



# Bacterial invasion of Tamar must not be taken lightly

An "unusual scene" was seen yesterday outside the new government headquarters and Legislative Council (Legco) complex at Tamar: water-supply trucks rolling in one after another and workers busy **carting** water in plastic barrels inside the complex. Hong Kong people have always regarded water as a symbol of good fortune. But this time, the SAR Government is having a headache over water. Bacteria causing Legionnaires disease had been found in the water supply system in the two-tower blocks. As a result, water supply had to be suspended for 36 hours for a major cleanout of the water supply system.

Thomas Tsang Ho-fai, controller of the Centre for Health Protection, yesterday stressed that the cause of the problem was still not clear and further checks were required. Whatever causes there may be, however, it is absurd and unacceptable that a newly completed government and Legco complex, which was put into operation only less than half a year ago, could be found to be full of such bacteria, with a secretary admitted to hospital and the water supply for law-makers suspended. This incident is a serious matter.

According to what has been publicized as of yesterday, the bacteria had been found in many locations on various floors in the two towers, including the offices of the Chief Executive, Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury Caejer Chan Ka-keung, Secretary for Labour and Welfare Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, Secretary for the Civil Service Denise Yue Chung-ye, Secretary for Transport and Housing Eva Cheng Yu-wah and Secretary for Security Ambrose Lee Siu-kgwong, as well as the canteen and café in the government headquarters building and the kitchen of the Legco banquet hall. It is hard to imagine what a horrible situation it would be, if CE Donald Tsang Yam-kuen and the five secretaries were all infected and **fell ill**, with many civil servants at various levels falling sick, and the honourable lawmakers and their honourable guests also falling ill!

Needless to say, as Thomas Tsang put it, the discovery of the bacteria does not necessarily result in an epidemic outbreak. Secretary of Education Michael Suen Ming-yeung fell ill because his immune system is weak due to a chronic kidney disease. But it cannot be entirely **ruled out** that other "healthy and fit" persons could be infected. Therefore, before the causes are identified, it may be better for the CE and secretaries whose offices are found to contain the bacteria to consider moving out to work somewhere else, so that their health and work would not be affected.

Besides the threat to the health of the CE and officials, the incident has another negative impact which arouses citizens' concern. How is it that such a new building complex could have so quickly become a "paradise" for Legionnaires bacteria? Are there some artificial factors involved such as flaws in design or negligence in the acceptance checks and management?

**At the moment**, according to professionals, there could be two "crime culprits". One is that there may be flaws in design of the water supply system which enables bacteria to grow and accumulate in pipes. The other is that the pipes had not been cleaned up and carefully checked before they were put to use, due to a rush for the opening of the building complex. In this way, some bacteria originally inside some pipes have continued to grow and spread, with the situation **going from bad to worse**.

Perhaps one of the two assertions is true or even both are true. This is to be

checked and determined by specialists in building construction and water supply engineering. The current situation is somewhat similar to the outbreak of the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) years ago. At first, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and Department of Health racked their brains trying to find out how the virus spread, but in vain. It was not until later when repeated on-spot checks by relevant experts found cracks in a drainage pipe outside the wall of a building, was it realized that the wastes of a patient living on a higher floor together with toilet flush and bath water had "vaporized" and leaked through the cracks of the pipe, and then rose in between buildings through a "chimney effect". As a result, dozens of residents in the same building were infected. Severely hit by the epidemic, the building thus became known as the "SARS Building".

Now, an urgent task is to find out what caused the spread of the bacteria. Given the number of floors in both towers that have been infected, the bacteria have spread quite widely. Perhaps more offices other than those known ones have also been infected. For safety concerns, follow-up works must not be limited to "plugging up loopholes" but must focus on an overall and thorough clean-out and sterilization. Suspension of water supply causes temporary inconvenience, but there would be no end of trouble in future if the bacteria are not completely eliminated.

It is the cold of winter now. The Observatory has forecast that a cold front is arriving. Legionnaires disease is a respiratory disease. The aged and weak people are most vulnerable to it. It can develop into a fatal pneumonia. In Hong Kong in the past, Legionnaires symptoms were also found in some office buildings with central air-conditioning systems with a number of people falling ill. Now the bird flu also seems to be making a comeback. Citizens must heighten their vigilance and exercise caution and care.

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## WORDS AND USAGE

① **Cart** (verb) – To take something somewhere in a cart, truck etc. ( 用車載運 )

Examples: 1. Household waste is carted away by the city's Sanitation Department. 2. We use this to cart the goods.

② **Fall ill** (idiom) – To become ill. ( 生病，病倒 )

Examples: 1. She had to stay home because her son fell ill. 2. We both fell ill after eating the baked fish.

③ **Rule out** (phrasal verb) – To remove from consideration; exclude. ( 排除……的可能性 )

Examples: 1. The regulations rule out anyone under the age of eighteen. 2. The police have ruled out suicide.

④ **At the moment** (idiom) – Now; at present. ( 目前，眼下 ) (This idiom is often used to suggest that the situation may change soon)

Examples: 1. At the moment the flood is receding, but more rain is expected tonight. 2. At the moment I'm living with my parents.

⑤ **Go from bad to worse** (idiom) – To progress from a bad situation to one that is worse. ( 每況愈下，一發不可收拾 )

Examples: 1. Under the new management, business of the company has gone from bad to worse. 2. Things went from bad to worse in a matter of days.

# 新總部大樓病菌為患不可輕視

添馬艦政府新總部及立法會大樓門外昨日出現「奇景」：一輛輛水車駛至，大批工人推着大型塑膠桶忙於往樓內「運水」。港人素重「水為財」好意頭，但特區政府這回卻要為水而頭痛，大樓供水系統因發現「退伍軍人」病菌而要三十六小時停水進行清洗消毒工作。

衛生防護中心主任曾浩輝昨日強調，有關原因仍有待進一步化驗及查證，但無論如何，建成啟用不足半年的政府新總部及立法會大樓，竟會細菌為患、局長入院、議員斷水，實在是令人不能接受的荒謬事情，且性質是嚴重的。

試想，以最新公布的「菌點」來說，包括「特首辦」及財經事務局局長陳家強、勞工福利局局長張建宗、公務員事務局局長俞宗怡、運輸及房屋局局長鄭汝樺及保安局局長李少光的辦公室，地點遍布整幢大樓的不同座數及樓層，還有總部大樓食堂、咖啡廳及立法會宴會廳的廚房水龍頭，水樣也被驗出帶菌。如此實在很難想像，一旦特首曾蔭權及五位局長全部受感染病倒，還有大批在食堂、咖啡廳用膳的各級公務員病倒，尊貴議員及他們的尊貴賓客病倒，那將會是怎樣可怕的一個局面！

當然，正如曾浩輝所說，發現病菌不等於就一定會爆發疫情，「中招」的教育局局長孫明揚患有慢性腎病免疫力較低，但其他「健康人」被感染的機會也不能完全排除，因此眼前原因尚未查明之際，特首及幾位已證實洗手間有菌的局長宜考慮暫時另覓辦公地點，以免影響健康及工作。

而事件的不良影響，除了對特首、官員的健康構成威脅外，更令市民關注的，是新大樓何以會極速成為「退伍軍人」細菌活動的「天堂」？這裡面是否涉及到一些人為因素，包括設計、驗收、管



▲運水車為添馬艦政府新總部大樓供水

理上的疏忽？眼前，根據相關專業人士的說法，「元兇」大概有兩個，一是供水系統的設計有誤，管道易於滋生及積存細菌；二是當日為趕工開幕，水管安裝後沒有清洗乾淨、也沒有認真驗收就付諸使用，原本在部分水管內的細菌繼續生長蔓延，以至一發不可收拾。

兩種說法，可能二居其一，也可能兩者都有問題，這就有待樓宇建築、供水工程及細菌病毒專家去排查驗證。就如當年「沙士」爆發，食環署、衛生署對病毒「播毒」途徑百思不得其解，後來經相關專家反覆現場查

證，才發現原來是大廈外牆的去水管有裂縫，高層病人的糞便及沖廁水、洗手水經管道裂縫「霧化」四散，再經樓與樓之間狹窄的「煙囪效應」上升，導致同一大廈內數十名住客染疫，成了十分駭人的重災區「沙士大廈」。

當前急務，首要是查明原因，而從已公布的樓層、座數看來，細菌的分布、走向已相當廣泛，可能遠不止已公布的幾個「辦」，為萬全計，末來的跟進工作不能只作局部「堵漏」，而是必須全面、徹底的進行一次消毒及清洗，暫停供水只是一時不便，不把細菌徹底消滅則可能後患無窮。

眼前正值寒冬，天文台昨日已宣布冷鋒將至，「退伍軍人症」屬呼吸道疾病，對年老體弱者尤其不利，嚴重者可致奪命肺炎，而本港一些中央冷氣系統的密封式寫字樓大廈過去也曾出現過「退伍軍人」症候群，多人染病，加上「禽流感」陰影又至，市民務必要提高警覺，多加小心。

2012/01/04 大公報社評

## 通識記憶體

### 新政府總部入伙半年問題較多

添馬艦新政府總部自去年5月交樓後，短短半年內已挖出5個問題：

2011年8月15日：一名警員在搜查期間，從假天花墮下重傷

2011年8月16日：由金鐘通往大樓的天橋金屬支架的「全焊」變成「點焊」

2011年11月29日：一名保安員在大樓當值期間，被突然塌下的假天花擊中頭部

2011年12月底：教育局局長孫明揚確診感

染退伍軍人症；後在其辦公室私人洗手間發現有關桿菌

退伍軍人症源於美國費城》》》

最近孫明揚感染退伍軍人症，令公眾懷疑收樓準則、是否有因趕工而跳過某些程序步驟等，亦怕會大規模爆發。初次看「退伍軍人症」這名字，可能會令人聯想成軍人退下戰場後，以為自己仍身在戰場

# 《十月圍城》捧楊衢雲諷孫中山 材料取自唐德剛《晚清七十年》

多月前收聽香港電台《辛亥百年檔案》，聽到主持人說《十月圍城》這部電影歪曲歷史。我於去年十一月廿六日看無綫播出該片，覺得大有同感。

影片開始，楊衢雲「教授」在輔仁文社大談革命，解釋「民主」一詞來源；鏡頭一轉，他被清吏刺殺，由孫中山「繼承」他的「遺志」，兩者都是歪曲歷史。據《楊衢雲略史》記載，輔仁文社只是「交換知識、研究學術之所」，楊談革命，在與孫中山認識時開始，而孫搞民族革命「經已數年」，孫要開會組成革命團體，楊要孫到廣州開會，結果，會在輔仁文社成立的第二年在廣州開成，乃談組織興中會事，楊留香港，不去參加，尤列回港告訴他，他也未有表示，直到孫中山把興中會移來香港，楊衢雲才參加，輔仁文社即時解散。歷史就這樣說明輔仁文社存在的三年間，與革命無關；也未嘗提過「民主」二字。既然孫中山搞革命比楊早，說是孫「繼承」楊的「遺志」，簡直開觀眾

玩笑。

《十月圍城》如此處理孫、楊關係，是依照唐德剛《晚清七十年》的內容。此書把輔仁文社說成「第一個革命團體」，孫中山是跟着楊衢雲革命。唐氏這個結論，是用「移花接木」、「時光倒流」等手法顛倒是非混淆黑白而成。這部電影的編劇，只是做了唐氏的尾巴。

《十月圍城》通過兩種手法暗諷（實即詆毀）孫中山：一是借香港富商李玉堂（影射李煜堂）之口，埋怨孫中山需索多多，貪得無厭；一是假設孫中山「登陸」香港，由大批革命同志保護，包括李玉堂之子李重光（影射參與組織同盟會香港分會的李自重）做替身，結果引起大量同志傷亡，李公子也犧牲，其父撫屍痛哭。其實，同盟會時期，港英是禁孫中山入境的，香港從未出現過「大量同志保護孫中山而引起傷亡」的事。這兩種手法，也取材於唐德剛在《晚清七十年》所用的諷孫「貪財」與「累死人」的手法。 容若

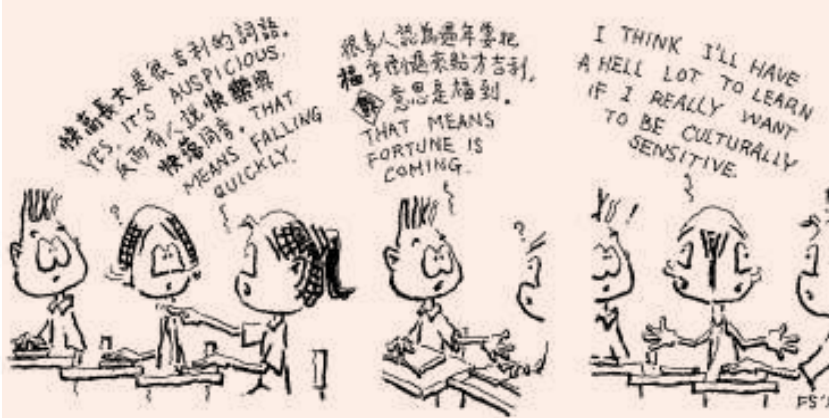
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## SOHO DIARY



# The Need to be Culturally Sensitive

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I said "Happy New Year" to all foreigners I met during the past few days. But when I met a Hongkonger, I said "New Year, Good Progress"（新年進步）.

Of course, if I said "Make good progress in the New Year" or "A better New Year" to foreigners, they would also understand. However, their reactions might be slower because the words were not so familiar to them as traditional greetings.

I know some old folks who dislike saying "Happy New Year" in Cantonese. Why? Because "happy" in Cantonese sounds like "going down quickly"（快落）. At a time when so many economists have given a forecast that the economy will "go down" further, people are worrying about the future and the

investments they have made.

So, this year, I think I should be particularly careful while choosing the words of greetings. Perhaps I should also remind myself not to greet people with the word "happy" in Cantonese.

I know it sounds superstitious or even silly to take care of these unnecessary things. But somehow, I have to be culturally sensitive. After all, it is not a nice thing to make people unhappy during the first few days of the new year. Looking back, the year 2011 is already considered by many observers as one of the most eventful years in world history.

That reminds me of an old question: being bilingual is sometimes funny because we tend to filter what we say in at least two ways instead of one before it comes out as words.