
JAPANESE FORMER LEADER ABE HONORED AT DIVISIVE STATE FUNERAL

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Japans assassinated hawkish former leader, Shinzo Abe, was given a rare state funeral Tuesday full of military pomp and surrounded by throngs of mourners as well as by widespread protests, with thousands taking to the streets in opposition.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said the publicly financed ceremony was a well-deserved honor for Japans longest-serving modern political leader. The event was attended by U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris, Japanese Crown Prince Akishino and other foreign and Japanese dignitaries.

Japans main political opposition parties boycotted the funeral, which critics say was a reminder of how prewar imperialist governments used state funerals to fan nationalism. The government maintains that the ceremony was not meant to force anyone to honor Abe. But the decision to give him the rare honor □ which was made without parliamentary debate or approval □ as well as the funerals high cost and other controversies have led to anger about the event.

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