

# 苟延殘喘

*gou3 yan2 can2 chuan3*

Asia Television has, again, delayed paying wages, so more of the remaining staff left, including those in top management.

With nobody working, daily news programs were suspended, in violation of license conditions. Also, the station failed to pay license fees, and has been fined a total of HK\$200,000 for that.

Established in 1957, Hong Kong's oldest television station looks set to cease broadcasting when its license expires shortly. The station has been struggling for years with financial troubles, and its current state can only be described as “苟延殘喘” (*gou3 yan2 can2 chuan3*).

“苟” (*gou3*) “just,” “merely,” “barely,” “延” (*yan2*) “to extend,” “to prolong,” “to postpone,” “殘” (*can2*) “remnant,” “remaining,” and “喘” (*chuan3*) “to pant,” “to gasp for air,” “a gasp.” “殘喘” (*can2 chuan3*) “lingering breath of life.”

## Idiom by Lon Yan

Literally, “苟延殘喘” (*gou3 yan2 can2 chuan3*) is “barely prolonging the lingering breath of life,” “just extending the last gasp.” It means “to linger on,” “to be at one’s last gasp,” “to prolong one’s last gasp,” “to drag out one’s feeble existence.”

This hopeless condition is also described by the idiom “奄奄一息” (*yan3 yan3 yi4 xi1*). The idiom is used to describe patients who are nearing death, with little or no hope of recovering. It is also generally applicable to an organization or an endeavor that is heading towards certain demise (失敗).

For the dying entity, “苟延殘喘” (*gou3 yan2 can2 chuan3*) is futile suffering, and the process is painful to watch.

### Terms containing the character “延” (*yan2*) include:

延長 (*yan2 chang2*) – to extend, to prolong, to lengthen

延期 (*yan2 qi1*) – to postpone, to defer

延續 (*yan2 xu4*) – to continue, to last

拖延 (*tuo1 yan2*) – to put off, to procrastinate