

Idiom by Lon Yan

遠走高飛

yuan3 zou3 gao1 fei1

Official figures showed more Hongkongers are emigrating and people are blaming it on the poor political climate. An earlier survey also showed that 42 percent of locals wanted to emigrate because they weren't happy with the place, housing, the quality of the government and education in particular.

Immigration consultants, meanwhile, noted that people are worried about deepening conflicts in the society and they expect more people to leave. The idiom “遠走高飛” (*yuan3 zou3 gao1 fei1*) comes to mind.

“遠” (*yuan3*) is “far,” “distant,” “走” (*zou3*) “to run,” “to go away,” “to go swiftly,” “高” (*gao1*) “tall,” “high” and “飛” (*fei1*) “to fly.” Literally, “遠走高飛” (*yuan3 zou3 gao1 fei1*) is “to run far and fly high.”

The idiom means “to go far,” “to be off to

distant parts,” “to escape to faraway places,” “to slip away to distant place.” For “遠走高飛” (*yuan3 zou3 gao1 fei1*) to apply, the person must have travel to a faraway place. People travel far for pleasure or for work, but we don't call those trips “遠走高飛” (*yuan3 zou3 gao1 fei1*).

“遠走高飛” (*yuan3 zou3 gao1 fei1*) involves running away from something, leaving to avoid trouble or some unpleasant circumstances. The idiom can be used to describe an eloping couple, or a gambler who runs away from loan shark.

Though we don't often use the idiom to describe people emigrating, it is nonetheless applicable as people who emigrate from Hong Kong are running away from things they don't like.

Terms containing the character “遠” (*yuan3*) include:

遙遠 (*yao2 yuan3*) – faraway; distant; far-off; remote

長遠 (*chang2 yuan3*) – long-term

遠離 (*yuan3 li2*) – to be distant from; to give a wide berth

跳遠 (*tiao4 yuan3*) – long jump