

Celebrating Emperor Naruhito's 66th Birthday as He Honors Recovery Efforts

天皇陛下の誕生日は、日本にとってどのような意味を持つ日なのでしょう。祝賀の場面だけでなく、その折に語られる言葉や姿勢にも多くの人々が注目します。公的な立場にある人物が発するメッセージは、社会にどんな影響を与えるのでしょうか。象徴としての役割と個人としての思いが交わる場面について、あなたはどのように受け止めますか。



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

Japan marked the 66th birthday of Emperor Naruhito on February 23. Ahead of the occasion, he held a press conference at the Imperial Palace, noting that this year marks 15 years since the Great East Japan Earthquake and 10 years since the Kumamoto earthquakes.

"I believe these milestones carry a **significance** that cannot be measured simply by the passage of 10 or 15 years," he said, adding that he **hopes** to "**continue**" to keep the disaster-stricken areas close to my heart."

Describing the present era as "one in which natural disasters are becoming more severe and frequent," His Majesty expressed deep respect and gratitude for those who have continued their efforts toward **recovery**, as well as for the support extended from within Japan and abroad.

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1. Article

While acknowledging progress such as the restoration of infrastructure, he noted that "challenges remain, including the rebuilding of livelihoods and communities." Extending his thoughts on those who lost loved ones or whose lives were profoundly changed, he said that "the wounds left by the disasters have yet to heal."

Turning to large-scale disasters more broadly, His Majesty emphasized the importance of passing down the experiences of recovery and reconstruction across generations. With the anticipated Nankai Trough earthquake and the possibility of a major quake occurring directly beneath the Tokyo metropolitan area in mind, he spoke of the risks ahead. "I strongly feel that we must once again review our preparedness," he said.

As the number of members of the Imperial Family declines, the burden on those remaining continues to grow. Against this backdrop, His Majesty addressed the fundamental [principles](#) guiding the Imperial Household's role and activities. He said these should be to "always wish for the happiness of the people and share in their joys and sorrows."

He added, "It is important to accurately sense the winds of the times and consider what form public duties should take as circumstances change."



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2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. significance 重要性

The volleyball coach explained the significance of teamwork before the final game.

2. hope 希望する

They hope to finish building the new bridge before the end of next month

3. continue 継続する

Toshie decided to continue the science course even though it became more difficult.

4. recovery 回復

After a long illness, his recovery took several months of rest.

5. principle 原則

Denise follows clear principles when making decisions about her work.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. What anniversaries did the Emperor mention in his press conference?
2. What future risks did he mention when talking about disasters?
3. What role did he say the Imperial Household should have?
4. Why do you think remembering past disasters is important for the future?
5. What role should public leaders play when people face disasters?

4. 天皇陛下、66歳に 東日本大震災15年、熊本地震10年「被災地に心を寄せていきたい」

天皇陛下は2月23日、66歳の誕生日を迎えられた。これに先立ち、皇居・宮殿で記者会見し、今年が東日本大震災発生15年、熊本地震発生10年の節目であることに触れ、「10年、15年という年月の経過だけでは測れない重みを伴うものだと思います」として、今後も「被災地に心を寄せていきたい」と述べられた。

陛下は現代を「自然災害が激甚化・頻発化する時代」だとし、地道な復興の努力を続ける被災者や、国内外の支援に深い敬意と謝意を示された。

被災地の現状についてインフラ面の復興などが進むものの「生業（なりわい）やコミュニティの再建など、まだ課題もある」ともご言及。肉親などを亡くし、生活環境が一変した被災者について「震災の傷はいまだ癒えていない」と思いを寄せられた。

一方、大規模災害について、世代を超えて復旧・復興の経験を継承する重要性をご指摘。南海トラフ地震や首都直下地震を念頭に「今一度私たちの備えを確認する必要があると強く感じます」と述べられた。

皇族数減少に伴い、皇族の方々のご負担が増大する中、皇室の在り方や活動の基本については「国民の幸せを常に願い、国民と苦楽を共にすること」とご言及。「時代の風を的確に感じ取り、その時々にはふさわしい公務の在り方を考えていくことが大切なのではないか」とされた。

出典：天皇陛下、66歳に 東日本大震災15年、熊本地震10年「被災地に心を寄せていきたい」

[Japan Forward](#)