

社評 雙語道

精準救助特定行業和打工仔刻不容緩

Assist specific sectors and their workers immediately with targeted measures

原文

政府多項防疫禁令從12月10日開始收緊，餐飲等行業的經營苦況必雪上加霜，部分行業的倒閉潮、失業潮恐將呼嘯而至。面對大批企業倒閉、大量打工仔失業的困境，非常時期，政府要有非常擔當、非常辦法，馬上研究、果斷動用財政儲備，以特惠方式、精準救助特定行業及從業人員，急民所急、紓困救民。
接連一年時緊時鬆的防疫措施，令餐飲等多個行業已經陷入經營艱難。此次食肆及餐飲場所「晚六朝五」禁堂食至12月23日，很多處所關閉，如果疫情持續，防疫禁令勢將延長，餐飲等行業失去聖誕、新年乃至春節等假期旺季生意，損失慘重可想而知。餐飲界估計，12月生意額有望達到160億元，限聚令再收緊下生意額或只有60億元，將蒸發100億元；美容業料12月生意損失150億元，若停業令延至農曆新年後，結業潮將無可避免出現。與旅遊相關行業的裁員潮早已開始，早前國泰航空5,300名駐港員工失業，永安旅遊亦宣布裁減兩成約120名員工。

目前本港失業率高達6.4%，失業大軍逼近26萬人，而政府「保就業」計劃已結束，專家預計本港失業率會升至7%，青年人的失業率更可能達至20%，業界和打工仔自然期望政府能夠救急救命。
特首林鄭月娥早前表示，政府已撥出3,100億元抗疫，對政府構成很大財政壓力，但現時政府立場有別之前，願意「積極回應」被新冠肺炎疫情重創的關閉處所，會推出津貼防止大規模的倒閉及失業。政府對救助受影響企業和打工仔的態度出現轉變，值得肯定，符合本港現時的實際情況，下一步應立即研究具體方案，果斷動用財政儲備，對特定企業實施精準的緊急救助。
無疑，今年政府已動用3,100億元於抗疫紓困，本財政年度首6個月錄得2,798億元赤字，庫房儲備由1.1萬

多億驟降至8,805億元，但8,000多億元的財政儲備與其他經濟體相比，仍是相當充裕。財政儲備的一個重要功能就是用來救急，遭疫情重創的企業、行業和打工仔水深火熱，政府當然不能袖手旁觀，眼看着他們掉入深淵。財政儲備此時不用，更待何時？！本港雖有量入為出的理財政策和紀律，但救命時刻，只要保證經濟不出大問題，救助危難企業和打工仔，財政儲備應使則使。
當然，政府未來的紓困救急措施，要有針對性，要惠及那些最需要救助的行業及從業員。同時政府對「失業支援計劃」健全人士申請資產上限放寬一倍，政府增加臨時職位的計劃等要加快推行，以緩解失業痛苦。本港經濟正面臨20多年來最差境況，政府需以底線思維，要做最壞打算，作最充分準備，精準救助，不能任由最壞情況出現。
(摘錄自香港《文匯報》社評 2020-12-10)



與旅遊相關行業的裁員潮早已開始，永安旅遊宣布裁減兩成員工。資料圖片

Exercise

- 1. 綜合社會保障援助計劃(綜援) 2. 傷殘津貼 3. 高齡津貼(生果金) 4. 長者生活津貼 5. 關愛基金

- 1. Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) 2. Disability Allowance 3. Old Age Living Allowance 4. Old Age Living Allowance 5. Community Care Fund

Answer

譯文

As the government tightens social distancing measures again starting from 10 December, the plight of the catering and other industries is set to further aggravate, and waves of business closures and layoffs are likely to hit soon. In face of the impending financial downturn where businesses will go bankrupt and workers will be left without a job, the government must take an unconventional approach and swiftly consider tapping into the fiscal reserves to help those sectors and workers.

It has been almost a year since the tightening and loosening cycles of social distancing measures descended upon Hong Kong, and many industries like catering are already engulfed in financial difficulties. In the latest round of tightening measures, dine-in at restaurants will be forbidden from 18:00 to 05:00 until 23 December, while many other premises

are also to close. If the pandemic situation continues, these measures are bound to be extended further into the Christmas, New Year's Eve, and even Lunar New Year holiday periods, and catering businesses are going to sustain heavy losses. The catering sector estimates that the original business turnover in December was going to reach HK\$16bn, however as social distancing measures tighten again, the figure is set to drop by HK\$10bn to HK\$6bn only. Meanwhile, the beauty industry also projects a HK\$15bn loss in December, and has stated that if the closure order is not lifted by Lunar New Year, businesses will inevitably close for good. Layoffs have long begun already for tourism-related sectors, with Cathay Pacific cutting 5,300 jobs and Wing On Travel 120, trimming 20 per cent of the company's positions.

At present, the unemployment rate in Hong Kong is already at 6.4 per cent,

with nearly 260,000 people jobless. As the government's Employment Support Scheme draws to an end, experts predict that the unemployment rate will climb to 7 per cent, and the unemployment rate among young people may reach as high as 20 per cent. Given the circumstances, businesses and wage earners naturally expect the government to provide urgent assistance. Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor said earlier that the government was under immense financial pressure as it has already allocated HK\$310bn to fight the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the government U-turned on the matter recently, and is now willing to "actively respond" to businesses that are affected by closure orders. Subsidies will be provided to save them from the brink of collapse and to prevent the large scale unemployment which would follow. The change in the government's stance towards helping the affected businesses and

employees deserves recognition and is certainly the right move given the current situation in Hong Kong. The next step should be to put forth immediately the concrete proposals of how to decisively use the fiscal reserves to achieve these goals.

Indeed, the government has already spent HK\$310bn in anti-pandemic relief this year, and a deficit of HK\$279.8bn has been recorded in the first half of this financial year. It is also true that the fiscal reserves fell drastically from over HK\$1.1tn to HK\$880.5bn. However, a fiscal reserve of over HK\$800bn is still considered quite abundant when compared with other economies. One of the main purposes of fiscal reserves is to cope with emergent events. As workers, businesses, and even whole industries are now suffering in dire situations due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the government must not just stand by and watch. If this is not the

time to use the reserves, when is? Although existing financial policies require the government to keep expenditure within the limits of its revenues, as long as there are no major problems in the local economy, the fiscal reserves should be drawn at this critical moment to help those businesses and workers that are in distress.

But of course, the government must ensure that its emergency relief measures are targeted at those industries and employees who need them most. Plans to relax asset limit requirements for able-bodied applicants of the unemployment support scheme, and plans to increase temporary jobs in the civil service must also be expedited to relieve the burden of unemployed citizens. As Hong Kong is facing the worst economic downturn in over two decades, the government must plan for the worst and act swiftly before it is too late.

聖誕紀念耶穌 節日約定俗成

「寒冷天氣警告」幾時生效呀？

歷史今昔

臨近聖誕節，先向讀者們祝賀聖誕快樂。說起這個節日，更多人會聯想起聖誕燈飾、聖誕禮物或聖誕老人，而忘記了該節日原是為了紀念耶穌的誕生。沒錯，聖誕節裏的「聖」是指耶穌，而「誕」是指誕生，加起來便是紀念耶穌誕生的節日。紀念耶穌並不單單只有節日，就連我們使用的公元紀年也是以耶穌出生為分水嶺。

公元前的英文是 B.C.，全寫是 Before Christ (基督前)，就是以耶穌的出生年份來決定公元前後的分別。可是，聖經並無明確記載耶穌出生的日子，而經過眾多神學家和歷史學家的推論後，雖不能肯定耶穌出生日期，但可以斷定並非12月。

要推斷耶穌出生的月份，需要先確定耶穌出生的年份，原因是聖經使用的曆法是猶太曆法，而猶太曆法有異於現今新曆和中國農曆，推算月份時需要注意。公元紀年是以耶穌出生進行計算，但切記耶穌在世時影響力並不大，人們不可能在耶穌在世時已經使用其出生為紀年。所以以耶穌出生為公元紀年一定是他死後的事情，既然是耶穌死後的事情，那便有機會出錯。事實上，經考證，現在的紀年的確有誤。馬太福音(12:1)記載「當



不少地區都有慶祝聖誕節的習俗。

資料圖片

希律王的時候，耶穌生在猶太的伯利恆。」希律王約公元前4年去世，估計耶穌出生的年份是公元前4年或以前。這項證據至少可以肯定耶穌不是公元出生。

了解耶穌出生年份大約是公元前四年或以前，我們可以繼續推算耶穌出生的月份。同樣，聖經沒有明確記載耶穌出生的月份，我們只能作大約的推算。其中一個推算方法是利用施洗約翰的出生月份進行推論。

《路加福音》記載了耶穌的開路先鋒施洗約翰的誕生，並提供了許多細節，其中《路加福音》(1:24-26)記載施洗約翰母親懷孕6個月後，瑪利亞才懷上耶穌。施洗約翰大約3月出生，推算瑪利亞懷孕時間相約，耶

耶穌是6個月後出世，則9月便是耶穌的出生。這個推算方法存在一定的不確定因素，因為我們無法確定瑪利亞究竟懷孕多少個月誕下耶穌，但即使有一兩個月的誤差，耶穌依然不可能是12月出生。

學術界雖不能斷定耶穌出生具體日期，但並非公元12月的結論卻無爭議。至於為何以12月25日為聖誕節，學術界一般認為是羅馬帝國君主原信奉太陽神，訂12月25日為「不敗之太陽神誕辰節」。後來羅馬帝國改以基督教為國教，於是將12月25日訂為耶穌的誕辰。羅馬帝國的決定影響教會的信徒，信徒漸漸接受此節日傳統，約定俗成和傳播影響下，此日才成為眾人皆知的聖誕節。

氣象萬千

噢？是不是當預測氣溫跌到12度的時候，就會發出寒冷天氣警告？那就要先了解一下，什麼是寒冷天氣警告啦！

香港天氣四季分明，每年基本上都會有炎熱和寒冷的日子。在香港，天文台會用七個形容詞來描述不同溫度，分別是嚴寒、寒冷、清涼、和暖、溫暖、炎熱和酷熱。當預測香港市區的氣溫下降到寒冷或嚴寒水平時，即是最低氣溫達攝氏12度或以下，天文台就會發出寒冷天氣警告。

根據天文台的記錄，香港的寒冷天氣主要在每年11月到翌年的3月，甚至在4月份都曾發生過。

那麼氣溫是否發出寒冷天氣警告的唯一考慮因素？當然不是這麼簡單啦，天文台還會根據其他天氣因素決定是否發出寒冷天氣警告。除了氣溫之外，濕度和風力都會考慮在內。

在冬天寒風凜冽，大風將身體的熱力很快帶走，令到身體感覺到特別凍，這個現象我們稱為風寒效應，如果再下雨，濕度高，感覺就更加凍，真的受不了！所以，如果大家冬天在戶外長時間逗留，就要做好禦寒措施啦。

現在香港天氣一年比一年熱，就算到了冬天，都沒有冬天的感覺。受氣候轉變，全球暖化的影響，香港近年來每年錄得的寒冷天氣日數呈現下滑的趨勢。看回歷史數據，單是看看香港錄得寒冷天氣還有酷熱天氣的日子在過去數十年的變化，都可以看到酷熱天氣日數明顯上升，而寒冷天氣日數就逐步減少，2019年更只得一天市區低過12度。在氣候變化，全球變暖的大環境下，除了天氣會愈來愈熱之外，極端天氣出現得愈來愈頻密，例如極乾旱和暴雨的情況亦會愈來愈多，海平面隨著冷蓋融化和海水受熱膨脹而繼續上升，如果有超強颱風吹襲，香港受破紀錄風暴潮的威脅就更大了。

為了我們和下一代着想，作為地球公民，應該要立定決心改變生活模式，節約用水用電，減少駕駛，降低碳排放，改變消費模式，實行低碳綠色生活，將物品循環利用、再造，從源頭減廢，大家要記得啦！



大風將身體的熱力很快帶走，令到身體感覺到特別凍，稱為風寒效應。影片截圖

布安東(歷史系博士，興趣遊走於中西歷史文化及古典音樂。)

香港天文台(本欄以天文台的網上氣象節目《氣象冷知識》向讀者簡介有趣的氣象現象。詳情可瀏覽天文台YouTube專頁: https://www.youtube.com/user/hkweather。)

