

Idiom by Lon Yan

一枝獨秀

yi4 zhi1 du2 xiu4i4

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Gregory So Kam-leung reported to lawmakers the business performance of Hong Kong's fleet of new food trucks in their first four months of operation. Income ranged from HK\$200,000 to over HK\$1 million.

Only one truck reached the million dollar mark, two made HK\$800,000, one HK\$700,000, two others earned HK\$400,000, and three over HK\$200,000. Two trucks earned below HK\$200,000 because they have a late start and have only been in business for less than two months.

So said location is a main factor affecting business. The one stationed outside the Hong Kong Disneyland, he said, has been doing brisk business while those at the Energizing Kowloon East Venue 1 in Kwun Tong, the Central Harbourfront Event Space, and

outside the Ocean Park weren't doing as well.

The media described the best-performing truck as “一枝獨秀” (yi4 zhi1 du2 xiu4).

“一” (yi4) is “one,” “single,” “枝” (zhi1) “branches of a plant;” “classifier for sticks, rods, pencils etc.” “獨” (du2) “single,” “alone,” “only,” and “秀” (xiu4) “beautiful,” “excellent,” “handsome,” “refined.” Literally, “一枝獨秀” (yi4 zhi1 du2 xiu4i4) is “one branch is particularly thriving;” “flowers blooming only on one branch of the plant.”

The idiom means “to outshine others.” It can be used to describe people or things. When all sectors are slow in an economic downturn, but one sector remains robust, we can say it is “一枝獨秀” (yi4 zhi1 du2 xiu4).

An idiom with a similar meaning is “獨領風騷” (du2 ling3 feng1 sao1) which means “most outstanding,” “par excellence.”

Terms containing the character “獨” (du2) include:

獨立 (du2 li4) – to be independent; independence

獨特 (du2 te4) – unique; distinctive; unusual

獨自 (du2 zi4) – alone, singly

獨裁 (du2 cai2) – dictatorship; autocratic