# Japanese Emperor and Empress Commence State Visit to UK, Strengthening Royal Relations



Japanese Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako commenced a three-day state visit to the UK on Tuesday, June 25, 2024. Greeted by King Charles III and Queen Camilla at the Horse Guards Parade, the visit featured traditional ceremonial events including a carriage procession to Buckingham Palace.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer will attend a state banquet tonight at Buckingham Palace. Princess Anne will miss the banquet due to a recent injury. The visit aims to strengthen relations between the British and Japanese royal families, focusing on non-political engagements. The itinerary includes a private lunch at the palace, a tour of the Royal Collection, and wreath-laying at the Grave of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey. The Emperor and Empress will also visit the Francis Crick Institute, Oxford, and St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle to lay a wreath on the tomb of Queen Elizabeth II.

Empress Masako wore a face mask during the carriage ride due to her allergy to horse hair. The visit further underlines friendly ties between the nations amidst the UK's emphasis on its Indo-Pacific strategy.