

Idiom by Lon Yan

引咎辭職

yin3 jiu4 ci2 zhi2

Typhoon Hato swept Macau, killing at least eight people and injured nearly 200 others. The government of the Macau SAR took heavy blame for its impotent response to the devastating typhoon.

Chief executive Fernando Hui Sai-on promised to review and improve the government's weather forecasting system as well as emergency response and rescue ability, and his weather chief Fong Soikun resigned. We call resignation in such circumstances “引咎辭職” (yin3 jiu4 ci2 zhi2).

“引” (yin3) is “to pull,” “to draw,” “咎” (jiu4) “fault,” “blame.” “引咎” (yin3 jiu4) is “to take the blame on oneself,” “to accept responsibility.” “辭職” (ci2 zhi2) means “to resign,” “resignation.”

“引咎辭職” (yin3 jiu4 ci2 zhi2), literally, is “take the blame and resign,” which is what it means

“引咎辭職” (yin3 jiu4 ci2 zhi2) is “to admit responsibility and resign,” “to acknowledge one's mistake and resign,” “to admit responsibility and resign.”

Even after committing serious error, not all officials would “引咎” (yin3 jiu4) – take the blame, let alone “辭職” (ci2 zhi2) – resign. So they would sometimes have to be removed, like the commander of the US 7th Fleet Vice Adm. Joseph Aucoin, who seemed quite unable to prevent his warships from getting into accidents.

He was dismissed after the latest incident in which 10 sailors went missing and feared dead when the guided-missile destroyer USS John S. McCain collided with a merchant ship. A statement from the 7th fleet said Aucoin was relieved of his duties “due to a loss of confidence in his ability to command.”

Terms containing the character “職” (zhi2) include:

職業 (zhi2 ye4) – an occupation; a profession; a vocation

失職 (shi1 zhi2) – to neglect one's duty; dereliction of duty

述職 (shu4 zhi2) – to report on one's official work

官職 (guan1 zhi2) – a government post; an official position