

謀財害命

mou2 cai2 hai4 ming4

The head-bashing gangs are back. A couple of robberies using this vicious method took place within a few hours in East Kowloon.

The robbers targeted people returning home alone in the wee hours of the morning. A woman was ambushed outside her building in Lam Tin; a man was accosted by four robbers inside a pedestrian subway.

The cases were separate, but they share the same *modus operandi* - the victims were hit on the head with a hard object.

Robbing people is bad enough, bashing them on the head is worse. Doctors said such injuries could crack the skull, cause brain hemorrhages and be fatal. It was just luck that the two victims weren't killed, but the intention of the robbers was clearly “謀財害命” (*mou2 cai2 hai4 ming4*), or at least they didn't care if the victims died.

“謀” (*mou2*) is “to plan,” “to scheme,” “財”

Idiom by Lon Yan

(*cai2*) “money,” “wealth,” “害” (*hai4*) “to injure,” “to harm,” “to kill,” “to murder” and “命” (*ming4*) is life. Literally, “謀財害命” (*mou2 cai2 hai4 ming4*) is “ploy for money, kill life.”

It means “to commit murder out of greed,” “to murder for gain,” “to plot and kill someone for his property,” “to murder for money.”

Money obtained by “謀財害命” (*mou2 cai2 hai4 ming4*), or any other wrongful, unethical and illegal means are called “不義之財” (*bu2 yi4 zhi1 cai2*) - ill-gotten gains, and people who kill for money are “財迷心竅” (*cai2 mi2 xin1 qiao4*) - to be befuddled by a craving for wealth.

Terms containing the character “謀” (*mou2*) include:

謀殺 (*mou2 sha1*) - murder

謀生 (*mou2 sheng1*) - to make a living

陰謀 (*yin1 mou2*) - a conspiracy

計謀 (*ji4 mou2*) - a scheme; a ploy; a strategy