



YOUR WEEKLY RECAP OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN JAPAN!

Kishida-Stoltenberg Meeting

On Tuesday, Prime Minister Kishida Fumio met NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg in Tokyo.

The two reaffirmed their commitment to **deepen ties and to share strategic interests and common values** including the rule of law.

In the joint statement, the two shared the view that **unilateral changes to the status quo by force or coercion is not acceptable** anywhere in the world, including in **Ukraine**.

The two reaffirmed the **importance of cooperation** in areas such as cyberspace, outer space, disinformation and strategic communications, critical and emerging technologies, and innovation to address emerging challenges in new domains.

Diet Debates Policies Addressing the Declining Birth Rate

This week, a major issue of contention between the ruling and opposition parties was the debate over policies addressing the declining birth rate.

It started with LDP Secretary General Motegi Toshimitsu's questions to the prime minister's policy speech on Jan. 25, in which he proposed **abolishing household income restrictions on the child allowance program**.

This **contradicts past LDP policy** which emphasized "self-help" over "public assistance" on issues relating to children. The LDP had advocated for income restrictions in the past.

The **opposition and Komeito** want the GOJ to end the income restriction. The GOJ will consider but are **cautious** of its effects.

The Weekly Observer

Jan. 30-Feb. 3

THIS WEEK IN NUMBERS

Cabinet Approval



39% (+ 4 pts.)

54% (-3 pts.)

Nikkei (Jan. 30)

COVID-19 Cases (NHK, Feb. 4)

Total Cases: 32.71 million

Total Deaths: 69,289

Daily (Japan): 38,581 (-16,201)

7-Day Ave.: 43,249 (-17,687)
(0.71x from last week)

Deaths: 256 (-82)

Daily (Tokyo): 2,992 (-1,523)

7-Day Ave.: 3,365 (-1,621)
(0.67x from last week)

Vaccination Progress (Feb. 3)

First dose: 81.4%

Second dose: 80.3% (-0.1%)

Third dose: 68.1% (+0.1%)

Omicron dose: 42.1% (+1.1%)