《日本天皇暗示生前退位 是因和安倍闹矛盾？》

apan's Emperor Akihito has strongly indicated he wants to step down, saying he fears his age will make it difficult to fulfil his duties.

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The revered 82-year-old emperor's comments came in only his second-ever televised address to the public.

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Emperor Akihito did not explicitly say he wanted to abdicate as he is barred from making political statements.

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PM Shinzo Abe said the government would take the remarks "seriously" and discuss what could be done.

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Why can't the emperor abdicate? Abdication is not mentioned under Japan's existing laws, so they would need to be changed for the emperor to be able to stand down. The changes would also have to be approved by parliament.

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What do the public think? Most support the emperor's desire to step down - a recent survey by the Kyodo news agency found more than 85% saying abdication should be legalised. But the move is opposed by some more conservative sections of Japanese society.

??85%??

Is this the first time a revision of the law has been discussed? A debate about whether or not a woman would be able to ascend the throne was triggered in 2006 when the emperor had no grandsons, but was postponed after a boy was born to the imperial family.

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What does the emperor do? The emperor has no political powers but has several official duties, such as greeting foreign dignitaries. Japan's monarchy is entwined in the Shinto religion and the emperor still performs religious ceremonies. He also plants and harvests a small rice paddy inside the palace while the empress raises silkworms.

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If he were to abdicate, it would be the first time a Japanese emperor has stepped down since Emperor Kokaku in 1817.

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