



MEDIA RELEASE

75th Anniversary of the bombing of Darwin

16 Feb 2017

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources and Member for New England, Barnaby Joyce has called on the New England Electorate community to pause and reflect this Sunday on the 75th anniversary of the bombing of Darwin.

More than 240 people died during two separate attacks when 242 Japanese aircraft bombed Darwin on 19 February, 1942.

In the following months air attacks were made on many towns in northern Australia including Wyndham, Port Hedland and Derby in Western Australia, Darwin and Katherine in the Northern Territory, Townsville and Mossman in Queensland, and Horn Island in the Torres Strait. From the first raid on 19 February, 1942 until the last on 12 November, 1943 Australia and its allies lost about 900 people, 77 aircraft and several ships. Many military and civilian facilities were also destroyed.

Mr Joyce said the national commemoration will recognise the anniversary with a service at the Cenotaph on the Darwin Esplanade at 9.30am on Sunday 19 February, 2017. An air raid siren will sound at 9.58am to mark the precise time the first attack took place.

The Bombing of Darwin day has been a national day of observance since 2011.

“On the 75th anniversary of the bombing of Darwin we should reflect on the courage and resilience displayed by both the military and civilians as Australia came under direct, sustained attack,” Mr Joyce said.

“The bombing of Darwin saw a tragic loss of life and destruction but it was also an occasion when our countrymen and women rose to the challenge and displayed the Australian character.

“On this anniversary we should reflect on both the costs of the war and the service and sacrifice of the men and women who fight to defend our values and freedoms.”

(ENDS)

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