



SAKURA

No. 119

January - February 2020



ふる たず あたら し
古きを訪ねて 新しくを知る There is nothing new under the sun

Banzai! His Majesty Emperor Naruhito ascends the Chrysanthemum Throne as Japan's 126th emperor on May 1st 2019. After 30 years of reign, Emperor (present Emperor Emeritus) Akihito

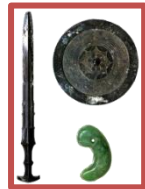


of Japan abdicated in favour of his son the

present Emperor Naruhito on 30 April 2019, which is not exactly

a breakaway from the Japanese love for tradition. The Emperor Kohaku had abdicated in favour of his son Emperor Ninko 202 years ago, in 1817.

Among an array of rituals and ceremonies to mark his accession, 3 are main:



1. Ceremony for Inheriting the Imperial Regalia and Seals.

Kenji-tō-Shōkei-no-gi (剣璽等承継の儀), takes place immediately after the death or abdication of the preceding sovereign in which

the successor formally inherits the sword and *magatama* jewel (actual articles to be seen only by emperor and priests), two parts of the Three Sacred Treasures which are the imperial regalia of Japan: A replica of the sword *Kusanagi-no-Tsurugi* (草薙劍) and the *Yasakani no magatama* (八咫瓊勾玉), a comma-shaped jade jewel bead and the mirror *Yata no Kagami* (八咫鏡), embodiment of the Sun Goddess. He also inherited the state and privy seals, which the emperor affixes to formal documents. The inheritance of these treasures proves his as the Emperor of Japan

2. The Core Enthronement Ceremony called *Sokuirei-Seiden-no-gi* (即位礼正殿の儀), is the

BANZAI!



Proclamation of enthronement; this was held on 22nd October 2019 for Naruhito at the Seiden-Matsuno-Ma, or the State Hall, of the Imperial Palace, with the Emperor's address re-affirming his mission of happiness and peace, followed by congratulatory speech by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzō Abe and three cheers of *Banzai* (Long Live 10,000 years!)

The enthronement parade, postponed until Nov. 10 due to the hardships people are suffering in the wake of Hagibis, saw huge crowds of well-wishers, who waved small national flags of Japan and cheered as the smiling imperial couple waved back at them from the back seat of a luxury convertible sedan of the black Toyota Motor Corp. Century....

3. The *Daijō-sai*



The *Daijō-sai* (大嘗祭), (November 14 and 15) the Great Thanksgiving Festival, is the third and most important of rituals held in two thatched huts in the palace grounds to be later dismantled. It is

the one in which the emperor is united to the sun-goddess Amaterasu, in such a way as to share in a unique way in her divinity. The ritual is an ancient harvest festival, when the emperor kneels on a mat facing the grand shrine of Ise, offers food to the gods and partakes in it to pray for peace and prosperity of his country and people.

This is followed by four court banquets and a visit to the shrines of his ancestors.



2020 -Year of the RAT

明けましておめでとう

ございます!



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AN INTERVIEW WITH KEN NAKAMURA



Mr. Ken Nakamura, Deputy Consul General of the Consulate of Japan in Kolkata, was born on 11th February 1967. That day is the National Foundation Day of Japan (Kenkokukinenbi), so his parents named him “Ken”.

He was born in the north east of Hokkaido in Japan, in a small town named Monbetsu - a very cold place.

We had a conversation in his Consulate office, Kolkata on various subjects, about his academic background, childhood, family, hobby, etc.

I asked him about his hobby. He smiled and said “I have a special interest in Japanese History –I love to read books on it. I also love listening to all kinds of music”.

Q You can play the guitar! And you used to compose music?

A Yes, but I haven’t done for a long time.

His wife is employed clinical laboratory technician staff in the hospital, his 22 year old daughter is a university student, who also learnt Arabic language, and his 17 year old son is in High School.

He has expressed his happiness – “I feel so blessed having these two children. I’m very happy to see them moving towards their dreams. My daughter is doing so well in her field-she learnt Arabic language and my son wants to become an architect. I hope they will succeed in pursuing their dreams. Thinking about them always brings so much happiness to me and my wife!”

His parents: His father was a manager of a transportation company dealing with fresh fish. His mother was thus able to cook a variety of exotic fresh fish, brought by his father, even for breakfast.

His academic background: In a serene reminiscing mood he said “I graduated from Aoyama Gakuin Daigakuin Tokyo; my major was International Business. I also studied Politics & Diplomacy”.

Q So you wanted to be a diplomat?

A Yes. While still in university, I took the examination for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was successful! At that time I received a huge volume of direct mails from private companies to offer their jobs because when I was a university student, Japanese economy was in its prime of bubble economy, but I did not accept them. I took up this job.

Q You have a vast experience in this field. Your first workplace was Tokyo?

A Yes. After that I was sent to Laos 1991 where I studied the national language of that country for two years.

Q After that you worked there for two more terms?

A Yes. First term was from 1991 to 1996. Second for 6 years, from 2004 to 2010, and then for third term from 2013 to 2016. In 2016 he went to Manila for work and in 2018 he came to India.

He said that he came to India for the first time directly to the Office of the Consulate General of Japan, in Kolkata as Deputy Consul General. While discussing about his experiences about cities in India he said that as the four states (West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar and Odisha) fall under the purview of Consulate General of Japan, Kolkata, he had chances to visit various cities in these states.

Q You went to Kalimpong in connection with work and you also went to Patna?

A The visit to Patna (Bihar) was so fantastic –I was much impressed by the statue of Buddha there in Bihar Museum. I realized that from there Buddhism had travelled to Japan. I was so mesmerised with the ambience and serenity.

Q Now about your childhood...

A Actually as I was born in the year of the special horse year (1967)-called Hinoe Uma (The fire horse) In Japan, girls born in that year are thought to be unlucky for their family, so there is a forced drop in the birth rate. As a result there was no hard competition like other years in examination.

Q You used to play Baseball?

A (smiled) Yes, there were baseball tournaments in our school twice in a year in Spring and Summer season.. We tried to have good results in that tournament. But our team was not successful.

Q Do you still pursue any sport?

A (Sighed) Actually in Kolkata I have become a member of the Tennis club of the apartment where I live, but unfortunately I do not find any partner.”

Q Your experience of various countries..

A I had very good experiences in Manila, Laos etc. I had a special memory of Cambodia, and was much impressed by the contrast among its developments, magnificent cultural monuments like Angkor Wat, and dark side of its history like killing field of Pol Pot era.

Q Do you like watching movies?

A Yes I like science fiction movies like Star Wars-suspense, thriller, etc. I also like Akira Kurosawa movies”

Q Which is your favourite place in Japan?

A (Enthusiastically) There are so many favourite places I have. The first place I come to my mind by this question is. Oirase, Aomori prefecture, close to the border with Iwate prefecture, and also Hagi city of Yamaguchi prefecture. They are very beautiful places.



Aloke Basu

Omedetou Sensei!

Omedetou once again! Sensei, Mrs Kazuko Nigam has proved her consistence in the promotion of Japanese Language and Culture ... she has been awarded “Autumn Imperial Decoration of The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays” This is her second Award, the first being the Award conferred by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Japan, in recognition for her services in the field of Japanese Language Learning in India and contribution towards promotion of mutual understanding between Japan and India. (Sakura Nov-Dec 2008)



Japan Utsav 2019



We thank the Consulate General of Japan in Kolkata for the most amazing experience of the Culture of Japan, right at our doorsteps! Arigatou, to all !

Anjana Banerjee, Vice President of NKKS receiving the prize for being adjudged the Best Photographer in the Photography contest held by the Consulate General of Japan, Kolkata.



Omedetou Anjana san!

MONTHLY PROGRAMME

- ◆ **Annual Picnic:** 16th Feb 2020
@FALTA
Departure RKM: 7:30 am (*sharp*)
(Date changed due to unforeseen circumstances)
- ◆ **35th In Nichi Bunkasai** 22nd Feb 2020
@ Dr Triguna Sen Hall,
Jadavpur University 5:30pm

Let's challenge JLPT

JLPT exams are only a week away! To give their preparations a boost , a practice session for the N5 and N4 examinees was held at Sarat Samiti hall on the 23rd of November, Saturday 6p.m. Nirmal Sensei and Mrs. Kazuko Nigam Sensei conducted the session. About 20 students, who had registered their names beforehand, attended the session.

N5and N4 style dokkai and bunpo, mock question papers were given to the students with 30 minutes time to answer about 18 questions. The test was conducted under the strict vigilance of Nirmal sensei who advised us to follow the rules and regulations of the JLPT exams diligently. After the test was over sensei discussed the correct answers and also tried to clear the doubts of the students individually.

This endeavour was truly encouraging and helpful for theN5 and N4 examinees. Minna Gambatte ne!

Babli Choudhury

**JAPANESE CROSSWORD
(January - February)**

1	2		3	4	
5			6		
7		8		9	10
	11		12		
13		14		15	
16				17	

ACROSS

- 1) Museum
- 5) Summer
- 6) Interest (Bank)
- 7) Private room
- 9) Japanese paper
- 11) Drum (musical)
- 14) Bamboo fence
- 16) Twenty year old
- 17) Hunting

DOWN

- 1) Story
- 2) Socks
- 3) Fishing
- 4) Oak
- 8) First day of month
- 10) Last date
- 12) Moss
- 13) Mother
- 15) Easel

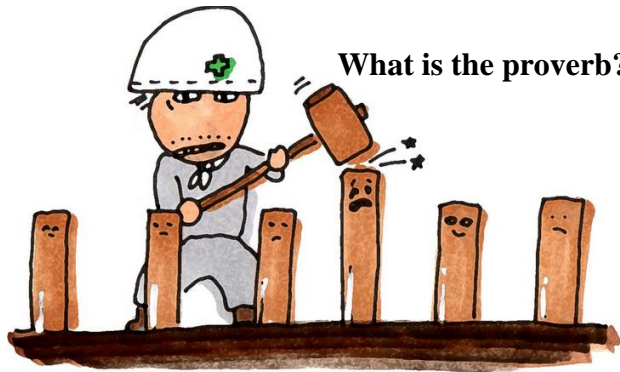
Mahashveta Basu Mukherjee

**Answers to
JAPANESE CROSSWORD
(November- December)**

1	2	3	4	5	6
ふ	さ	か	ぎ	り	
5	か	る	い	し	6
					か
む		7	き	8	ん
		せ		た	
9	10			11	た
ら	が	ん		か	
12	さ	ん	13	い	ん
			か		
14	か	が	く		な
き					

WORD JUMBLE – 63

Unscramble the following words, and join the circled letters to find out the answer:



What is the proverb?

1. せいひんかでん(Home appliances)

	○						
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2. ぼんるすでんわ(Answering phone)

○							
---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

3. にくたべい(Difficult to eat)

			○	○	
--	--	--	---	---	--

4. ざらはい(Ashtray)

○				
---	--	--	--	--

5. がううた(To doubt)

○	○			
---	---	--	--	--

6. れるは(To clear up, sunny)

○	○		
---	---	--	--

Sontu Debnath

**ANSWERS TO
WORD JUMBLE – 62**

- 1. じゅうよう
- 2. じゅうみん
- 3. にんぎょう
- 4. といあわせ
- 5. いろいろ

じ	ゅ	う	に	ん	と	い	ろ
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