

The Weekly Observer

April 13-17, 2026

The 220th edition of the weekly newsletter aggregating news on Japanese politics. This week focuses on the GOJ's new "POWERR Asia Initiative," the Japan-Australia frigate deal, the Japan-Poland summit meeting, the first navigation of the Taiwan Strait by a Japanese naval vessel in ten months, the LDP's first annual party convention since Takaichi took office, progress on key legislation in the Diet, the first all-party dialogue on stable Imperial Household succession in around a year, the GOJ's draft public-private growth investment roadmap, Finance Minister Katayama's attendance at multilateral meetings in Washington, the JFTC's second report on the domestic generative AI market, a civilian member's recommendation to the GOJ on fiscal policy management, the MOF's estimation of JGB interest payments in FY 2035, and more.

By Content

I. News of the Week

Foreign Policy/Security

1. Takaichi Announces POWERR Asia Initiative
2. Japan and Australia Formally Sign Frigate Deal
3. Foreign Policy Developments
4. Defense/Security Developments

Domestic Politics

5. LDP Holds First Annual Convention Under Takaichi
6. Key Legislation Tracker (221st Special Diet Session)
7. Key Political Developments

Economics/Finance

8. GOJ Presents Draft Public-Private Investment Roadmap for Key Growth Sectors
9. Finance Minister Katayama Attends G7, G20, and IMF/World Bank Meetings
10. Economic Security and Tech Developments
11. Key Developments
12. State of the Economy

II. Public Opinion Polls

1. NHK (4/13)

I. News of the Week

1. Takaichi Announces POWERR Asia Initiative

- On Wednesday, Prime Minister Takaichi Sanae [hosted](#) the Asia Zero-Emission Community (AZEC) Plus online summit on energy resilience, where she announced the “Partnership on Wide Energy Resources Resilience (POWERR Asia),” a new framework consisting of both emergency responses and structural ones with mid-to-long term perspectives.
- The scheme involves financial cooperation of approximately \$10 billion, which is equivalent to roughly one year’s worth of crude oil imports for ASEAN if converted to crude oil and petroleum product procurement by Asian countries. Japan [aims to stabilize](#) the supply of medical goods coming from Southeast Asia — dependent on oil — by providing financial assistance in the countries’ procurement of oil.
- On Thursday, Minister of Finance Katayama Satsuki [announced](#) the “POWERR Asia FAST Window” of up to ¥600 billion in loans through the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC). The window will be [open](#) from May 2026 to March 2027 for the Asian countries and Middle East countries involved in the initiative.
- On Friday, Takaichi [issued](#) a written message for the virtual leaders meeting of the freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz hosted by France and the United Kingdom, welcoming the ongoing talks between the United States and Iran and stressing the importance of stability in the Hormuz given its strategic importance. Meanwhile, Minister for Foreign Affairs Motegi Toshimitsu [issued](#) a statement welcoming the ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon, urging all parties to abide by international law and exercise maximum restraint and seek a diplomatic settlement.
- Takaichi [announced](#) that the GOJ will release fifty million of the five hundred million medical gloves it has [stockpiled](#) starting May to address supply shortages. The GOJ also [announced](#) the additional release of approximately twenty days’ worth of national oil reserves on Wednesday as part of efforts to address oil shortages.
- *Nikkei* [reported](#) that the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) is considering adding chemical products derived from petroleum and natural gas to its list of specified critical products starting FY 2026, expanding the scope from raw materials to intermediate materials. Meanwhile, Teikoku Databank [announced](#) that around 30 percent of surveyed Japanese manufacturers are likely to have been affected by the naphtha shortage.

2. Japan and Australia Formally Sign Frigate Deal

- On Friday, Minister of Defense Koizumi Shinjiro [departed](#) Japan for Australia, where he met with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Richard Marles on Saturday.
- The ministers [met](#) under the Framework for Strategic Defense Coordination (FSDC) in Melbourne, confirming to further strengthen bilateral defense cooperation building upon the Australian National Defense Strategy 2026 and the conclusion of the contract of Australia's General Purpose Frigate.
- The ministers [exchanged](#) views on developments in the Middle East, stressing the need for continued negotiations between the parties to resolve the conflict and ensure unimpeded and safe navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.
- The ministers welcomed the signing of the Letter of Intent between the Department of Defense of Australia and the Ministry of Defense (MOD) concerning a defense cyber partnership. This will enable the two sides to enhance collective cyber readiness, resilience and capacity, capitalizing on respective strengths to meet national interests.
- The ministers attended a ceremony aboard the JMSDF destroyer *JS Kumano* to commemorate the conclusion of the contract of Australia's General Purpose Frigate. The two [signed](#) the Memorandum of Cooperation (Mogami Memorandum) and confirmed their commitment to promoting this project through close public-private cooperation between the two countries.
- Japan [won](#) the contract over Germany in the final round due to the Mogami-class frigate manufactured by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries being easier to customize based on client interests. The Japanese proposal had the deployment of U.S. Tomahawk cruise missiles in mind, while the German proposal had European missiles in mind.

3. Foreign Policy Developments

- On Thursday, Motegi [received](#) a courtesy call from NATO Permanent Representatives and others visiting Japan. Motegi stated that the visit is a timely one for strengthening Japan-NATO cooperation and expressed the hope that the representatives would further deepen their understanding of the severe security environment surrounding Japan and the Indo-Pacific.
- On Wednesday, Takaichi [hosted](#) a summit meeting with Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk in Tokyo. The two sides elevated the bilateral relationship to a "comprehensive strategic partnership" and signed a Social Security Agreement, Memorandum of Cooperation in agriculture, and a joint statement on potential civil space cooperation.

- NHK [reported](#) Tuesday that Motegi is scheduled to host U.K. Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs Yvette Cooper next week in Tokyo to discuss the Middle East, bilateral cooperation in areas like economic security, as well as Ukraine and the Indo-Pacific situation including China.
- On Monday, Takaichi [held](#) a telephone meeting with President To Lam of Vietnam, congratulating him on his reappointment as General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and assumption of the office of the president. The leaders discussed the recent developments of the Middle East situation and agreed on cooperating to strengthen energy resilience with the view of impact on Asia.
- The members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) — Japan and eleven other countries — [issued](#) a joint statement reiterating that it is in the interest of all nations to extend the eighty years period of non-use of nuclear weapons by making every effort to prevent nuclear war and working towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

4. Defense/Security Developments

- *Yomiuri* [reported](#) Friday that the JMSDF's destroyer *JS-Ikazuchi* passed through the Taiwan Strait, the fourth time a JMSDF vessel has done so and the first time since Takaichi's Taiwan contingency remarks in November 2025 sparked a retaliatory response from Beijing. Japan aims to emphasize its position on freedom of navigation while exploring dialogue with China.
- The Japan and EU [held](#) a defense industry dialogue in Brussels — part of the EU-Japan Competitiveness Alliance — recognizing that the strengthening of the defense industrial base is a shared priority and that reinforcing security through partnership is essential in an increasingly challenging security environment. Japan also [held](#) the Fourth Japan-U.S. Defense Industrial Cooperation, Acquisition, and Sustainment (DICAS 2.0) meeting on Tuesday, elevating the dialogue on four tracks: missile co-production, ship repair, aircraft repair, and supply chain resilience.
- Koizumi [revealed](#) that Japan's defense-related spending (public infrastructure and coast guard included) in FY 2026 has reached ¥10.6 trillion, or 1.9 percent of GDP. The government already achieved 2 percent of spending with the FY 2025 budget. Meanwhile, the Joint Staff [announced](#) that JSDF aircraft scrambled 595 times in FY 2025, a 15 percent decrease from the 704 times in FY 2024. China accounted for 60 percent (366 times) of the total.
- The MOD [announced](#) that the JGSDF will dispatch an officer to serve as the chief of staff of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), succeeding the outgoing officer

who finished tenure in March. The JGSDF has sent officers to serve in the command and other units in the UNMISS since November 2011.

- On Wednesday, JMSDF Chief of Staff (COS) Adm. Saito Akira [met](#) with Chief of Naval Operations for the ROK Navy Vice Adm. Kim Kyung-ryul and U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander Adm. Stephen T. Koehler in Seoul to discuss North Korea. This is the first time since October 2018 that the JMSDF COS visited South Korea.
- On Monday, the MOD [announced](#) the creation of two offices within the JGSDF — Office for the Promotion of Unmanned Asset Defense Capabilities and Office of Unmanned Systems — to promote drone use. Meanwhile, Yonaguni Town Mayor Uechi Tsuneo [informed](#) Koizumi that the town approves of the deployment of surface-to-air missile units to JGSDF Camp Yonaguni in FY 2030.

5. LDP Holds First Annual Convention Under Takaichi

- On Sunday, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) held its annual party convention, the first one under Takaichi's presidency. The party [issued](#) a new vision marking the seventieth anniversary since its founding.
- The new vision [described](#) a confrontation with “populist politics” that resorts to extreme positions, requiring a sense of moderation, a sense of responsibility to maintain basic order, and the openness to accept differing viewpoints. It aims to draw a clear line with populist parties that advocate for extreme policy positions.
- The party also [adopted](#) its action plan for the year, which positions victory in the unified local elections next spring as the “most important challenge.” The plan commits to working on key policy items like the consumption tax cut, reducing the number of Lower House seats, stable Imperial Household succession, and realizing revision of the Constitution.
- Takaichi [delivered](#) a speech at the convention, promising to “build a strong party that continues to win both national and local elections,” and “implementing, one by one, the policies outlined in our campaign platform — our promise to the people.”
- Takaichi said that the “time has come” to amend the Constitution, stating that she would like to have a concrete timeline for triggering the amendment process by the time the annual party convention comes around next year. It remains to be seen whether the ruling parties can muster up a supermajority in both Houses to proceed with a national referendum to amend the Constitution.

6. Key Legislation Tracker (221st Special Diet Session)

- **In the Diet**
 - **Act to Establish the National Intelligence Council:** The ruling parties [aim to pass](#) the bill through the Lower House next week. Opposition parties are demanding changes to the language to provide assurance that the intelligence body will not infringe on rights to privacy and constitutional freedoms.
 - **Act to Establish the Disaster Management Agency:** The Lower House plenary session [began](#) deliberations on Tuesday. Opposition parties questioned whether there was a need to create a new body to coordinate across the government.
 - **Amended Health Insurance Act:** The Lower House Committee on Health, Labor and Welfare [began](#) deliberations on Wednesday. The Act would require patients prescribed “OTC-like drugs” — which have ingredients and effects similar to over-the-counter medications — to pay additional out-of-pocket costs, and to introduce a system that factors financial income into insurance premiums and out-of-pocket costs for those aged 75 and older.
 - **Amended Act on Special Measures for Strengthening Financial Functions:** The Lower House [passed](#) the bill on Thursday. The amended bill extends the application period for regional banks and credit unions to receive subsidies via a grant program for restructuring. It aims to support regional banks to improve their management foundations in light of depopulation and aging population trends.

7. Key Political Developments

- On Friday, the LDP and Japan Innovation Party (*Nippon Ishin no Kai*) [held](#) the first council meeting on amending the Constitution since the February election. While they agreed to accelerate discussions, the two parties [disagree](#) on Article Nine, with the LDP proposing just the addition of the JSDF into the text as opposed to *Ishin*, which wants to delete the second paragraph, insert the JSDF as a national defense force, and fully permit collective self-defense.
- Koizumi [said](#) that there “could have been a different decision” regarding the JSDF officer’s attendance at the LDP party convention and subsequent singing of the national anthem had the matter been escalated to senior officials. This has been criticized as a potential violation of the JSDF Act, which restricts partisan political activities. Takaichi herself [commented](#) on Tuesday that the act of singing the national anthem does not call for support for any particular political party.
- On Thursday, the Lower House Commission on the Constitution [held](#) a session where the LDP proposed focused discussion around the emergency situations clause, while the Centrist Reform Alliance (CRA) urged for discussion on restricting the prime

- minister's ability to convene extraordinary Diet sessions. Meanwhile, the Upper House Commission on the Constitution [held](#) a session on Wednesday, focusing on the dissolution of at-large constituencies and opposition rejection to setting up a drafting committee to amend the Constitution.
- The Lower House Election System Council [met](#) for the first time this year to discuss issues related to the electoral system. Opposition parties criticized the ruling parties for adding the reduction of Lower House seats by 10 percent in the meeting agenda, arguing that the matter should be discussed first before assuming it will be part of the electoral system reform process. The LDP had just [replaced](#) incumbent chair Aisawa Ichiro — critical of the reduction proposal — with former Minister of Justice Suzuki Keisuke on Tuesday.
 - On Wednesday, the National Diet's council concerning stable Imperial Household succession [met](#) for the first time in about a year to resume discussions. Speaker of the Lower House Mori Eisuke indicated that he hopes to enact the amended Imperial Household Law this year, urging the CRA to come to a party consensus in a month. The ruling parties support a proposal to welcome male descendants of former imperial families into the Imperial Family through adoption.
 - The Immigration Services Agency [began operating](#) a new scheme requiring proof of Japanese language proficiency when applying for the “engineer/specialists in humanities/international services” visa for foreign nationals with specialized expertise. The visa for interpreters and hotel reception staff will require Japanese language proficiency above the JLPT N2 level (second highest).
8. GOJ Presents Draft Public-Private Investment Roadmap for Key Growth Sectors
- On Thursday, the GOJ's Japan Growth Strategy Council subcommittee on strategic sectors [met](#) to discuss the “key products and technologies” identified under the seventeen strategic sectors including AI and semiconductors.
 - The GOJ had already presented a roadmap for public-private investment for twenty-seven key products and technologies like physical AI and all-photonics networks on March 10. This time, it [presented](#) a roadmap for thirty-four products and technologies under the seventeen strategic sectors.
 - The roadmap [sets](#) the investment targets, timing, and target amounts for each sector. It has thus far identified sixty-one key products and technologies under the seventeen priority sectors that have been deemed critical to Japan's economic growth.

- The draft roadmap [sets](#) the target of raising global share of unmanned vehicle sales to around 25 percent in the 2030s, [aiming to raise](#) the ratio to around that of what Japanese automakers enjoy for regular gasoline vehicles.
- The draft roadmap also proposes raising the global share of undersea cables from 20 percent to 35 percent by 2030. It also identified targets for other key products and technologies like contents, offshore wind, and warships. The roadmap [targets](#) expanding the domestic AI market to over ¥5 trillion and the cloud market to approximately ¥12 trillion by 2030.
- Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Ozaki Masanao [called](#) on ministries and agencies to move beyond conventional budget constraints and “remove all limits to thoroughly consider truly effective and necessary measures with a sense of urgency.”

9. Finance Minister Katayama Attends G7, G20, and IMF/World Bank Meetings

- Minister of Finance Katayama Satsuki [traveled](#) to Washington, D.C., for the G7, G20, and IMF/World Bank meetings from April 15-19.
- The G7 finance ministers and central bank governors [met](#) on Wednesday. U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Scott Bessent skipped the meeting. No joint statement was issued. Katayama said that the discussion focused on the impact of the deteriorating situation in the Middle East on the global economy and trends in financial markets.
- Katayama participated in a G7 plus ministerial meeting on Friday to discuss critical minerals. She announced that Japan will provide the Asian Development Bank and the Inter American Development Bank with \$20 million each toward supporting new and emerging countries to develop critical minerals supply chains.
- Katayama [participated](#) in the G20 finance ministers and central bank governors’ meeting on Thursday, where the participants did not issue a joint statement but agreed on the need to de-escalate the situation in the Middle East. Katayama said it was important that countries recognized that “ensuring freedom of navigation and safety in the Strait of Hormuz, as well as maintaining its infrastructure, is vital to the global economy.” She also touched on the need to redress non-market trade practices.
- Katayama [issued](#) a statement at the meeting of the development committee of the IMF/World Bank spring meetings, laying out Japan’s expectations for the role to be played by the World Bank Group. She also [signed](#) a statement with her counterparts from ten other nations, which committed to “addressing the economic response to and recovery from this crisis in a cooperative, responsible, and flexible manner.”

- Katayama [met](#) with Bessent on Wednesday, exchanging views on developments in crude oil markets and financial markets such as foreign exchange markets following the situation in the Middle East. She [revealed](#) after the meeting that Bessent plans to travel to Japan when he accompanies President Trump to China next month. She [reiterated](#) at an event at the Asia Society on Saturday that the alliance is in a “golden age” and that bilateral cooperation is essential in addressing key global challenges, including those related to critical minerals.

10. Economic Security and Tech Developments

- *Yomiuri* [reported](#) Friday that the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) plans to revise an ordinance in June to require all IT equipment used by local municipalities to be certified by the National Cyber Office or the METI. This is designed to prevent use of equipment vulnerable to cyber-attacks and ransomware.
- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) [launched](#) a call for proposals for a program that supports innovative research utilizing AI, with subsidies amounting up to ¥5 million. Meanwhile, the Cabinet Office (CAO) [plans to develop](#) an AI model to accelerate the development of materials for the automotive and chemical industries that would normally take a decade.
- METI Minister Akazawa Ryosei [announced](#) that the ministry will subsidize up to ¥60 billion for Sony Semiconductor Manufacturing Co.’s plan to mass manufacture state-of-the-art image sensors for autonomous driving and AI robotics starting in May 2029. The METI [approved](#) plans to secure stable supply under the Economic Security Promotion Act.
- On Thursday, the Japan Fair Trade Commission (JFTC) [released](#) the second report regarding the domestic generative AI market, which cited specific examples, such as “bundling” with existing services, that could potentially violate the Antimonopoly Act. The JFTC [sounded the alarm](#) about the monopolization of the digital market by big tech companies and called for measures to foster a competitive environment.
- *Nikkei* [reported](#) that the JFTC is contemplating revising rules under the Antimonopoly Act that currently prohibit banks from investing in companies for over ten years. The revision aims to ensure sufficient funding flows to startups in the deep tech sector, which, while offering high growth potential, requires significant time to develop.
- *Nikkei* [reported](#) Sunday that SoftBank will partner with NEC, Honda, Sony Group, Mitsubishi UFJ Bank, Mitsui Sumitomo Bank, Mizuho Bank, Nippon Steel, and Kobe Steel to launch a new company with public sector support to develop foundation AI models supporting “physical AI,” which enables autonomous control of robots and machinery.

11. Key Economic/Financial Developments

- On Friday, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Suzuki Norikazu [stated](#) that it is estimated that “production (of 2026 rice crop) can be increased by approximately 250,000 tons” for uses other than food. Rice production shortages amount to approximately 250,000 tons. Meanwhile, rice reserves are [estimated](#) to be around 530,000 tons, far short of the GOJ’s targeted one million tons.
- The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (MHLW) [informed](#) the Subcommittee on Working Conditions under the Labor Policy Council that it plans to survey the implementation of a discretionary work hours system in companies. While labor opposes the move given concerns over overtime, the LDP’s Japan’s Growth Strategy HQs [proposes](#) prioritizing discussions around this issue to cover the gap between overtime and maximum work hours that shows people want to work more.
- On Wednesday, the METI [approved](#) exploratory drilling off the coast of Kujukuri in Chiba Prefecture toward the practical application of carbon capture and storage (CCS). This would be the second project and [store](#) 0.5 percent of domestic emissions in the future. Meanwhile, it also [decided to provide](#) ¥110.2 billion (two-thirds of pre-development costs) in support for next-generation geothermal power generation — which can be generated outside hot spring areas — between FY 2026-2030.
- On Tuesday, METI Minister Akazawa [said](#) that the GOJ “takes this matter very seriously,” regarding Ogasawara Village Mayor Shibuya Masaaki’s decision to effectively accept a literature review (if no other candidate steps up), the [first step](#) toward selecting a final disposal site for high-level radioactive waste from nuclear power plants. Meanwhile, Tokyo Electric Power Co. [announced](#) on Thursday that it restarted the No. 6 reactor at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear power plant in Niigata Prefecture for the first time in fourteen years (3.11 Great East Japan earthquake).
- On Monday, a civilian member of the GOJ’s Economic and Fiscal Policy Council [proposed](#) that the GOJ shift its focus from the traditional single-year primary balance to steadily reducing the ratio of outstanding debt to GDP for its fiscal management target. The member also [recommended](#) managing crisis management and growth investments under a “new investment framework” separate from the regular budget.
- The yield on newly issued ten-year JGBs, which serves as a benchmark for long-term interest rates in the domestic bond market, [temporarily rose](#) to 2.49 percent (bond prices fell), the highest level since June 1997. Meanwhile, Bank of Japan (BOJ) Governor Ueda Kazuo [said](#) that real interest rates, adjusted for inflation, are “very low, and monetary conditions are extremely accommodative,” indicating that the Bank will stick to the policy of hiking rates even as the Middle East situation persists.

12. State of the Economy

- On Friday, the Japanese Trade Union Confederation (RENGO) [released](#) the results from its fourth survey of companies concerning the spring 2026 wage negotiations. It [found](#) that the average wage hike, combining base pay raises and regular pay hikes, was 5.08 percent, while the rate for small- and medium-sized enterprises was 4.84 percent, falling below 5 percent.
- The Ministry of Finance (MOF) [presented](#) an estimate at its Fiscal System Council showing that interest payments on JGBs could rise to ¥45.2 trillion in FY 2035, more than triple the amount in FY 2026. It takes into account the possibility that long-term interest rates rise significantly.
- The MOF, which began discussions ahead of the formulation of the Basic Policy on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform (*Honebuto no Hōshin*) and FY 2027 budget, [pointed out](#) that “an increase in interest payments on JGBs heightens fiscal risks,” and that “it is necessary to secure fiscal flexibility” in light of the risks related to the deteriorating situation in the Middle East.
- On Wednesday, the CAO [announced](#) that seasonally adjusted machinery orders — a leading indicator of capital investment — increased 13.6 percent in February from January to ¥1.12 trillion, the first increase in two months and the largest since comparable statistics became available in April 2005. The CAO [maintained](#) the assessment that there are “signs of recovery.”
- The Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) [announced](#) that the number of foreign visitors to Japan in March increased 3.5 percent from the same month last year to 3.62 million, a record high for the month of March. The number of visitors from the Middle East [fell](#) 30.6 percent to 16,700, while the number of visitors from China fell 55.9 percent to 291,600.

II. Public Opinion Poll

- An NHK poll [released](#) on Monday found that the Takaichi Cabinet’s approval rating was 61 percent, up two points from March, while disapproval was 22 percent, down four points.
 - 31 percent of respondents [said](#) that they support the Cabinet because it seems to have executive ability; 27 percent said because it seems better than the alternatives; and 20 percent said because they have high hopes for its policies.
 - 33 percent of respondents said that they do not support the Cabinet because they have no hopes for its policies; 28 percent said because they do not trust the prime

minister; and 16 percent said because it does not include a political party they support.

- 52 percent of respondents said that they somewhat approve of the GOJ’s response to the situation in the Middle East; 20 percent said they somewhat disapprove; 13 percent said they strongly approve; and 6 percent said they strongly disapprove.
 - 43 percent of respondents said that they feel great concern over surging energy prices; 35 percent said they somewhat feel concern; 14 percent said they feel little concern; and 4 percent said they feel no concern.
 - 52 percent of respondents said that they somewhat approve of the GOJ’s efforts to find alternative energy sources; 23 percent said they strongly approve; 14 percent said they somewhat disapprove; and 4 percent said they strongly disapprove.
 - 67 percent of respondents said that they believe citizens should conserve energy given the current situation surrounding Iran, while 23 percent said they do not believe citizens should conserve energy.
 - 58 percent of respondents support the GOJ’s bill to establish a National Intelligence Secretariat, while 19 percent said they oppose it.
 - 62 percent of respondents said that they believe stricter measures concerning foreign nationals obtaining Japanese nationality are appropriate, while 20 percent said they believe it is not appropriate.
 - 37 percent of respondents said that they do not really feel wages are going up as prices continue to rise; 28 percent said they somewhat feel wages are going up; 17 percent said they do not feel wages rising at all; and 8 percent said they strongly feel that wages are rising.
 - 50 percent of respondents said that they believe the new “child/childcare support fund” taken from each citizen for a fairer burden of childcare costs is appropriate, while 34 percent said they believe it is not appropriate.
- The survey also collected data on the latest approval ratings of political parties.

Political Party	Approval Rating (%)
Liberal Democratic Party	38.2 (+4.6)
Centrist Reform Alliance	2.5 (-3.7)
Japan Innovation Party	2.9 (-1.1)
Democratic Party for the People	3.6 (-0.5)
Japan Communist Party	2.6 (+0.4)
Reiwa Shinsengumi	0.8 (-0.3)
Suffrage Party (Sanseitō)	2.7 (-0.4)

The Weekly Observer (4/13-4/17)

Japan Conservative Party	1.4 (+0.9)
Socialist Democratic Party	0.4 (+0.2)
Team Mirai	1.8 (-1.3)
Constitutional Democratic Party	2.7 (+0.5)
Komeito	1.8 (+0.6)
Independent (No Party)	32.8 (+0.8)