



The Hon Victor Dominello MP

Minister for Citizenship and Communities
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

MEDIA RELEASE

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Japanese midget submarine on display for 70th anniversary

Seventy years after the Imperial Japanese Navy infiltrated Sydney Harbour, one of the midget submarines used in the attack will be on display to the public at Sydney's ANZAC Memorial, Minister for Citizenship and Communities Victor Dominello announced today.

The 70th anniversary of the incursion into Sydney Harbour by three Japanese submarines will be officially commemorated today (1 June) at 12pm at the ANZAC Memorial in Hyde Park, followed by a private memorial service for family and descendants of those lost in the attack.

“On the night of 31 May 1942, three midget Japanese submarines stole into Sydney Harbour. In the early hours of 1 June, one of the torpedoes fired from these submarines exploded against a seawall, sinking the depot ship HMAS Kuttabul and killing 21 Allied sailors,” said Minister Dominello, who is responsible for Veterans' Affairs in NSW.

“The remains of one of the Japanese submarines that never made it out of Sydney Harbour are featured in an exhibition at the ANZAC Memorial – a generous loan from the Navy Heritage Centre as this item is not normally on public display.”

Vietnam Veteran and Parliamentary Secretary for Veterans' Affairs Mr Charlie Lynn MLC will represent Minister Dominello at the commemoration.

Among the families will be five siblings of Stoker Second Class Herbert Arthur Smith from Taree, and the grandson of Stoker Jack Gardner born in Caulfield, Victoria. Three Kuttabul crew members will also participate including Harold Reader who survived the sinking, as well as Neville Rice and Reg Turner who both were ashore at the time of the attack.

“The penetration by enemy submarines into the very centre of Australia's maritime defence headquarters was a defining moment in our history with the territorial integrity of our nation under grave threat,” Mr Lynn said.

“It was a time that called for bravery and selfless action displayed by the sailors who, despite the danger and uncertainty of the situation, dived repeatedly to save their mates.

“We especially remember this occasion because the lives of 19 Australian sailors and two British naval personnel were lost that night, as well as six Japanese submariners.”

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