

Queen Elizabeth I of England signs the death warrant for her cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots

Oldest continuous writer of insurance in America opens, the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York (MONY)



First volume of the Oxford English Dictionary, A-Ant, is published

King Carlos I of Portugal and his heir, Prince Luís Filipe, are assassinated by Republican sympathizers in Terreiro do Paço, Lisbon



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Five years since the military seized power in Myanmar, impunity & widespread violations of international law persist. I remain deeply concerned by the deteriorating situation & stand in solidarity with the people of Myanmar.

@antonioguterres

02



Ten children have died from hypothermia in #Gaza since the onset of winter. As cold temperatures and heavy rains intensify, children and families sheltering in poorly insulated, makeshift structures face extreme exposure, with little protection from the elements.

@DrTedros

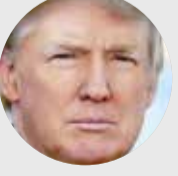
03



U-Inc. Making business truly borderless.

@vonderleyen

04



Last night I saw, "MELANIA," for the second time. The audience loved it, and so do I. Check it out — A MUST SEE!

@realDonaldTrump

Disclaimer: (Views expressed by columnists are personal and need not necessarily reflect our editorial stance)

Elephants and football diplomacy on Starmer's 'historic' China trip



Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer and British actor-producer Rosamund Pike meet with Chinese performing arts students at the Design Innovation Institute Shanghai, in Shanghai

● Starmer met with Chinese officials, including Xi, on Thursday.

● Starmer presented Xi Jinping with a football from a recent match between Arsenal -- Starmer's favourite club -- and Manchester United

● Starmer was tight-lipped on how discussions went over more contentious aspects of the relationship

AFP | Shanghai, China

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer concludes an official visit to China on Saturday -- a four-day tour of Beijing and Shanghai that he described as "historic".

While in the country, Starmer discussed trade, football and elephants with Chinese leader Xi Jinping. Here is what to know about the trip.

'Historic' visit

Starmer is the first British prime minister to visit China in eight years.

"They say that eight days is a long time in politics. Try eight years," he said upon arriving in Beijing.

Starmer met with Chinese officials, including Xi, on Thursday.

The two leaders spoke for about three hours -- longer than initially scheduled, Downing Street noted.

Clouding the visit was criticism by US President Donald Trump, who warned that rapprochement between London and Beijing was "very dangerous".

'The whole elephant'

Speaking to business leaders, Starmer summarised his goal in China with a parable.

"President Xi tells the story of blind men being presented with an elephant. One touches



Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi (R) and Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer shake hands

the leg and thinks it's a pillow. Another feels the belly and thinks it's a wall," Starmer said.

"Too often this reflects how China is seen. But I profoundly believe that broader and deeper engagement, which we've been talking about all this week, is our way of seeing the whole elephant and therefore building a more sophisticated relationship fit for these times."

Xi echoed calls for engagement, telling Starmer the countries should "strengthen dialogue and cooperation".

Football diplomacy

Starmer rarely misses an opportunity to discuss the English Premier League, the world's most-watched football competition, with his foreign counterparts.

On Thursday, Starmer presented Xi Jinping with a football from a recent match between Arsenal -- Starmer's favourite club -- and Manchester United, which Xi reportedly supports.

Xi, often characterised by Chinese state media as an avid reader of world literature in his youth, also discussed Shakespeare, Starmer said.

Outcomes for Britain

Starmer faces a challenging situation at home, where he is striving to deliver on campaign promises to reduce undocumented immigration, boost growth and combat the high cost of living.

While in China, Starmer touted the benefits his visit will have for British people, including visa-free travel for UK citizens on stays of less than 30

days, Downing Street said. A spokesman for Beijing's foreign ministry specified Friday that the measure will come into effect "at an appropriate time upon completing the necessary procedures".

Starmer also highlighted a reduction in customs duties on whisky exports. Downing Street said this would bring in an estimated 250 million pounds (\$343 million) over the next five years.

The prime minister urged business leaders in his delegation to seize opportunities in China, but to do so in a way that benefits Britain, where the cost of living is the "number one concern".

Discretion on hotspot issues

Starmer was tight-lipped on how discussions went over more contentious aspects of the relationship, such as Beijing's treatment of the Uyghur Muslim minority in Xinjiang.

He confirmed that he raised the case of Hong Kong pro-democracy media mogul Jimmy Lai, 78, who is facing years in prison after being found guilty of collusion charges in December.

Starmer noted a "respectful discussion" with Xi about Lai and the treatment of Uyghurs. A British official familiar with the talks confirmed that the subjects had received attention.

"If you engage, you can raise the difficult issues," Starmer said. The prime minister also said that the strategy played an instrumental role in securing the lifting of sanctions imposed by Beijing in 2021 on some British parliamentarians.

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

A special approach to vulnerability



CAPTAIN MAHMOOD AL MAHMOOD

Bahrain is expanding special needs education with 54 new classrooms by 2025–2026, guided by its Constitution and Education Law. While hundreds of students with conditions like autism and Down's syndrome are integrated with support, the current inclusion programme excludes those with learning difficulties or chronic illnesses, suggesting a selective rather than universal approach.

Bahrain's commitment to integrating persons with special

needs into the workforce is not merely a social gesture but a structured legal mandate. At the heart of this commitment is Law No. 74 of 2006, which serves as the legislative cornerstone for the care, rehabilitation, and employment of individuals with disabilities. This law ensures that inclusion moves beyond the classroom and into the professional sphere, treating these citizens as vital contributors to the Kingdom's economic progress.

Bahrain has demonstrated a strong commitment to the integration of persons with special needs into the workforce, underpinned by a clear legal framework. At the core of this commitment is Law No. 74 of 2006, which provides the legislative basis for the care, rehabilitation, and employment of individuals with disabilities. This law extends inclusion beyond education, recognising these citizens as valuable contributors to the Kingdom's economic development.

To facilitate employment opportunities, the government enforces a mandatory quota system. Following recent legislative amendments, private and public sector organisations employing 50 or more individuals are now required to allocate 4% of their workforce to qualified persons with disabilities, a significant increase from the previous 2%. Beyond securing employment, the law safeguards the quality of the work environment, ensuring employees are entitled to two hours of paid daily rest and receive equal pay and benefits. The Social Insurance Organization (SIO) also provides specialised retirement provisions, acknowledging that certain conditions may impact long-term career viability.

This legal framework is further supported by the Ministry of Social Development, which oversees vocational training programmes designed to align the skills of individuals with disabilities with the demands of the labour market. By embedding these rights and initiatives within the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities, Bahrain reinforces workplace inclusion as a fundamental aspect of its national vision, fostering an environment where professional merit is valued above physical or intellectual challenges.

(Captain Mahmood Al Mahmood is the Editor-in-Chief of The Daily Tribune and the President of the Arab-African Unity Organisation for Relief, Human Rights and Counterterrorism)

Bahrain's commitment to integrating persons with special needs into the workforce is not merely a social gesture but a structured legal mandate. At the heart of this commitment is Law No. 74 of 2006, which serves as the legislative cornerstone for the care, rehabilitation, and employment of individuals with disabilities. This law ensures that inclusion moves beyond the classroom and into the professional sphere, treating these citizens as vital contributors to the Kingdom's economic progress.