



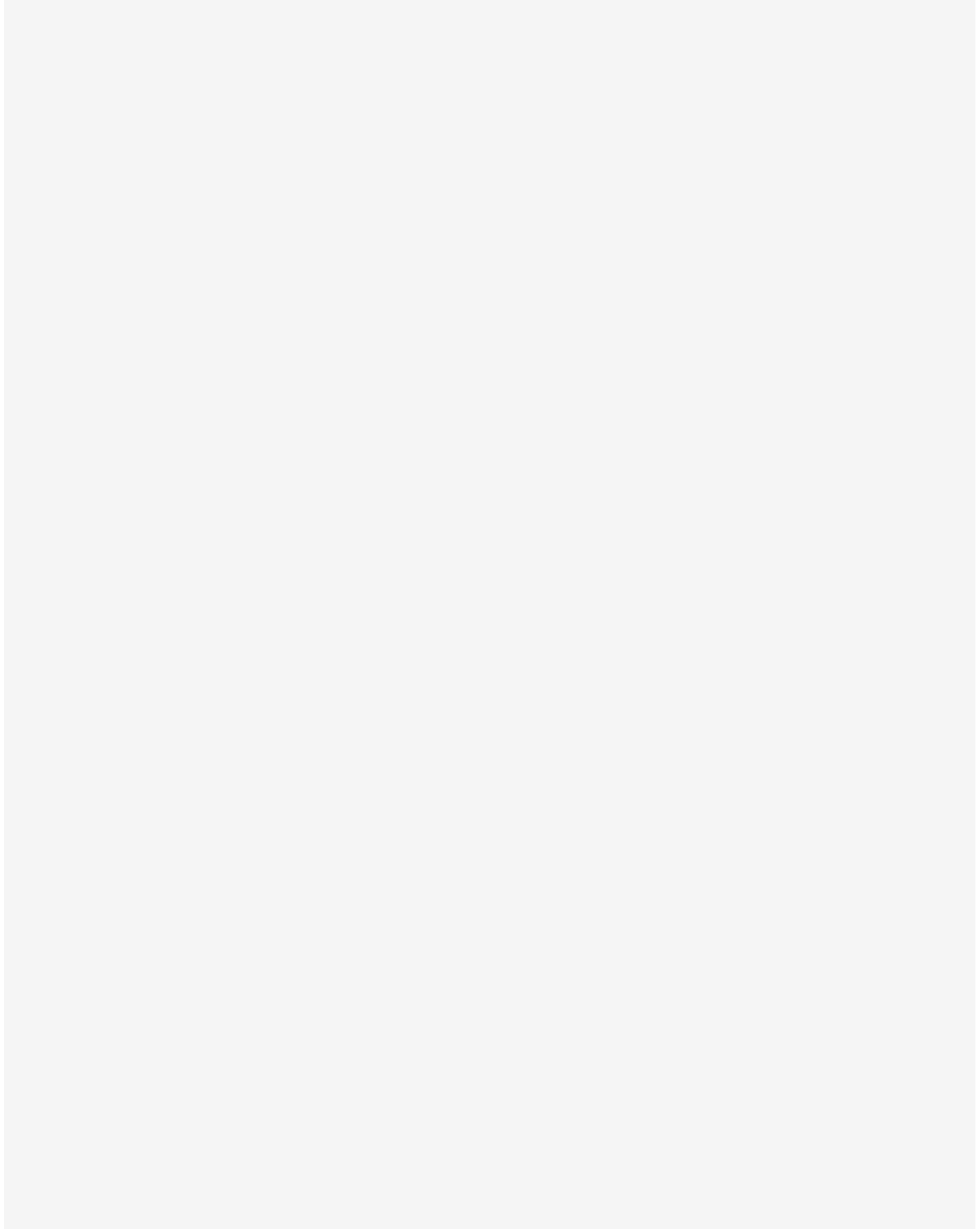
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June 30, 2022

Bamboo curtains

Marcelo Duhalde

Graphic **on maximun size**





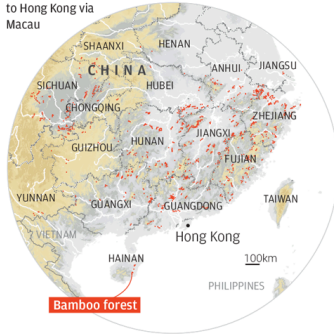
Bamboo curtains

Hong Kong is one of the last places in the world where bamboo is still widely used for scaffolding in construction. It is flexible, strong and cheaper than steel and aluminium — metal alternatives that are now more commonly used on the mainland and elsewhere in Asia. In Hong Kong, skilled armies of scaffolders can erect enough bamboo to engulf a building in a day using techniques that are thousands of years old, and have been passed down through generations.

By Victor Sanjinez and Marcelo Duhalde

Origins

Hong Kong's scaffolding bamboo typically comes from Guangdong province and the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region. The bamboo is usually transported to Hong Kong via Macau

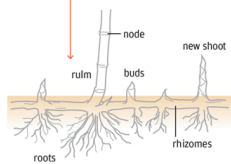


Anatomy

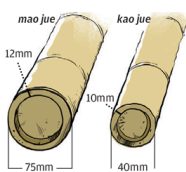
Bamboo is one of the fastest-growing plants in the world, and in some cases can grow 60cm a day, and eventually reach a height of 40 metres



Bamboo has thick underground roots called rhizomes, which can grow quickly, creating new shoots metres away



In Hong Kong, two types of bamboo are used in most scaffolding



It can be difficult to erect scaffolding that is safe and steady on some older buildings with weakened exterior structures

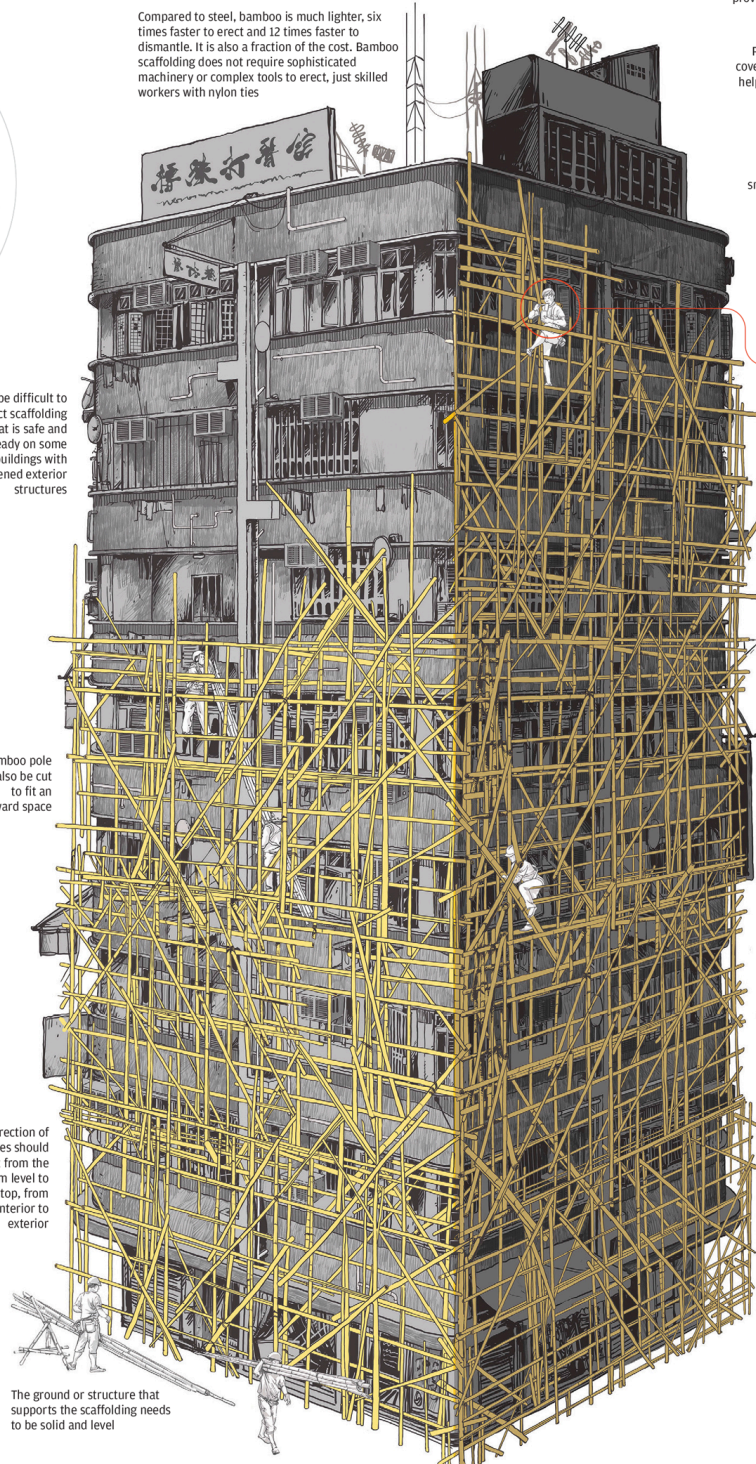
A bamboo pole can also be cut to fit an awkward space

Erection of structures should start from the bottom level to the top, from interior to exterior

The ground or structure that supports the scaffolding needs to be solid and level

Building a bamboo scaffold

Compared to steel, bamboo is much lighter, six times faster to erect and 12 times faster to dismantle. It is also a fraction of the cost. Bamboo scaffolding does not require sophisticated machinery or complex tools to erect, just skilled workers with nylon ties



The worker's gear

Gloves to protect hands from injuries and provide grip for climbing

Protective sleeves to cover from the sun, and help protect arms from sharp surfaces

Workers carry a handsaw and a small bag with tools

Safety shoes with a non-slip sole

Nylon strips to make the ties



Scaffolders may spend all day many storeys up, even eating lunch there. Bottles may be needed for bathroom breaks



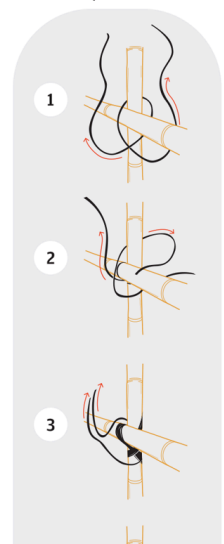
Working in Hong Kong's summer heat can be uncomfortable for scaffolders. Proper hydration and sun protection are important

Preparing a knot



Scaffolders risk injury every day from falls or being struck by debris

Knot technique



Scaffolding for signboards

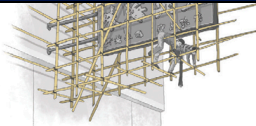
Single-layered scaffolding

Double-layered scaffolding

Truss-out scaffolding

For building construction or major renovations

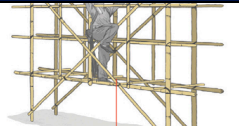
Workers first part



They are typically of cantilever construction. The entire scaffold is supported by steel wires or hanging posts attached to the structural elements of a building



These are connected with horizontal beams to fix their position



Three kao jue poles are erected between the two mao jue poles



Working platforms are erected between the layers

Often used as an exterior platform for minor repair work of external drain pipes, spalling concrete and external rendering

Scan for a deep dive of this graphic online



Sources: The Craft of Bamboo Scaffolder, Dan Waters; Evolution of Bamboo Scaffolding for Building Construction in Hong Kong from the 1960s to the Present Day, Frankie Lee Hong Lam; Occupational Safety and Health branch Labour Department; Climbing scaffolding in Hong Kong's building construction (University of Hong Kong)

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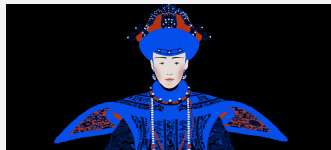
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