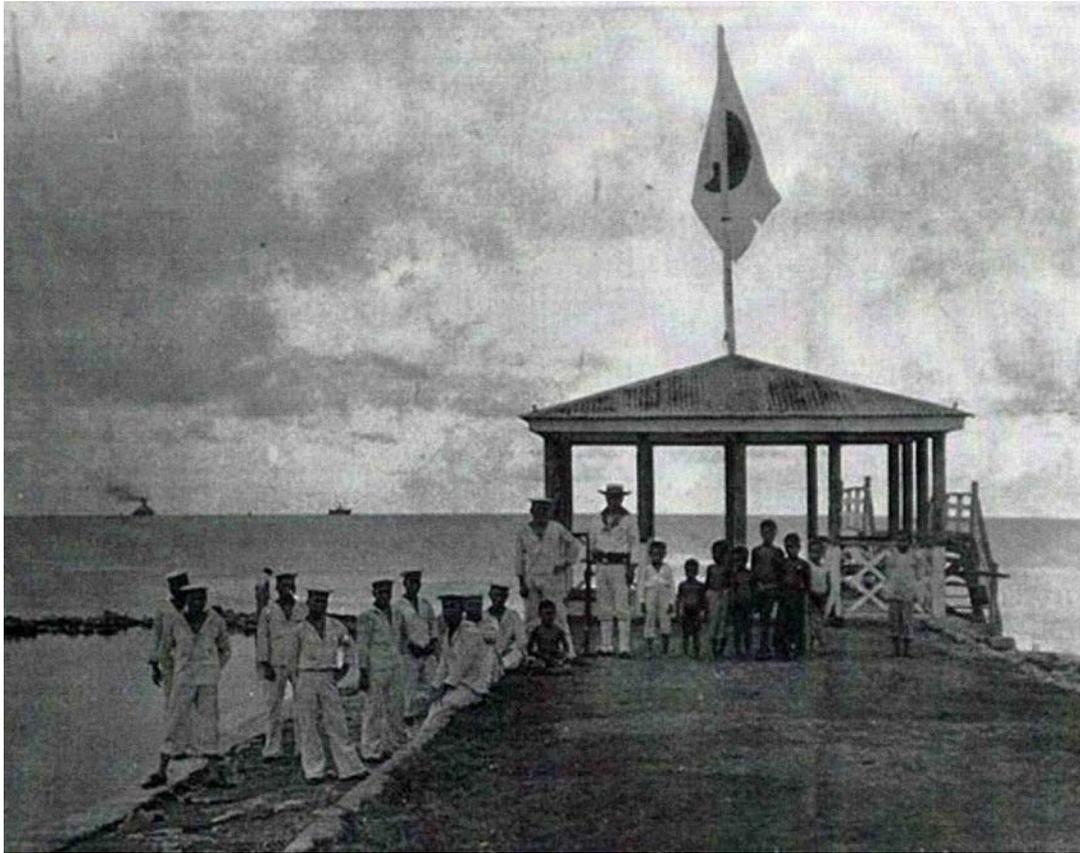


October 14th



On this day in 1914, Japanese naval forces took possession of Saipan at the outbreak of World War I.

In the early morning hours of Wednesday, October 14th, the 2nd South Seas Squadron arrived off the western coast of Saipan.

This naval squadron was under the command of Rear Admiral Matsumoto who traveled aboard the squadron's flagship, the Battleship *Katori*.

Matsumoto was tasked with capturing Saipan which was the administrative seat of German Marianas.

At sunrise, the invasion commenced when 350 naval personnel came ashore at Garapan. A group of local policemen, led by Joaquin Lizama, volunteered to defend the colony, but the German station master, Walter Boehme wisely decided against resisting the superior Japanese force.

Following a bloodless conquest, the German flag was hauled down at 8:10 a.m. and replaced by the flag of Japan "in an orderly fashion" according to a German report.

A week later, Japanese forces took possession of Rota thus ending nearly 15 years of German colonial rule in the Northern Mariana Islands.

Most of German administrative personnel, priests, and settlers who lived in the Northern Marianas were deported in early November. The last German to leave was Father Corbinian who remained on Rota until April 1919.

A few days after Saipan was captured, the Japanese naval commander established the Katori Jinja (Shinto Shrine) on a hill just to the east of Garapan Village. This was the first of several Shinto shrines established in the islands during Japanese rule. It was named after the famous Katori Jinja in Chiba Prefecture.

The Japanese navy administered the Northern Marianas for the next seven years.

In 1922, Japan was awarded the Northern Marianas and the rest of former German Micronesia as a League of Nation's mandate.

Following the establishment of the mandate, Japan replaced naval rule with the civilian-run South Seas government or Nan'yo Cho.