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PHOTO NEWS



Foreign embassies give kids taste of many cultures at Tokyo event

Children tried their hand at Thai vegetable carving and practiced Indian yoga at an intercultural event put on by foreign embassies Sunday in Tokyo.

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Kan's exit seen as boon for unity

By MASAMI ITO

Finance Minister Yoshihiko Noda wins the Democratic Party of Japan presidency and will replace Naoto Kan as prime minister, becoming the ruling party's third leader since taking power in 2009...

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Noda victorious in race for prime minister

By NATSUKO FUKUE

New DPJ President Yoshihiko Noda will barely have time to savor his victory because unifying the party and building opposition support for rebuilding Tohoku will demand his immediate attention.

Countermeasures for yen

TOKYO (8 p.m.) AccuWeather, Inc. ©2008



27°C
Partly sunny

Humidity: 73%
Winds: ENE at 28 kph
Pressure: 1012 hpa

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Having fun: Children mimic their instructor at a yoga workshop offered by the Indian Embassy at Children's International Festa 2011 on Sunday at Yebisu Garden Place in Tokyo's Shibuya Ward. YOSHIKAZU MIURA

Foreign embassies give kids taste of many cultures at Tokyo event

By TAKAHIRO FUKADA
Staff writer

Children tried their hand at Thai vegetable carving and practiced Indian yoga at an intercultural event put on by foreign embassies Sunday in Tokyo.

Children's International Festa 2011, held in Yebisu Garden Place in Shibuya Ward, was intended to expose children to new cultures during their summer vacations, event spokeswoman Madoka Soma said. Tunisian Embassy Counselor Mohamed Trabelsi gave a demonstration of Arabic calligraphy. The Japanese children were delighted when they saw him write their names in Arabic.

"Because the letters are complicated, it is interesting," said Kei Matsumoto, a 7-year-old second-grader from Minato Ward. He said he wanted to explore other cultures at the event as well.

Officials from the Thai Embassy were, meanwhile, giving lessons in their national art of fruit and vegetable carving. Using special knives, some children carved white radishes and created flower-shaped sculptures. "It was a little difficult for me to carve things," said Tomoki Narukawa, a 6-year-old first-grader from Minato Ward.

In addition to yoga, the Indian Embassy offered children lessons in playing traditional drums. Adults as well as kids participated in the yoga sessions, stretching their bodies into various poses.

Meanwhile, the Czech Embassy offered a workshop on coloring popular animated characters from the country.

Later in the day, at the third annual Children's International Speech Contest 2011, supported by The Japan Times and other organizations, participants gave speeches in English and Japanese.

A total of 36 elementary school students took part in the contest, which had three different levels of competition. First prize for the beginner level went to Kaho Aramaki, a third-grader who spoke about her impression of Czech culture, while fifth-grader Riku Ueno took first place in the intermediate level for his speech on Thailand.

First-grader Hanako Koseki won the advanced level for her speech on the Czech Republic. The grand prize went to Chie Fukuda, a third-grader who spoke about Indian culture.

The Japan Times: Monday, Aug. 29, 2011
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Skilled hand: Tunisian Embassy Counselor Mohamed Trabelsi hands the name of Airi Yano, written in Arabic, to the 1-year-old's mother, Setsuko, 36, while 4-year-old brother Taisei looks on. YOSHIAKI MIURA