

朋比為奸

peng2 bi3 wei4 jian1

The development of Wang Chau in Yuen Long has erupted into a huge controversy.

Allegations and accusations have been flying regarding the drastic reduction of planned public housing units from 17,000 to 4,000.

The government has been accused of a lot of things. These include “官商勾結” (*guan1 shang1 gou1 jie2*) government collusion with business; “官商鄉勾結” (*guan1 shang1 xiang1 gou1 jie2*) – government collusion with business and village landlords, as well as “官商鄉黑勾結” – (*guan1 shang1 xiang1 hei1 gou1 jie2*), government collusion with business, village landlords and triads.

“勾結” (*gou1 jie2*) means “to collude”, “to conspire.” Clearly, the list of parties involved in Wang Chau “勾結” (*gou1 jie2*) is getting so long that it is becoming hard to follow.

In fact, all such forms of “勾結” (*gou1 jie2*) can be

Idiom by Lon Yan

more simply expressed by the umbrella idiom “朋比為奸” (*peng2 bi3 wei4 jian1*).

“朋” (*peng2*) is “a friend,” “朋比” (*peng2 bi3*) means “to conspire,” “為” (*wei4*) “to do,” “for,” and “奸” (*jian1*) “crafty,” “wicked,” “evil.” Literally, “朋比為奸” (*peng2 bi3 wei4 jian1*) is “conspire for wicked purposes.”

“朋比為奸” (*peng2 bi3 wei4 jian1*) means “to conspire,” “to gang up,” “to conspire for illegal or selfish ends.”

The idiom does not apply only to collusion involving the government. Whenever two or more parties come together to pursue an evil goal, we can call them “朋比為奸” (*peng2 bi3 wei4 jian1*).

Terms containing the character “奸” (*jian1*) include:

奸人 (*jian1 ren2*) – a crafty scoundrel; villain

奸商 (*jian1 shang1*) – an unscrupulous trader

奸夫 (*jian1 fu1*) – a male adulterer

奸官 (*jian1 guan1*) – a treacherous official