

Blundering Prince Philip at it again with Indian name gaffe

拿印度姓氏開玩笑 菲利浦親王失言糗事又一樁

Britain's Prince Philip listens to speeches during the opening of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom in London, Oct. 16, 2009. PHOTO: REUTERS

十月十六日，英國菲利浦親王在倫敦英國最高法院開幕式上聽講。
照片：路透



Britain's Prince Philip has proven **you can't teach an old dog new tricks** by making a gaffe with a British-Indian business leader about his name, a newspaper said.

During a reception at Buckingham Palace for some 400 **influential** British Indians, the husband of Queen Elizabeth II greeted Atul Patel by glancing at his name tag and saying: "There's a lot of your family in tonight."

According to the *Sun* newspaper, the comment appeared to suggest that all Patels are related. Patel is a common Indian surname, and there are an estimated 670,000 Patels living in Britain, the tabloid said.

A spokesman for Patel, who is chief executive of leading housing association the LHA-Asra group, said no offence was taken by the remark.

"Absolutely no offence was taken at all by Atul. It was taken in a very light hearted way," the spokesman told the newspaper.

The reception was held to **coincide** with the state visit of Indian President Pratibha Patil who arrived in Britain last Monday.

Patil will this week join Queen Elizabeth II to launch the baton relay for the 2010 Commonwealth Games in New Delhi.

The prince's comment was condemned by Republic, a group campaigning to **abolish** the monarchy, as "deeply embarrassing."

"Making a joke about people called Patel is deeply embarrassing given the timing of the Indian state visit. At best it's a comment that shows he's out of touch and out of date," said the group's spokesman Graham Smith.

The 88-year-old prince is well known for undiplomatic off-hand remarks, which have included: "Still throwing spears?" (a question to an Australian Aborigine during a 2002 visit) and "You managed not to get eaten, then?" (to a student who had been trekking in Papua New Guinea, 1998).

據報載，英國菲利浦親王證明了「老狗學不會新把戲」，他又失言拿一位印度裔英國商界領袖的名字開玩笑。

英國女王伊麗莎白二世的夫婿在白金漢宮接待約四百位極具影響力的印度裔英國人，在歡迎阿圖爾·帕特爾時，他瞥了他的名牌一眼說：「今晚這裡有很多你的親戚。」

《太陽報》報導，他言下之意是所有姓帕特爾的人都有親戚關係。帕特爾是印度常見的姓氏，據該小報報導，在英國，姓帕特爾的人估計有六十七萬。

英國最大房屋協會LHA-Asra集團發言人表示，這些話沒有冒犯到總裁帕特爾。

發言人對《太陽報》表示：「阿圖爾一點也沒有覺得受到冒犯，當時的氣氛非常輕鬆。」

這場招待會是為了配合印度總統普拉蒂巴·巴蒂爾上週一抵達英國訪問而舉行。

巴蒂爾本週將和英女王伊麗莎白二世一起主持二〇一〇年新德里「國協運動會」的接棒儀式。

菲利浦親王此言一出，引來提倡廢除君主制的團體「共和國」的強力譴責，他們認為他的言論「令人很難堪」。

該團體發言人葛拉漢·史密斯說：「挑印度總統來訪時，拿帕特爾這個姓氏開玩笑，實在是很尷尬。此話充其量證明了他既與世隔絕，又完全跟不上時代。」

現年八十八歲的菲利浦親王口無遮攔失言眾所週知，他歷來的失言風波包括：「還在擲長矛嗎？」（二〇〇二年出訪澳洲時問澳洲原住民的問題），還有「好樣的，你沒被吃掉啊？」（一九九八年時對一名在巴布亞紐幾內亞遊學的學生如是說。）

TODAY'S WORDS 今日單字

1. **influential** /,ɪnfluˈɛnʃəl/ adj.

有影響力的 (you3 ying2 xiang3 li4 de5)

例：It might be useful to make some connections with influential businesspeople. (認識一些有影響力的企業人士可能會有幫助。)

2. **coincide** /,kɔɪnˈsaɪd/ v.

同時發生 (tong2 shi2 fa1 sheng1)

例：The party was scheduled to coincide with the launch of a new product. (這場派對預定在新產品推出之際舉辦。)

3. **abolish** /əˈbɒlɪʃ/ v.

廢除 (fei4 chu2)

例：The majority of lawmakers voted to abolish inheritance tax. (多數立委投票贊成廢除遺產稅。)

TODAY'S WORDS 重要片語

you can't teach an old dog new tricks 老狗學不會新把戲／本性難移

You say **you can't teach an old dog new tricks** to mean that it's difficult to get old people to learn new things or change habits and ideas.

Examples: "My grandson suggested that I attend a night class on computers, but **you can't teach an old dog new tricks,**" or "They say **you can't teach an old dog new tricks** but my aunt was over 70 when she started learning Russian."

若說「you can't teach an old dog new tricks」，意思就是要老人學會新事物，或是改變習慣、想法並不容易。

例如：「我孫子建議我晚上去進修電腦，但老狗學不會新把戲啊」，或是「人家說老狗學不會新把戲，但我姑媽七十幾歲了才開始學俄文」。