

# 操之過急

*cao1 zhi1 guo4 ji2*

The Highways Department admitted the artificial island for the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge near Tuen Mun had drifted one to 2.9 meters. But it stressed that the drift was not 3.5m as reported by journalist blogger Howard Winn.

Whatever the distance of the drift, it required remedial work, and tunneling work was held up. Still, the department said the situation is steady after assessment by consultants. It did not say whether it is steadily bad, steadily good or steadily worsening.

But it insisted the end of 2017 remains the target for finishing the first stage of the project. One may set whatever target one wants, but achieving it is, of course, quite another matter.

Laymen just could not comprehend how a HK\$7 billion-150-hectare man-made island could just “drift.” The government said it was due to new construction technology. Winn’s blog post said an engineer told him it was due to the attempt

## Idiom by Lon Yan

to speed up the settlement of the reclamation. In other words, it was the result of “操之過急” (*cao1 zhi1 guo4 ji2*).

“操” (*cao1*) is “to act,” “之” (*zhi1*) “this,” “that,” “過” (*guo4*) “over,” “excessively,” and “急” (*ji2*) “fast,” “rapid.” Literally, “操之過急” (*cao1 zhi1 guo4 ji2*) is “to act overly fast.” The idiom means “to act precipitately or impulsively,” “to act with undue haste,” “eager and impatient,” “over-hasty.”

There is another saying that warns against being rash in your actions. It is “欲速則不達” (*yu4 su4 ze2 bu4 da2*), meaning “if you want to speed things up, you will end up not getting to your destination.”

### Terms containing the character “急” (*ji2*) include:

心急 (*xin1 ji2*) – impatient

急救 (*ji2 jiu4*) – first aid

急需 (*ji2 xu1*) – to need urgently

急症室 (*ji2 zheng4 shi4*) – accident and emergency department