# Protests and Diplomacy: Chinese Premier's Visit to Australia Amid Tensions



Pro-China and pro-Tibet protests occurred at Parliament House in Canberra on Monday morning, as Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese prepared to meet Chinese Premier Li Qiang. The pro-Tibet activists were overwhelmed by the counter-protesters waving large Chinese and Australian flags, resulting in increased tensions and incidents, including a minor scuffle.

The protests surrounded the visit of Premier Li Qiang, who is on a four-day state trip to Australia, marking the first visit by a Chinese premier in seven years. His visit coincides with efforts to repair and strengthen ties that deteriorated in 2020 when China imposed sanctions on Australian goods following a call for an independent inquiry into the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Premier Li's itinerary includes high-level talks with Albanese, discussions aimed at removing remaining trade barriers, and addressing security and human rights concerns. Additionally, Premier Li's visit will encompass meetings with Australian politicians, business representatives, and community leaders, as well as a trip to Western Australia.

Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong emphasized the importance of safeguarding national interests, hinting at the potential discussions on the case of detained Australian writer Yang Hengjun. The bilateral meetings aim to stabilize the relationship and ensure future trade without interruptions, despite persistent security concerns.

Dr. Benjamin Herscovitch from the Australian National University remarked on the delicate balance Canberra must maintain to avoid renewed trade restrictions from Beijing. The Australian government remains cautious about deeper technological collaborations due to potential security threats, as indicated by the exclusion of Huawei from the national 5G rollout and restrictions on Chinese investments in critical minerals.