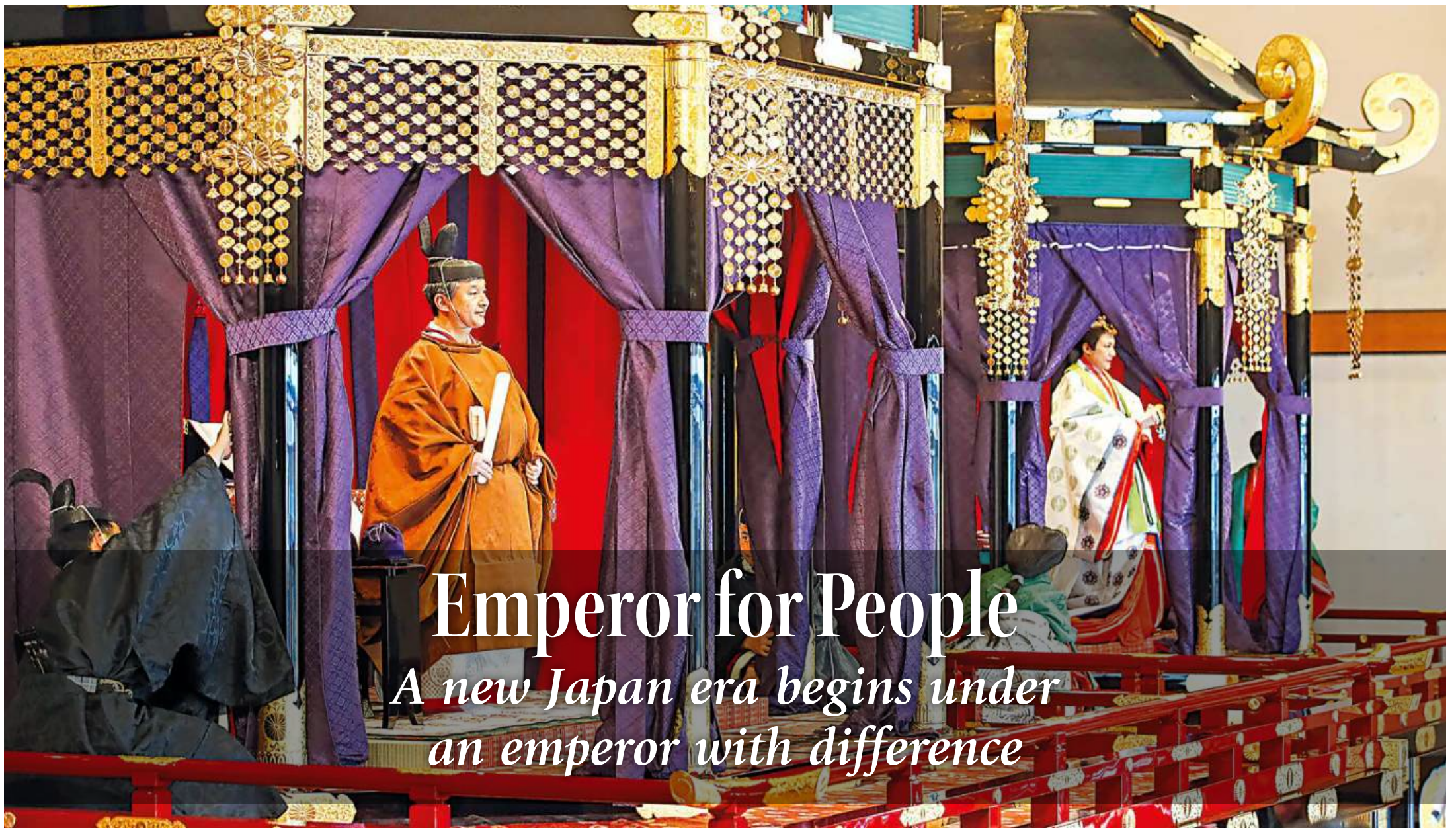




HAPPY BIRTHDAY JAPANESE EMPEROR

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FALGUN 10, 1426 BS



Emperor for People

A new Japan era begins under an emperor with difference

Emperor Naruhito formally declared his accession to the throne at the enthronement ceremony (Sokui-Rei) on October 22, 2019.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

MAYABEE ARANNYA

On May 10, 2019, Japan welcomed its 126th emperor, Naruhito (original name Hironomiya Naruhito), to the Chrysanthemum Throne after the abdication of his father, Akihito. Born on February 23, 1960, today marks the Emperor's 60th birthday. On this special day, let us take a glimpse into the significance of Emperor Naruhito and the Japanese Imperial Family in world history.

The Japanese Imperial Family (or Imperial House of Japan) is the oldest continuous hereditary monarchy in the world. The Emperor is a ceremonial head of state, with no real political power. However, they are also considered the highest form of authority in the main religion of Japan, Shinto (or Shintoism). In Shinto religion, the Emperors are believed to be living gods. This belief sprouted from the idea in Shinto religion that the Japanese

Imperial Family are descendants of the sun goddess, Amaterasu. After Japan's fall in World War II, Hirohito, grandfather of Emperor Naruhito, was allegedly forced to issue a Humanity Declaration (imperial rescript), rejecting the claim of being a living god, and forfeiting the divine power he had over the state according to the Japanese constitution of 1889. Hirohito was succeeded by his eldest son, Akihito, who is Emperor Naruhito's father. Akihito's

abdication is a historic event, since he is the first to stand down from the role of Emperor in 200 years. Akihito had begun hinting about wanting to step down since 2016, but could not clearly state it due to issues with making political statements. He received permission for abdication in 2019, citing reasons of poor health and old age, having had cancer and major heart bypass surgery. The "Ceremony of the Abdication" was held in a state room of the

Imperial Palace on April 30, 2019. At the stroke of midnight, the new Reiwa (English meaning, "beautiful harmony") Era began, with Emperor Naruhito ascending the throne. Japanese emperors always bring with them the advent of a new era for the people of the country. Akihito is now known as Emperor Emeritus, while his wife Michiko is known as Empress Emerita.

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HITACHI

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