



The Weekly Observer

October 12-16

YOUR WEEKLY RECAP OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN JAPAN!

THIS WEEK IN NUMBERS

Russia Detains Japanese Journalist

On Tuesday, the **Russian Federal Security Service (FSB)** announced that it had **detained a Japanese reporter from Hokkaido Shimbun** in Sakhalin Oblast in the Far East on suspicion of **espionage**. A Moscow court authorized two months of pretrial detention until December 12.

The FSB claims that the reporter was **gathering information on soldiers mobilized from the Kuril Islands for the military operation to invade Ukraine**. If found guilty, the defendant could face a prison sentence of **ten to twenty years**. A *Kyodo* reporter was temporarily detained in December 2019, but was released about five hours later and left the country the following day.

On Thursday, **Prime Minister Takaichi Sanae** told reporters that the "MOFA is working hard to communicate with Russia and is requesting a meeting." She also denied any Russian claims of "**espionage threatening Russia's security**" made by the FSB.

MAFF Minister Yana Resigns

On Wednesday, **Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) Yana Kazuo** resigned after media reports surfaced regarding **three separate political scandals**. Takaichi explained that "I take my responsibility for appointments very seriously."

Takaichi initially defended Yana and told him to win back trust through hard work. However, after a **scandal surfaced on Tuesday concerning Yana's potential violation of election laws** to shuttle voters to voting stations during the February election, Takaichi changed her tone and said she would "**take necessary action**" if he was found in violation of election laws.

On Thursday, Takaichi appointed former State Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries **Takebe Arata** to replace Yana. Takebe is the son of a former agriculture minister. Takaichi explained that she appointed Takebe for his expertise and out of the belief that **he would be able to contribute immediately**.

Cabinet Approval



51% (-2 pts.)

32% (+1 pt.)

[NHK](#) (October 13)

State of the Economy

BOJ Public Opinion Survey (Sept.):
Average respondent expects prices to go up 10.1% in 5 years

3rd consecutive quarter of respondent rate exceeding 10%

Corporate Goods Price Index (Sept.):
135.7 (+6.8%)
Growth rate down 0.8 pts. from Aug.

Foreign Nationals (as of July 1):
4.28 million as of the end of June

65,229 undocumented foreigners
(-3,259 people or approx. 5%)