move for Hong Kong's economy to bottom out. Only by pro-actively making policy adjustments can we seize opportunities in good time to defeat the disease.

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WORDS AND USAGE

• **Rush into (sth) (phrasal verb)** –

To enter some place hurriedly or quickly. (衝進，湧入)

Examples:

1. Cold air rushed into the car as I opened the window.
2. The firefighters rushed into the burning building.

• **Turn around (phrasal verb)** –

to stop being unsuccessful and to start being successful, or to make something do so. (改善，轉好)

Examples:

1. If the economy turned round the government's authority would quickly increase.
2. He was hired by the government to help turn around the failing high-street bank.

• **(Stuck) in a rut (idiom)** –

Too fixed in one particular type of job, activity, method, etc., and needing to change. (墨守成規，一成不變)

Examples:

1. I need to change jobs – after 15 years here I feel I'm stuck in a rut.
2. I had so many ambitions when I first graduated from college, but now I feel like I'm in a rut.

• **Come to an end (idiom)** –

To stop or end; to finish. (結束，告終)

Examples:

1. I'm enjoying my English class, but it's about to come to an end.
2. When the war finally came to an end, Europe was in ruins.

• **Get around (phrasal verb)** –

To go or travel to different places. (到處走走，旅行)

Examples:

1. It's quite easy to get around Hong Kong.
2. We often use public transport to get around.



性別中立的代名詞 "They"

Using they/them as singular pronouns



續FUN英語

代名詞 (pronouns: I, me, my, mine, myself, he, him, his, himself, she, her, hers, herself, you, your, yours, yourself / yourselves, etc.) 是一個代替名詞的詞，是取代句子中的名詞的詞，用於避免一遍又一遍地重複相同的名詞。

Carlo saw Clara, and he waved at her. 在這句話中Carlo看到了Clara，他朝她揮手，he和her的代詞分別取代了Carlo和Clara。最普遍的三種類型的代名詞：主語 (subject) (例如，he)；賓語 (object) (him)；或 possessive (his)。在代名詞的使用時，性別 (gender) 是重要的，使用不正確的性別可能會把整個句子誤解。

大家一般也清楚代名詞 I/You/We/He/She/It 的用法，只有 "They" 是比較有趣：皆因它在不同情況下可以當單數 (Singular "they") 或複數使用，也可以稱它做性別中立 (gender-neutral or non-binary) 的代名詞。我們看看以下例子：

1) **They** are my students, and these excellent assignments are **theirs**. I hope they were completed by **themselves**. I like all of **them** and **their** assignments.

這句子中的 "They", "theirs", "themselves", "them" 及 "their" 最一般複數的用法。

2) **Someone** left **their** books in the classroom. Please let **them** know where **they** can get it.

中文翻譯是：「有人把書本留在班房，請你／你們讓他／她知道在哪裏可以拿取這些書本。」

這個句子以單數代詞 (Singular pronoun) "their", "them" 及 "they" 指未知或未肯定的人或事。

3) **They** will not be the first or last person who gets themselves involved in an identity theft case.

這句子中的主語 "They" 及 "themselves" 用作強調單數代詞或一個人使用，什麼性別也可以。當然，我們要看情況是否可以這樣一概

而論，這句子純粹強調身份盜竊案件發生在任何人身上也可以。

大家有興趣可以看看這個牛津字典有關 Singular They 的歷史：

A brief history of singular "they"
<https://public.oed.com/blog/a-brief-history-of-singular-they/>
順帶一提，大家勿亂用縮寫的 possessive 代名詞 "it's"。例如：



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They

It's a dog. 可以是：
It is a dog. 它是一頭狗。
It was a dog. 它從前是一頭狗。

It has a dog. 它有一頭狗。
這有可能會造成世界大戰。
事實上，以 apostrophe 縮寫也不應該在學術文章或是商業辦公室英語 formal writing 中使用。整體 formality 及 seriousness 會即時降低。