

A HAPPY NEW YEAR! Japanese usher in their  
2,593rd New Year with great rejoicings and colourful  
ceremonies.

-Meguro-

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Picture. :- Japan didn't adopt the Western calendar  
until some--

--sixty years ago, so this celebration of the--  
--Japanese New Year is held according to the old Nippon--  
--calendar. The year is two-thousand-five-hundred-and-  
ninety--  
--three, and that's based on the number of years since--  
--the founding of the Japanese Empire. To celebrate the--  
--wonderful past, each kiddie gets a present. The--  
--high spot of the day's doings is--  
--bean throwing. Crowds of thousands wait--  
--until the official bean throwers--  
--get to work. Then it's 'hat's off to catch beans !'

These ceremonial 'soy' beans are considered to be  
very lucky,--

--and to bring their owners--

--a prosperous year. Hence the phrase "good luck, old bean!"