



# The Weekly Observer

June 12-16

YOUR WEEKLY RECAP OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN JAPAN!

THIS WEEK IN NUMBERS

## JSDF Officer Kills Instructors

On Wednesday, the police arrested an 18-year-old JSDF officer after he shot a rifle, killing two instructors and injuring a third at a military firing range in Gifu. He was referred to prosecutors on Thursday on suspicion of murder.

This was the **first fatal shooting incident** at a JGSDF firing range since 1984. The officer claimed that he never intended to fatally wound the 52-year-old instructor he was targeting.

## PM Rules Out HoR Dissolution

On Thursday, Prime Minister Kishida Fumio ruled out the dissolution of the Lower House to call a snap election.

Reports suggest that 1) **he lost justification** to call an election after the Diet enacted key legislation; 2) **rift with Komeito**

impacted election prospects; and 3) **political scandals** involving his son and the My Number Card led to declining approval rating.

## GOJ Presents 25 Sensitive Tech Fields for Patent Protection

On Monday, the GOJ presented a draft plan for **patent protection** at a panel meeting on the economic security promotion law.

The GOJ designated **25 fields** — inventions highly likely to harm **the security of the nation and its people** or those that **impact economic activity or innovation** — including technologies related to aircraft stealth equipment and hypersonics. Of those, **ten** will only be protected if for **defense or commissioned by the GOJ**.

The GOJ aims to implement the measures **around spring 2024**, after crafting an ordinance over the summer.

## Cabinet Approval



**43%** (-3 pts.)

**37%** (+6 pts.)

[NHK](#) (June 12)

## State of the Economy

**Trade Balance (May):** ¥1.373 deficit (20<sup>th</sup> straight month)

**Business Outlook (April-June):** - +2.7 (first positive in two Qs)

**CGPI (May):** 119.1 (+5.1% from same month last year); rate of increase fell for fifth straight month

**Machinery Orders (April):** +5.5% (first increase in three months)