

Inaugural Emperor's Birthday Reception for the Emperor Naruhito

On 11 February, Consul-General Kiya Masahiko hosted a reception at his residence in celebration of the birthday of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan. It was the first national day to celebrate the birthday of His Majesty Emperor Naruhito since his accession to the throne in May last year. His Majesty turned sixty years of age on 23 February.

Blessed with fine weather, the event was attended by more than 250 guests from diverse fields.

To open the reception, the national anthems were sung by students from Sydney Japanese International School, followed by a minute's silence to pay respect to those affected by the bushfires.

In the Consul-General's speech, he mentioned that the Japan-Australia relationship in all areas is deeply rooted in mutual trust and friendship between our two countries.



Sydney Japanese International School students were in fine voice, and Premier Berejiklian's SEI-NO-DON countdown led to well-timed mallets breaking open the sake barrels.



The Premier of New South Wales, the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian MP, attended the reception and expressed her congratulations to His Majesty the Emperor. The Premier also gave the countdown to the traditional *kagami-biraki* or breaking-open of the sake barrels.

At the reception, a variety of booths promoting Japanese produce, services and companies exhibited. Guests were also entertained by a live Japanese *taiko* drumming performance.

Consul-General Kiya's speech from the event can be found at www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/about_consul_generals_speeches.html

Parliamentary Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs in Sydney



On 22 February, the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Nakayama Norihiro, visited Sydney. He observed a class at the Sydney Saturday School of Japanese (SSSJ), the facial recognition system by NEC, and the redevelopment of Central Station as a part of Sydney's Innovation and Technology Precinct.

Photos of the Consul-General's visits and Consulate events are regularly uploaded to our website and Facebook.

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Consul-General Kiya's official Twitter account—www.twitter.com/CGJapanSydney