The idiom comes from the saying “鷸蚌相爭，漁人得利 (yu4 bang4 xiang1 zheng1 yu2 ren2 de2 li4). “鷸” (yu4) is a sandpiper, and “蚌” (bang4) is a clam. The saying means “when the sandpiper and the clam grapple, the fisherman profits.”

The clam closed its shell on the beak of the sandpiper. Neither the bird nor the Bivalvia were going anywhere, so a fisherman who happened to pass by just picked them up and had a nice meal.

Figuratively, the idiom means “neighbors who can’t agree lose out to a third party.” And as people in Hong Kong fight each other, Macau has apparently become the fisherman.

Terms containing the character “利” (li4) include:

利潤 (li4 run4) – profit, returns
利用 (li4 yong4) – to exploit, to make use of
利益 (li4 yi4) – benefit, advantage
利誘 (li4 you4) – to lure by gain