



# The Weekly Observer

Jan. 23-27

YOUR WEEKLY RECAP OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN JAPAN!

THIS WEEK IN NUMBERS

## PM's Policy Speech to the Diet

On Monday, **Prime Minister Kishida Fumio** delivered his policy speech to the 211<sup>th</sup> ordinary session of the Diet.

He said that Japan is facing its third **"historic turning point"** in which the "peaceful rules-based international order" is being **challenged**.

He stated that the **policies to reinforce defense** will require substantial funding, of which **25 percent** will be the "responsibility of the current generation."

He said that the most important policy of the **"new form of capitalism"** will be policies **related to children and child rearing**.

## Japan Lowers COVID-19 Threat Level

On Friday, Prime Minister Kishida announced that the **GOJ will lower the threat level of COVID-19** from "new infectious disease" to "category five" (equivalent to seasonal flu) on **May 8**.

Measures include **cuts to public funding** for medical care and **optional mask wearing**. Concrete measures will be decided sometime in **March**.

## Spring Wage Negotiations Begin

The **"spring wage offensive"** or Shunto wage negotiations began on Monday.

The key will be whether **business and labor organizations can agree to raise wages** to the level the GOJ desires, which is **5 percent or more (above inflation rate)**.

According to **Keidanren**, last year's rate of increase was **2.27 percent**.

## Cabinet Approval



**38%** (+ 1 pt.)

**58%** (+1 pt.)

FNN/Sankei (Jan. 23)

## COVID-19 Cases (NHK, Jan. 28)

**Total Cases:** 32.42 million

**Total Deaths:** 67,388

**Daily (Japan):** 54,782 (-27,832)

**7-Day Ave.:** 60,936 (-42,757)

(0.63x from last week)

**Deaths:** 338 (-87)

**Daily (Tokyo):** 4,515 (-2,088)

**7-Day Ave.:** 4,986 (-3,308)

(0.65x from last week)

## Vaccination Progress (Jan. 20)

**First dose:** 81.4%

**Second dose:** 80.4%

**Third dose:** 68.0% (+0.1%)

**Omicron dose:** 41.0% (+0.4%)