



The Weekly Observer

July 22-26

YOUR WEEKLY RECAP OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN JAPAN!

THIS WEEK IN NUMBERS

Japan and China Ramp Up Engagements

Japan and the People's Republic of China held meetings at various levels this week, in a sign that both sides desire continued dialogue amid U.S.-PRC competition and soured Japan-PRC ties due to issues like the detainment of Japanese nationals and the seafood import ban.

On Friday, **Minister for Foreign Affairs Kamikawa Yoko** held a meeting with **PRC Foreign Minister Wang Yi** on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Vientiane, Laos. Kamikawa urged the PRC to **revoke its seafood import ban** related to the release of treated water from Fukushima Daiichi and the **resumption of visa waivers**.

LDP General Affairs Chair Moriyama Hiroshi met Wang during his visit to Beijing on Tuesday, where he urged the PRC to **resume beef imports frozen since 2001**. The two sides emphasized the importance of **mutually beneficial strategic relations**.

Moriyama also met with **Liu Jianchao**, head of the CCP's **International Department**, where Liu voiced his desire to **resume ruling party dialogues by the end of the year**. Japan's other engagements this month include **Health Minister Takemi Keizo's visit** from July 17-19, marking the **first visit by a health minister in six years**.

Vice Speaker of the House of Representatives Kaieda Banri also visited China and met **Zhao Leji**, **Chairman of the National's People Congress (NPC) Standing Committee**, on Monday and discussed the **importance of working toward restarting lawmaker exchanges between the Diet and the NPC**.

On Monday, **Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Okano Masataka** held the **first bilateral Strategic Dialogue in four years** with **Ma Zhaoxu**, his counterpart. The two concurred on the importance of mutually beneficial strategic relations and **promoting a constructive and stable bilateral relationship**.

Cabinet Approval



25% (+2 pts.)

62% (-2 pts.)

[*Yomiuri Shimbun*](#) (July 22)

State of the Economy

Monthly Economic Report (July):
"Recovering at a moderate pace"
Same for 6th consecutive month

Average Minimum Wage (FY 2024):
MHLW's Central Minimum Wages Council raises minimum wage to ¥1,054, a record-high ¥50 increase

Annual Japanese Population (2024):
121.56 million (-861,237)
Declining for 15th straight year

Services Producer Price Index (June):

107.1 (+3%)

Rate of increase rose 0.3 pt., to the highest rate of increase since September 1991