Idiom by Lon Yan

Starting early is usually considered a better strategy, hence the idiom “先發制人” (xian1 fa1 zhi4 ren2) – the advantage of striking first. This is what people aim to do in war as well as in social and political fights. Commercially, it is referred to as the first-mover advantage.

But in some cases, waiting for the enemy to make a move first can give you an advantage, hence the expression “後發制人” (hou4 fa1 zhi4 ren2) – “to gain mastery by striking only after the enemy has struck” which clearly can work as is shown by Pakistan Star – or “巴基之星” (ba1 ji1 zhi1 xing1), which might someday become an idiom vindicating late bloomers.

Terms containing the character “發” (fa1) include:

發展 (fa1 zhan3) – to develop; to expand
發生 (fa1 sheng1) – to occur
發明 (fa1 ming2) – to invent
發財 (fa1 cai2) – to become rich