# Japanese State Visit Amid Royal Health Setbacks and Election Preparations



A Japanese state visit hosted by King Charles III is set to begin on Tuesday, featuring Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako of Japan. The festivities will be marked by a ceremonial welcome on Horse Guards Parade, a carriage procession, and a grand banquet at Buckingham Palace. This visit, lasting from Tuesday to Thursday, happens just before the UK’s general election on July 4.

Princess Anne, 73, will miss the event due to injuries sustained from a horse incident on her Gatcombe Park estate. Anne, a skilled equestrian and 1976 Montreal Olympics competitor, suffered minor head injuries and a concussion, requiring treatment and observation at Southmead Hospital in Bristol. She will also miss an overseas tour to Canada scheduled for later in the week.

The royal family has faced multiple health challenges this year, including cancer diagnoses for both King Charles III and the Princess of Wales, and skin cancer for Sarah, Duchess of York. Despite these setbacks, the visit will proceed as planned, although adaptations have been made due to the impending election.

This state visit, the first since it was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, aims to strengthen "friendly relations across generations" between the UK and Japan. High-ranking officials, including Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer, will attend the banquet, pausing their election campaigns temporarily. The visit concludes with Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako laying a wreath at the tomb of the late Queen Elizabeth II at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle.