

## Texts to restore army Okinawa mass suicide role

Kyodo News

Several publishers of high school history textbooks are preparing to ask the education ministry to allow them to reinsert mention of the Japanese military's role in coercing civilians into committing mass suicide during the 1945 Battle of Okinawa, according to industry officials.

The publishers are expected to file requests, possibly from late October to early November, to add phrases such as "forced by the military" into the text, the officials said.

Earlier this month, education minister Kisaburo Tokai hinted that such requests would be accepted, saying that applications will be referred to the Textbook Authorization Council for rescreening.

The rare move comes in the wake of growing expressions of anger from residents in Okinawa at the ministry's instruction during the previous screening process to publishers to rewrite or delete descriptions indicating that the Japanese military forced civilians to commit mass murder-suicides and suicides.

The publishers preparing to file the requests include at least four of the five that removed the references from their high school textbooks in line with the instruction, and several other publishers are asking the ministry about the procedures for making requests, the officials said.

In September, about 110,000 people staged a rally in Ginowan demanding the retraction of the ministry's instruction. It was the largest rally in Okinawa since its reversion to Japan from the United States in 1972.

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