

殺一警百

shā yì jǐng bǎi

Stocks crashed in the mainland and the regulatory authorities (規管當局) blamed market manipulation. The Ministry of Public Security was called in to help find evidence of "malicious (惡意的) short selling of stocks and indexes."

Commenting on the move, an analyst in Shanghai said, "They will probably investigate a few accounts with big amounts of money and catch some as typical examples."

A Chinese idiom that describes this kind of action by law enforcement agencies is "殺一警百" (shā yì jǐng bǎi).

"殺" (shā) means kill, "一" (yì) is one, "警" (jǐng) is warn and "百" (bǎi) means one hundred. Literally, "殺一警百" is "kill one, warn one hundred". It means "to execute one offender as a warning to all."

This idiom is similar in meaning to the expression "make an example of", which means "punish as a warning to others."

Idiom by Lon Yan

The judge made an example of the defendant in the drug case by imposing the death penalty." We can use "殺一警百" in the sentence like this: "To 殺一警百, the judge imposed the death penalty on the defendant in the drug case."

"殺一警百" does not only apply to situations in which a person is actually killed. After all, the death penalty has long been abolished in Hong Kong. The idiom is commonly used to describe any situation in which one or a few offenders are punished to deter others. If workers habitually come to work late and the company fires two of them, the action can be described as "殺一警百".

Terms containing the character "警" (jǐng) include:

"警告" (jǐng gào) - to warn or put on guard

"警察" (jǐng chá) - policeman

"警方" (jǐng fāng) - the police authorities

"報警" (bào jǐng) - report to the police