



AS IT IS

Japan's Former PM Shinzo Abe Assassinated

July 08, 2022

Former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has died after being shot in the **chest** during a campaign speech Friday, medical officials said.

The attack shocked Japan, a nation with some of the most restrictive gun control laws in the world.

The 67-year-old Abe died at a hospital in Nara. He had been getting treatment there for gunshot wounds from what police described as a handmade gun.

Abe was Japan's longest-serving prime minister. He resigned in 2020 because of a health problem.

Videos from Japanese broadcaster NHK showed Abe speaking at a train station in Nara when two gunshots rang out. The former prime minister fell to the ground while holding his chest. His shirt was covered in blood.

Medical officials said Abe was not breathing and his heart had stopped after being airlifted to the hospital. Doctors tried to stop the bleeding and gave him a **blood transfusion**. They said Abe had deep wounds to the heart and the right side of his neck.

He was declared dead at 5:03 p.m. local time.

Police arrested the suspected gunman at the place of the attack. The suspect has been identified as 41-year-old Tetsuya Yamagami of Nara. He served in Japan's navy for three years until 2005.

NHK reported that the suspect told the police that he was not pleased with Abe and wanted to kill him. The man also said he had made several handmade explosives and guns in the past.

Japan has very restrictive gun laws that make it almost impossible to buy a gun.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida condemned the attack as “**barbaric**,” saying it took place during elections that form the very heart of Japan’s democracy.

Even before the shooting, Abe was expected to have a major **impact** on Sunday’s election. During his years in office, Abe pulled Japan out of an economic **recession**. He built strong ties with the United States and wanted to counter China’s growing strength in Asia. His goal of rewriting the nation’s **pacifist** constitution failed because of poor public support.

Japanese officials have said the election planned for Sunday will still take place.

U.S. President Joe Biden said, “This is a **tragedy** for Japan and for all who knew him.” Similar messages of shock and sadness came from leaders around the world, including from neighboring Taiwan, China and Russia, as well as from across Asia and Europe.

The attack shocked Japan. With a population of 125 million, the country had just 10 gun-related criminal cases last year. Police said eight of those cases were related to **gang** activities. Tokyo, a city of nearly 14 million people, had no gun incidents, injuries or deaths last year.

Shiro Kawamoto is a professor at the College of Risk Management at Nihon University in Tokyo. He said, “Japanese people are in a state of shock.”

Kawamoto added, “This serves as a wake-up call that gun violence can happen in Japan, and security to protect Japanese politicians must be re-examined.”

I'm Ashley Thompson.

Hai Do adapted this story for Learning English based on reports from VOA News, The Associated Press and Reuters.

Words in This Story

chest - n. the front part of the body between the neck and the stomach

blood transfusion - n. e medical treatment in which someone's blood is put into the body of another person

barbaric - adj. very cruel

impact - n. major influence or effect

recession - n. a period of declining economic activities

pacifist - n. belief that war and violence are wrong

tragedy -n. causing great sadness

gang - n. a group of criminals

We want to hear from you. We have a new comment system. Here is how it works:

- 1. Write your comment in the box.*
- 2. Under the box, you can see four images for social media accounts. They are for Disqus, Facebook, Twitter and Google.*
- 3. Click on one image and a box appears. Enter the login for your social media account. Or you may create one on the Disqus system. It is the blue circle with "D" on it. It is free.*

Each time you return to comment on the Learning English site, you can use your account and see your comments and replies to them. Our comment policy is [here](#).