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Sanae Takaichi is set to become Japan's 'Iron Lady'.

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Japan could very well have its very first female prime minister (PM) soon, according to various [Japanese](#) and [international](#) media outlets. After winning Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) presidential poll on October 4 by [obtaining](#) 185 of 341 votes cast

from the party's sitting parliamentarians and current members, thus becoming the LDP's first ever female president, Sanae Takaichi, a protege of former Japanese PM Shinzo Abe, is likely to become Japan's first ever female PM as early as October 15, the Japan Times [reported](#).

The LDP is Japan's governing party, and is presently the largest in its House of Representatives, which chooses the country's national leader, Sky News [noted](#). Strikingly, Takaichi was the sole woman in the leadership race, emerging triumphant due to her campaign for clamping down on rule-violating immigrants and visitors, raising subsidies, as well as slashing taxes.

Moreover, divided opposition parties imply that it is highly probable that Takaichi would be selected to be PM.

While mainstream media outlets have touted Takaichi's gender as a victory for women's status in positions of power in the East Asian country, Takaichi herself notably [said](#): "I wouldn't appoint women just because they're women. But the plan is to pick far more women who are capable and willing to serve the nation."

A native of Japan's Nara Prefecture, Takaichi, the daughter of a manufacturing company employee and police officer, graduated from Kobe University in 1984 with a business degree. In 1987, she spent a year in the U.S. working for Rep. Pat Schroeder (D, Colo.). A former government minister and television host, Takaichi will face the uphill task of spearheading the LDP, a party embattled by scandals, as well as dealing with the sociopolitical crises beleaguering Japan, including abysmal birth rates.

In 1992, Takaichi participated in her maiden parliamentary election as an independent but was [defeated](#). Despite her loss, she persisted, winning a seat a year later and joining the LDP in 1996. Thus far, Takaichi has been elected as an MP 10 times, losing only once, and has a track record of being one of the LDP's most outspoken conservative voices, as per a BBC [report](#).

Furthermore, Takaichi has assumed various senior government roles, including minister for economic security, state minister for trade and industry, as well as served a stint as minister for internal affairs and communications. In 2021, Takaichi made her first foray in the LDP leadership race but lost to Fumio Kishida. She tried again in 2024 but [eventually lost](#) to Shigeru Ishiba.

Following her LDP leadership victory, Takaichi [said](#): "Instead of just celebrating, I know the real challenge starts now. I believe there is a mountain of work ahead and we must tackle it together with everyone's support. With all of you, I will strive to fire up the

LDP and make it a positive party, which turns people's anxieties into hope." As per media outlet *Time Magazine*: "Following a premiership vote in Japan's parliament, Takaichi will presumably take over from Ishiba, [who resigned last month](#) after the LDP suffered two election defeats since he took office in 2024. The party and its coalition partner lost majorities in both chambers of parliament for the first time since 1955, and are now operating under a minority government. The LDP's successive election failures were in part caused by several political scandals that have in recent years [tarnished the party's reputation](#).

Takaichi, a more far-right pick for the typically center-conservative party, takes charge amid growing calls for the party to reform itself as Japanese voters have increasingly gravitated toward [right-wing political movements](#)." Takaichi has said Britain's first female prime minister Margaret Thatcher is her hero. In a [victory speech](#) after her LDP victory, she said that she has "thrown away my own work-life balance and I will work, work, work".