

Idiom by Lon Yan

窮途末路

qiong2 tu2 mo4 lu4

A few months ago when the Court of Appeal rejected Baggio Leung Chung-hang and Yau Wai-ching's application for leave to appeal against their disqualification from the Legislative Council, the two vowed to fight on.

You declared at the time "This is not the end." What she meant was that she and Leung would take their case to the Court of Final Appeal, which they did. But recently, the Court of Final Appeal also turned down their application.

As the Court of Final Appeal was their last chance to seek reinstatement, this is the end. Their situation can be said to be "窮途末路" (*qiong2 tu2 mo4 lu4*) as far as trying to seek reinstatement of their Legco seats is concerned.

"窮" (*qiong2*) is "destitute," "poor," "exhausted," "end," "途" (*tu2*) "a road," "a way." "途窮" (*qiong2 tu2*) means "to come to the end of a road," "at the end of one's resources." "末" (*mo4*) "end," and "路" (*lu4*) "a path," "a route," "road." "末路" (*mo4 lu4*) is "the end of the road," "final road," "the end."

Literally, "窮途末路" (*qiong2 tu2 mo4 lu4*) is "the end of the road," "the path exhausted." Figuratively, the idiom means "in an extremely distressed or difficult state," "in dire straits," "an impasse," "in a plight with no way out."

Apart from being "窮途末路" (*qiong2 tu2 mo4 lu4*) in seeking legal recourse, the two's situation also seems rather dismal in other respects – they are in dire financial straits as they are facing hefty legal bills while the Legislative Council is knocking on their doors asking for repayment of funds.

Terms containing the character "途" (*tu2*) include:

途徑 (*tu2 jing4*) – a way

途中 (*tu2 zhong1*) – on the way

歧途 (*qi2 tu2*) – a wrong path; a road of evil

途人 (*tu2 ren2*) – a passer-by; stranger