

# Idiom by Lon Yao

## 信口雌黃

*xin4 kou3 ci2 huang2*

Chief executive Leung Chun-ying has filed a defamation lawsuit against lawmaker Kenneth Leung Kai-cheong over statements the latter was alleged to have made about payment made to the chief executive by Australian firm UGL.

The remarks in question were said to have been made during a press conference by 26 pro-democracy lawmakers.

Backed by about a group of pro-democracy legislators, Kenneth Leung fired back, vowing he won't be muzzled in his work as a legislator and in the select committee that is probing the UGL payment.

The litigation is ongoing, and it is for the court to decide which of the two Leungs should prevail. The matter has, meanwhile, sparked a controversy about whether a chief executive of the SAR should take such action.

In any event, defamation cases is a

reminder for one to be careful with words, especially when speaking publicly. To do the opposite is “信口雌黃” (*xin4 kou3 ci2 huang2*), which could land you in trouble even if you are the most powerful man in the world, like Donald Trump.

“信口” (*xin4 kou3*) means “to blurt out,” “to open one’s mouth without thinking.” “雌黃” (*ci2 huang2*) is “yellow ochre, yellow pigment,” as a verb, it means “to make irresponsible remarks,” “to wag one’s tongue too freely.”

“信口雌黃” (*xin4 kou3 ci2 huang2*) means “to make irresponsible remarks,” “to make a malicious remark carelessly,” “to talk nonsense,” “to criticize freely without caution,” “to think without thought,” “to make deceitful statements,” “to bring unfounded charges.”

“信口雌黃” (*xin4 kou3 ci2 huang2*) is a bad habit, irrespective of your position, age or the occasion in which you speak.

### Terms containing the character “黃” (*huang2*) include:

黃金 (*huang2 jin1*) – gold

黃色 (*huang2 se4*) – yellow

黃昏 (*huang2 hun1*) – dusk; nightfall

黃河 (*huang2 he2*) – the Yellow River