

Remarks

Presented by NAITO Yasushi, Consul-General of Japan in Perth
On the occasion of the UWA Japanese Studies Society Matsuri event
Wednesday September 20, 2023

I am happy to be here today with you at the Matsuri event organized by the Japanese Studies Society of the University of Western Australia. We are fortunate to have many Japanese festivals in Western Australia including Perth Japan Festival in March, Shinju Matsuri in Broome in September and South West Japan Festival that ended last week. I am delighted to have Matsuri event so close to us here in UWA. This is the seventh annual Matsuri in UWA and we commend the initiative by the students driven Japanese Studies Society that has advanced the Matsuri planning in the past seven years.

UWA has a rich history of cooperation with Japan as you can see the heritage of Japanese Garden funded and opened by Tokyu Group on campus. We have the Perth USAsia Centre that hosts the annual Japan Symposium, strong Japanese language studies under Professor Kyoko Kawasaki with annual Japanese Speech Contest, partnerships with 19 Japanese universities and institutions including a collaborative research partnership with Nagoya University with a number of joint thesis published. We are encouraged to know that UWA students and staff including the school of humanity are going to visit Japan for exchange in November. In the field of sports, UWA has the famous UWA Judo Club, and the water polo team who received the Japanese national team earlier this year, among many other collaborations.

The Consulate-General of Japan in Perth is just 10 minutes away from your campus and we are happy to support your activities on Japan. We have now opened applications for the JET Programme for departure next year. We have sent 540 people to Japan from WA in 37 years through Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme. You also have opportunity to apply different scholarships including MEXT scholarship, Mitsui Education Foundation Program and the New Colombo Plan. If you are interested in Japan, these programs are useful for you to go to Japan to learn. It will open windows for opportunities, global vision and will be useful for your future career.

Today we have Monica and Brittany from the Japanese Consulate who are alumni of these exchange programs. All the staff in the Consulate including Monica and Brittany can join discussion on quite sophisticated issues including politics and economic relations and I am proud of them. So if you have questions, please ask them.

It is encouraging to see the return of Japanese students is in full swing in Perth. I am glad to see many Japanese students enjoying activities today. Soon we will have the resumption of the All Nippon Airways Perth-Tokyo direct flights, connecting WA and Japan in less than 10 hours again at the end of next month. Thus, more people from Japan are expected to visit Perth, including UWA.

Japan is already a popular destination for Australians, but the direct flight brings Japan even closer to you, making it easier for you to enjoy skiing on powder snow, to visit different 'matsuri' special to each local town, to enjoy Japanese fashion, design, shopping, and a variety of Japanese food. So you can plan your value for money trip to Japan.

And today, let us all enjoy aspects of Japan at the Matsuri in UWA.

Thank you for your attention.

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