

[China Proposes Controversial New Holidays Amid Growing Tensions With Japan](#)

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A new plan proposed in China's parliament would establish two new national holidays in remembrance of conflicts with Japan in the 1930s and 1940s, China's [Xinhua News Agency](#) reported Tuesday.

Many perceive Beijing's push for the new holidays, which comes amid growing political and economic tensions between China and Japan, as an antagonistic move against the Japanese.

The first holiday, set to be celebrated on Sept. 3, is designated "Victory Day of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression" and would commemorate China's victory over Japan in World War II.

The second holiday, which is planned to be marked on Dec. 13, would serve as a memorial day to the Chinese victims of the Nanjing Massacre, a six-week period in 1937 in which tens of thousands of Chinese civilians and soldiers were murdered by Japanese troops.

Both holidays are expected to be approved by China's legislative body, the National People's Congress, per Xinhua.

"The Chinese think that the most effective method of criticizing Japan is to cast this in the light of history," [Willy Lam](#), an expert in Chinese politics at the University of Hong Kong, explained to the Agence France Press. "The designation of the public holiday means a large-scale mobilization of Chinese."

The Sino-Japanese wars in general and the Nanjing Massacre in particular have for years remained a point of contention between China and Japan. As Reuters explains, both nations [disagree](#) over the exact number of Chinese that were killed during the episode, with some Japanese even insisting that the massacre never occurred at all.

Chinese leaders were also incensed in 2013 when Prime Minister Shinzo Abe made a [highly publicized visit](#) to the Yasukuni Shrine, a monument that houses commemorating millions of Japanese war casualties, including those who died in World War II. Abe was the first Japanese prime minister to visit the shrine since 2006.

The vote over the the new holidays comes amid rising tensions between the Asian nations. China and Japan are locked in a fierce standoff over control of a group of uninhabited islands in the East China Sea, known as the Diaoyu Islands in China and the Senkaku Islands in Japan. The group of islands was captured by the United States during World War II and returned to Japanese control in 1971, despite Chinese claims on the territory. The islands are a [significant](#) economic resource to those who own them and contain potentially significant [supplies of hydrocarbon](#).