

Daiwa's Economic View

LDP-JIP supermajority hangs in balance ahead of vote

- Factors driving change since midpoint of campaign
- Heavy snowfall and other uncertainties
- Post-election fiscal policy

FICC Research Dept.

Koji Hamada

81-3-5555-8791

kouji.hamada@daiwa.co.jp

**Kenji Yamamoto**

81-3-5555-8784

kenji.yamamoto@daiwa.co.jp



Daiwa Securities Co. Ltd.

On 5 February, the *Nikkei* and *Mainichi* Newspapers published their final polls ahead of the upcoming Lower House election. The ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)/Japan Innovation Party (JIP) coalition could win more than 300 seats according to the *Nikkei*, while the *Mainichi* sees a two-thirds majority as within reach. This indicates a further pickup in the LDP's momentum. Heavy snowfall on election day is also unlikely to disadvantage the LDP.

If the LDP-JIP coalition wins a two-thirds majority in the Lower House (310 seats), it would be able to pass legislation rejected by the Upper House via a second Lower House vote. This would resolve the issue of the coalition's minority status in the Upper House. Even if it falls short of two-thirds, we would expect Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi to dramatically strengthen her power base within the party. We will be watching fiscal policy after the election.

Recent election trends: LDP's momentum grows

As we noted in [our 4 February report \(*Daiwa's Economic View: Interpreting mid-to-late Lower House election survey trends*\)](#), at that point Asahi Shimbun and FNN polls were already indicating that the ruling coalition could win a two-thirds majority. However, we adopted as our base case the more cautious Kyodo News poll, which suggested that the coalition could win 261 seats, the "absolute stable majority." Many districts remain closely contested, and some media reports also suggest that the former Komeito support base is mounting a comeback. We therefore favored the Kyodo News poll as it incorporated additional reporting and likely factored in more uncertainties.

However, 5 February polling by the *Nikkei* and *Mainichi*, which likewise incorporates additional reporting, also suggests the potential for the coalition to secure a two-thirds majority.

As the election campaign entered its mid to late stages, Takaichi's rising popularity emerged as a key factor driving the shift in the political landscape. Media reports describe scenes at her soapbox speeches that are reminiscent of idol fan culture, with female senior high school and university students waving fans and calling out "Sanae-chan". Takaichi's popularity appears to be helping the LDP to steadily win over floating voters, including younger demographics.

The Centrist Reform Alliance (CRA), on the other hand, seems to be making a strong comeback with the support of the former Komeito. However, its candidates lack electoral appeal, and even with the backing of the Komeito base they are not expected to attract enough votes to win seats.

Fears of opposite outcome to media reports, heavy snowfall on election day

Takaichi noted in a 4 February online interview that the LDP has been burned many times on election day after reportedly leading in the polls. Actual results have often differed from pre-election polling. However, this has apparently led her to push the LDP to a state of high alert. Media reports suggest that LDP candidates on the campaign trail do not appear complacent about their prospects.

Japan's Meteorological Agency has issued weather warnings about heavy snowfall on election day (8 Feb), mainly along the Sea of Japan coast from northern to western Japan, adding another unknown quantity. The LDP currently holds an advantage in attracting unaffiliated voters. Conventional wisdom suggests that bad weather tends to keep these voters from going to the polls.

However, some observers are of the view that the forecast heavy snow will make it difficult for seniors to get out to vote, putting the CRA at a disadvantage given that many of its supporters are elderly. Conversely, young supporters of Takaichi are actively calling on social media for people to go and vote even in the snow. We therefore see the LDP as unlikely to lose its momentum.

Takaichi to drastically strengthen party power base

The snap election gave lawmakers and the administration no time to prepare and derailed prospects for passing the FY26 budget by end-March. An election result that merely maintains the status quo with a ruling coalition majority would therefore be meaningless. Anecdotally, it appears that some observers view a single-party LDP majority as the true yardstick for victory. However, current polling suggests that the ruling coalition could secure a two-thirds majority, which would represent the best possible outcome. Even if it falls short of two-thirds, Takaichi would likely be hailed as the architect of the LDP's victory and secure a dominant power base within the party.

We therefore think fiscal policy after the election will more closely reflect Takaichi's views. The focus will be on whether she pushes forward with her own policies or prioritizes consensus within the government and the ruling coalition.

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