

Idiom by Lon Yan

事與願違

shi4 yu3 yuan4 wei2

To combat serious illegal parking in the city, the government proposed to increase parking ticket fines, heftily.

But when the proposal was tabled at the Legislative Council, members from both the pro and non-establishment camps, a rare show of unity, threw it out.

Members said you can't really blame the public for parking illegally when there isn't enough places to park legally. So, they told the government not to come back with the request again until they have tried harder to provide parking spaces.

Sensing possible rejection, the officials have already cut down on the amount of the requested increase before putting it for a vote. But still, the planned increase ended up a case of “事與願違” (*shi4 yu3 yuan4 wei2*)

for the government, reported Headline Daily.

“事” (*shi4*) is “affairs,” “business,” “matter,” “thing,” “與” (*yu3*) “and,” “願” (*yuan4*) “hope,” “wish,” “desire,” and “違” (*wei2*) is “to disobey,” “to defy,” to violate.” Literally, “事與願違” (*shi4 yu3 yuan4 wei2*) is “the matter is contrary to the wish.”

The idiom means “events do not happen as one wishes,” “to get the opposite of what one wants,” “to get an outcome cross to the purpose,” “things turn out contrary to the way one wishes.”

The opposite of “事與願違” (*shi4 yu3 yuan4 wei2*) is “如願以償” (*ru2 yuan4 yi3 chang2*) or its slightly different version “得償所願” (*de2 chang2 suo3 yuan4*), both meaning “to have one's wish fulfilled,” “to achieve what one wishes,” “to obtain what is desired.”

Terms containing the character “違” (*wei2*) include:

違法 (*wei2 fa3*) – illegal; wrongful

違背 (*wei2 bei4*) – to disobey; to violate

違約 (*wei2 yue1*) – to break a contract

違禁品 (*wei2 jin4 pin3*) – contraband