



# The Weekly Observer

April 1-5

YOUR WEEKLY RECAP OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN JAPAN!

THIS WEEK IN NUMBERS

## LDP Announces Punishments for Diet Members Over Scandal

On Thursday, LDP Secretary-General Motegi Toshimitsu announced the results of the Party Ethics Committee's decisions for disciplinary action against Diet members involved in the **political fundraising scandal**.

Punishments were categorized by order of involvement and amount of money received, ranging from **"order to leave party"** to a **"stern warning"** to forty-five lawmakers who received less than ¥5 million.

Prime Minister Kishida Fumio said that he will leave the final judgment up to the public but stressed that the **punishment was determined based on whether members were in positions to overturn the scheme or not**.

The LDP's party constitution lists eight disciplinary measures.

Being ordered to leave the party (second most severe) hinders the ability of Diet members to run elections using party resources, while a **suspension of membership** denies them a vote in the upcoming LDP presidential race.

Following the decision, former Upper House Secretary-General and Abe faction Upper House president **Seko Hiroshige** announced that he would comply with the party's decision and **leave the party**. Meanwhile, **Shionoya Ryu**, the ex-acting president of the Abe faction, **announced his intention to appeal the decision**.

Meanwhile, ruling and opposition party members **criticized the ambiguous criteria** used to impose disciplinary measures and pointed out that the **prime minister himself should be disciplined** for his faction's involvement in the scandal.

## Cabinet Approval



23% (+/-0 pt.)

75% (+1 pt.)

[JNN](#) (April 1)

## State of the Economy

### **BOJ TANKAN (March):**

Large Manufacturers: +11 (1<sup>st</sup> fall in four quarters)  
Supply DI: -36 (1<sup>st</sup> low since 1991)

### **BOJ Sakura Report (April):**

Downgraded 7 out of 9 regions

### **Demand-Supply Gap (Oct.-Dec. 2023):**

+0.02% (1<sup>st</sup> positive since Jan.-Mar. 2020)

### **Household Consumption (February):**

¥279,868 (-0.5%)  
12<sup>th</sup> consecutive month in decline