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Japanese Naval Training Squadron Visits Havana

06/07/2017



Two training ships of Japan's Maritime Forces of Self-Defense arrived Thursday in Cuba for an official visit, the second of its kind.

The squad is comprised by the school-ship JS Kashima and its escort ship JS Harusame. As they entered the Bay of Havana the leading vessel shot a 21-cannon salute, that was reciprocated by an artillery battery from the Fortress of San Carlos de La Cabaña that overlooks the bay.

The crew of the visiting squadron under the command of Rear Admiral Koji Manabe was welcomed at the peer by Navy Captain José Luis Souto, chief of Department of the Cuban Revolutionary Navy, and the Japanese Ambassador to Cuba, Masaru Watanabe.

The agenda of Japanese sailors includes a news conference, courtesy visits to the Chief of Cuban Navy and the President of Havana's People's Power Assembly (provincial parliament), as well as touring places of historical and cultural interest and a tribute to Cuban National Hero Jose Marti. Next Saturday the Harusame will be opened for the public.

The crew will also visit the Central Military Hospital Dr. Luis Diaz Soto and Granma Naval Academy where they will make a presentation of Japanese martial arts. They will

also visit the Pantheon of the Veterans of the War of Independence at Havana Cristobal Colon Cemetery. Their musical band will play an open concert at St. Francis of Assisi Square.

This is the second time that Japanese training ships visit Cuba; the first was in 2014 to mark the 400 years of the first contact between Japan and the Caribbean island nation.

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