

Japan's Ishiba Set to Become Prime Minister in Parliament Vote

- Lawmakers will confirm the new leader after lunchtime
- Ishiba, new ministers to have press conferences Tues and Weds



Shigeru Ishiba after winning the LDP leadership election in Tokyo on Sept. 27. *Photographer: Toru Hanai/Bloomberg*

By [Alastair Gale](#) and [Yuki Hagiwara](#)

October 1, 2024 at 8:30 AM GMT+9

Shigeru Ishiba is set to be confirmed as Japan's new prime minister on Tuesday, shifting the pressure of managing the nation onto the shoulders of a political idealist who has spent much of his long career offering critiques from the sidelines.

In announcing plans Monday for a national election on Oct. 27, Ishiba has already given an indication he's willing to act decisively to try and turn public support into a mandate to rule. It may also help him stamp his authority on the Liberal Democratic Party and the right-leaning party lawmakers who frequently oppose him.

Upheaval in the LDP after a series of scandals and the sidelining of senior power brokers could eventually present Ishiba with an internal challenge, and voter frustration over persistent inflation and the LDP's past malfeasance may still lead to setbacks at the ballot box.

Read more: [Japan's 'Oddball' Leader Wants to Boost Military, Beat Deflation](#)

For now, Ishiba is riding high on a dramatic come-from-behind victory in the LDP leadership election. He's installed heavyweights in senior roles in the party to try and ensure he has a solid power base, and he's given up-and-coming LDP election rival Shinjiro Koizumi the job of managing the party's national election campaigns.

A public opinion poll conducted by the Mainichi newspaper over the weekend showed 52% of those surveyed were optimistic about the incoming Ishiba administration, while 30% expressed pessimism.

Tuesday's events won't have any of the drama of the party election. Just after lunchtime, the two houses of parliament will vote – starting with the more powerful lower house – on a motion to approve Ishiba as prime minister. Thanks to the LDP's dominance in both houses, the process should be a formality.



Sign Up

By continuing, I agree to the [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#).

He will also announce his cabinet lineup, though that also likely won't have any surprises after his choices were widely reported in the local press. Among his picks, Ishiba has handed Katsunobu Kato, another LDP leadership contest rival, the key role of finance minister. Only two women are set to make the cabinet, a fresh reminder of the low levels of representation of women in Japanese politics and professional life.

Ishiba has indicated he will continue many of the economic policies of the outgoing Kishida administration, and the retention of Yoshimasa Hayashi as top government spokesman is one signal of continuity, said Rintaro Nishimura, a Japan associate at The Asia Group, an advisory firm.

A challenge for Ishiba will be managing the right-wing members of the LDP after conservatives were excluded from cabinet and senior party leadership positions, Nishimura said. If he continues to antagonize them, “I fear conservatives will do everything they can to stall or water down Ishiba’s policies,” Nishimura said.

Among Ishiba’s rivals are Sanae Takaichi, who surprisingly lost to Ishiba in a run-off in the LDP leadership election despite leading him in the first round of voting. Takayuki Kobayashi, the other major right-leaning candidate in the LDP election, also missed out on a cabinet position.

Ishiba is expected to hold his own press conference some time in the evening on Tuesday after he visits Emperor Naruhito for a ceremony in which he will be formally confirmed as prime minister.