

Idiom by Lon Yan

急不可待

ji2 bu4 ke3 dai4

What shouldn't you do if you are in a big hurry and your bus is stuck in a traffic jam?

Answer: You shouldn't push open the emergency door and exit the bus.

But that was exactly what a young man has done recently. His stunt, captured on video and posted online, drew flak.

It was, of course, very dangerous to get off a vehicle in the middle of moving traffic. Even if you don't get killed, a fine of HK\$3,000 and/or six month jail awaits anyone who opens an emergency exit on a bus when there isn't an emergency.

In this case, the man made his exit because the traffic wasn't moving, but his action was, nonetheless, inadvisable and risky. One comment said the man should not get sympathy should he be ran over by another

vehicle. Another netizen jokingly remarked that the man sure was in a big hurry.

The idiom to describe the man's state of mind is “急不可待” (*ji2 bu4 ke3 dai4*).

“急” (*ji2*) is “urgent,” “pressing,” “anxious,” “不可” (*bu4 ke3*) “cannot,” “should not” and “待” (*dai4*) “to wait.” Literally, “急不可待” (*ji2 bu4 ke3 dai4*) is “anxious and cannot wait.”

The idiom means “too impatient to wait,” “extremely anxious,” “so urgent that there is no time for waiting,” or simply “impatient,” “eager to.”

Another version of “急不可待” (*ji2 bu4 ke3 dai4*) is “急不及待” (*ji2 bu4 ji2 dai4*). But no matter how “急” (*ji2*) you are, being rash is never a good policy and usually doesn't end well.

Terms containing the character “急” (*ji2*) include:

急切 (*ji2 qie4*) – in a hurry; anxious

急速 (*ji2 su4*) – very fast; hurriedly; at high speed

急症 (*ji2 zheng4*) – an acute disease; an emergency case

救急 (*jiu4 ji2*) – first aid