

否極泰來

pi3 ji2 tai4 lai2

Tourism in Hong Kong is picking up after a year-long depression. July numbers for both mainland and foreign visitors have started to rise.

There are also signs of a revival in the local property market. Home prices were reported to have stabilized in the past two months, with one major bank expecting house prices to rise 8 percent in the second half.

Hopefully the stock market will also revive, and we will see “否極泰來” (*pi3 ji2 tai4 lai2*) for local markets and the economy, which have been disappointing.

“否” (*pi3*) is “evil,” “bad,” “極” (*ji2*) is “the utmost,” “the extreme,” “to reach the final point,” “泰” (*tai4*) “safe and tranquil,” “peaceful,” “calm,” “healthy” and “來” (*lai2*) “to come,” “to arrive.” Literally, “否極泰來” (*pi3 ji2 tai4 lai2*) is “after bad extremes peace and calm returns.”

The idiom means “after extreme bad luck comes good luck,” “out of the depths of misfortune come

Idiom by Lon Yan

bliss,” “when misfortune reaches the limit, good fortune is at hand.”

“否極泰來” (*pi3 ji2 tai4 lai2*) is just the way the world works. It is actually quite logical. When you hit rock bottom, where else can you go but up?

But nothing will go up forever, not property prices and certainly not the value of stocks or currencies. So when the stock or homes markets, or anything for that matter, have risen to great heights, it is time for caution.

There is no such idiom as “泰極否來” (*tai4 ji2 pi3 lai2*) – after extreme good luck, bad luck comes, but it must be true too.

Terms containing the character “泰” (*tai4*) include:

康泰 (*kang1 tai4*) – in good health;

泰適 (*tai4 shi4*) – comfortable

泰然自若 (*tai4 ran2 zi4 ruo4*) – calm, unperturbed

泰國 (*tai4 guo2*) – Thailand