

MERLION STAR

Serving the Sembawang Community

DON'T FORGET

- ✦ Military Month of the Child Fun Run, April 9
- ✦ SRRC Easter Egg Hunt, April 17
- ✦ PRT, April 20-28

April 8, 2011

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JAPANESE MINISTER THANKS U.S. SERVICE MEMBERS



NORTHERN JAPAN (March 15, 2011) Japanese citizens move food and water out of an HH-60H Sea Hawk helicopter assigned to the Black Knights of Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron (HS) 4. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Alexander Tidd

USS RONALD REAGAN, At Sea

By: LISA DANIEL,
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS
SERVICE

(NNS) -- Japanese Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa boarded USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) April 4, to thank U.S. service members for their help since a magnitude 9.0 earthquake and tsunami struck Japan March 11.

The work of U.S. service members and other Americans is a testament to the half century of tomodachi – friendship - between the United States and Japan, Kitazawa said as he shared a statement from Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan.

“To all U.S. military members, on behalf of the people of Japan,

I sincerely express my deep appreciation for the tremendous support provided by the U.S. military, the U.S. government and the American people at a time of unprecedented crisis in Japan,” Kitazawa said.

USS Ronald Reagan responded immediately after the disaster, and its Sailors, as well as other service members, continue the humanitarian mission in Japan “with pride and passion” and “are supporting Japan on an extraordinary scale,” he said.

As of March 25, more than 1,000 Sailors and Marines were deployed in support of Operation

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President Obama Proclaims April Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month

Our Nation must continue to confront rape and other forms of sexual violence as a deplorable crime. Too many victims suffer unaided, and too many offenders elude justice. As we mark National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month, we recommit to building a society where no woman, man, or child endures the fear of assault or the pain of an attack on their physical well-being and basic human dignity.

Despite reforms to our legal system, sexual violence remains pervasive and largely misunderstood. Nearly one in six American women will experience an attempted or completed rape at some point in her life, and for some groups, rates of sexual violence are even higher. Almost one in three American Indian and Alaska Native women will be sexually assaulted. Young women ages 16 to 24 are at greatest risk, and an alarming number of young women are sexually assaulted while in college. Too many men and boys are also affected. With each new victim and each person still suffering from an attack, we are called with renewed purpose to respond to and rid our Nation of all forms of sexual violence.

Sexual assault is considered to be the most underreported violent crime in America, and criminal justice responses vary widely across our country. Some communities have developed highly trained, coordinated teams who understand the nature of sexual assault and can respond with compassionate understanding. In other places, victims hesitate to report these crimes because they fear the criminal justice system will respond with skepticism or fail to bring the perpetrator to justice. We must ensure our police, prosecutors, and courts treat victims with the seriousness and respect they need and deserve. We must do more to provide services that help victims recover from the trauma of sexual assault. And ultimately, we must prevent sexual assault before it happens.

Under Vice President Joe Biden's leadership, my Administration is committed to engaging a broad spectrum of Federal agencies and community partners to prevent sexual assault, support victims, and hold offenders accountable. The Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women is leading the Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative to improve the way sexual assault survivors are served. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is funding innovative prevention campaigns that engage bystanders in reducing sexual assault, and the Department of Education is working to combat sexual violence at schools and universities. We will continue to support new approaches that show promise in changing cultural attitudes toward sexual violence and preventing these crimes.

Each victim of sexual assault represents a sister or a daughter, a nephew or a friend. We must break the silence so no victim anguishes without resources or aid in their time of greatest need. We must continue to reinforce that America will not tolerate sexual violence within our borders. Likewise, we will partner with countries across the globe as we work toward a common vision of a world free from the threat of sexual violence, including as a tool of conflict. Working together, we can reduce the incidence of sexual assault and heal lives that have already been devastated by this terrible crime.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 2011 as National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month. I urge all Americans to support victims and work together to prevent these crimes in their communities.

Senior Leaders Seminar Brings Together 12 Nations for Talks on Piracy Issues

BANGKOK, Thailand – The U.S. and Royal Thai Navies co-hosted the annual Senior Leaders Seminar (SLS) March 29th-April 1st in Bangkok, Thailand, drawing senior naval leaders from twelve Southeast Asian countries, for in-depth discussions on piracy.

By: MC2 JESSICA BIDWELL,
COMMANDER, TASK FORCE 73
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The conference combined senior naval leaders from twelve Southeast Asian countries, including Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Philippines, Singapore, Sri-Lanka and Vietnam. Seminar discussions focused on counter-piracy operations in South/Southeast Asia, in an open format that helped spur discussions, and led to a deeper understanding of piracy-related issues. Several subject matter experts representing academic, commercial, law enforcement, governmental, and military organizations addressed the audience on a piracy from their specific discipline's point of view.

“This seminar is the first of its kind to be held in Thailand,” commented Adm. Khamthon Pumhiran, Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Thai Navy, in his welcoming remarks. “Aside from being a prominent expression of cooperation among the Armed Forces from 12 participating countries, this seminar also reflects the determination and willingness of the participating countries to join hands in dealing with the

expanding threats that many countries are facing,” continued Adm. Khamthon.



BANGKOK, Thailand (Mar. 29, 2011) Rear Adm. Thomas F. Carney, Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans, Policies and Requirements, Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, right, delivers his opening remarks as senior attendees listen during the 2011 Senior Leaders Seminar. The seminar is co-hosted by the U.S. and Royal Thai Navies, and focuses on counter-piracy operations in South/Southeast Asia. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jessica Bidwell

expanding threats that many countries are facing,” continued Adm. Khamthon.

Rear Adm. Thomas Carney, Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans, Policies and Requirements, Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, thanked the Royal Thai Navy for co-hosting this year's seminar. Carney noted that Thailand's recent participation in Task Force 151, the multinational task force that conducts counter-piracy operations under a mission-based mandate throughout the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) area of responsibility, made the RTN the ideal host for the seminar.

“The successful deployment by the Royal Thai Navy shows the power of cooperation in working together against a common problem,” Carney said. “People build the relationships that enable action and success, and the goal of this conference is to build those relationships so we can combat piracy and other maritime challenges more effectively.”

BANGKOK, Thailand (Mar. 29, 2011) Senior Royal Thai Navy and Philippine Navy officers mingle during a break at the 2011 Senior Leaders Seminar. The seminar is co-hosted by the U.S. and Thai navies, and focuses on Counter-Piracy Operations in South/Southeast Asia. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jessica Bidwell/Released

Japanese Deeply Moved by American Efforts

Tomodachi and had flown more than 450 missions for recovery, transport and supplies distribution, according to the U.S. embassy officials in Tokyo.

Kitazawa said he received a call from President Barack Obama right after the earthquake, pledging American support.

"The entire Japanese people are deeply moved and encouraged by scenes of U.S. military members working hard in support of relief efforts," he said. "Those in Japan and the United States are true tomodachi. ... They share basic values such as democracy and respect for human rights."

Faced with such a disaster, Kitazawa said, "in no time like the present do I feel so strongly about our friendship with the United States. Your support is a testament of our enduring bond for more than half a century. Japan, with your continuous cooperation, is determined to launch a full-scale effort to overcome these challenges ahead of us."

U.S. Ambassador to Japan, John V. Roos, was part of the delegation that included senior Japanese military officials aboard USS Ronald Reagan.

"Looking out over this spectacular view, in front of all you great Americans, I am awed to be here, and I can't tell you how deeply moved I am by all you've accomplished in the last several weeks," he said.

Roos offered U.S. condolences to the Japanese, noting that he saw the disaster's effects firsthand in northeastern Japan.

"One cannot even begin to imagine the devastation until you witness it yourself, and even then it's hard to imagine," Roos said. "I met with people who lost almost everything in their lives, including their loved ones," he continued. "I could not help but be moved by their calm dignity and resilient spirit."



PACIFIC OCEAN (Apr. 4, 2011) - Japan Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa receives honors from Sailors upon his arrival aboard the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76). During the visit Japanese and American officials thanked and greeted Ronald Reagan Sailors for relief efforts during Operation Tomodachi U.S. Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Shawn J. Stewart



PACIFIC OCEAN (Apr. 4, 2011) - Senior U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Army military members present Japanese Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa an Operation Tomodachi banner in a wardroom aboard the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76). Senior U.S. and Japan leaders visited Ronald Reagan to thank the crew members for their relief efforts. U.S. Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kyle Carlstrom



PACIFIC OCEAN (Apr. 04, 2011) - Sailors aboard the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force helicopter destroyer JDS Hyuga (DDH 181) wave the American and Japanese flags as a sign of friendship during a pass and review with the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76). U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Nicholas A. Groesch

NRCS Takes Part in World Water Day Events



Navy Region Center Singapore (NRCS) jointly participated with the American Embassy Singapore in the World Water Day Event on March 20. NRCS co-sponsored the event with Singapore Waterways Watch Society to cleanup the Singapore River. The event drew more than 300 participants, and many lively discussions took place on ways to achieve environmental sustainability and how best to conserve the earth's resources. Yaacob Ibrahim, Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, personally expressed sincere thanks to all participants for taking part in the cleanup, as did Ann Giri, representing the Waterways Watch NGO.

2011 Summer Physical Fitness Assessment

20-21	April.....	BCA
26	April.....	Run
26	April.....	Swim
27-28	April.....	Elliptical/Bike/Treadmill
5-11	May.....	Stragglers PFA

For more information contact the command PFA Coordinator at 6750-2468