

Remarks

Presented by NAITO Yasushi, Consul-General of Japan in Perth
On the occasion of the Tokyo City University Australia Program (TAP)
Student Farewell Ceremony at Murdoch University
Thursday November 14, 2024

(Acknowledgement)

I wish to start by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation, and pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

Dr Dee O'Conner, Dean, School of Humanities, Art and Social Sciences,
Professors and staff of Murdoch University and Murdoch College,
Tachibana-Sensei from TCU international center,
Students from Tokyo City University, Student Buddies,

(Words of Congratulations)

Congratulations on your completion of the TAP program at Murdoch University. I remember well that I welcomed 112 of you at Boola Katijin building in August. It was like yesterday. Time flies fast. I see you had a fruitful 16 weeks of learning here at Murdoch University. I am glad you are enjoying the beauty of the Jacaranda blossoms in the city.

I believe you had precious experiences that you would have never hoped to have had should you have stayed in Japan. The world you see now must be different from what you saw at the beginning; how you see Australia, how you see Japan and what it is like to study abroad. And you will get to know more of it within you, after you get back to Japan.

(ANA direct flight and human interactions)

While you were here in Perth, the ANA Perth-Tokyo direct flight resumed again last month, this time operating all year round. 830,000 Australians visited Japan in the past year including the Lord Mayor of Perth this month and the Governor of Western Australia last month, and Prof Andrew Deeks the Vice chancellor, and Prof Kelly Smith the Pro Vice Chancellor of Murdoch University are visiting Japan very soon this month.

So, the level of human interactions is expected to increase to a greater level, as we

already see many business delegations are pouring into Western Australia. With the Osaka Kansai Expo in April to October next year, one million Australians are expected to visit Japan in the year ahead.

The Japan Australia relationship on an economic and political front is stronger than ever and will be even more important in the difficult international situations ahead and at the time after the US presidential election. And this relationship, supported by broad human bonds at a grassroots level, is the most important asset.

(Murdoch Japan Festival)

During your stay in Perth, the Murdoch Japan Festival must have been one of the highlights of your activities. The festival was planned and organized by students themselves and I hope you enjoyed being cultural ambassadors of Japan. Although I was in Nagoya together with the Governor of Western Australia and I was not able to join the festival, my team told me that Japan Festival in Murdoch University this year was especially active and well organized, as our staff enjoyed Bon Odori, live band, Aikido, Kendama as well as the whole welcoming atmosphere you created.

In fact, Bon Odori is booming in Perth right now. I love Bon Odori and I wished I were there with you. It is great to see the circle of friendship gets bigger and it shares a sense of togetherness, which is the essence of Japanese Matsuri.

(Honouring the pioneer of University exchanges)

Another notable development during your stay I should share with you was that the Government of Japan announced the conferment of the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette, upon Mr. Arun Radha Krishnan, a former lecturer at Murdoch University in recognition of his outstanding contributions in promoting academic exchange and mutual understanding between Japan and Australia.

For over 30 years, he taught Japanese politics, economics and society at Murdoch University and UWA, and promoted exchanges with Japanese universities. Krishnan sensei is a pioneer of Japanese Studies and it was in response to an unprecedented surge in demand in WA for doing business with Japan in mineral resources in the early 1970's, which later led to the remarkable economic development of both Japan and Australia.

A number of prominent leaders in Japanese relations have emerged in Western Australia,

having learned under Krishnan sensei that include Dianne Rimmer and it will continue to benefit the ties of both countries.

(Bon Voyage)

It is time for you to advance your way forward. You will now head for Japan, continue your studies, and prepare for future professions. Some of you may wish to work abroad, some continue studying, and some may come back to Perth, you have a variety of possibilities.

And I am sure the inspirations you encountered during the TAP program will be useful in thinking about your future. And for those of you who wish to come back to study or work in Perth, our team will be here and welcome you again to this beautiful city.

Again, congratulations to you all.

Thank you for your attention.

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