

Koike's Re-Election Leaves More Questions than Answers

Tokyo gubernatorial election

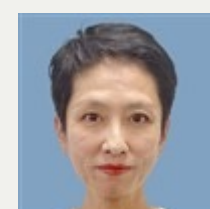
- **Voter turnout was second-highest since 1989.** 60.6% of eligible voters vs. 55% in 2020 and 59.7% in 2016, the last contested governor election and Koike's first bid.
- **"Chaos" of 56 candidates prompts calls for national election reform.** While media focused on 3-4 candidates, there was and continues to be significant discussion about the large number of "candidates" using the election to promote non-political causes.
- **Election viewed as potential proxy for national party politics.** National ruling parties, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and Komeito, endorsed Koike but did not organize their supporters; Renhou was backed by opposition parties, most notably the Constitutional Democratic Party (CDP) and the Japan Communist Party (JCP).
- **Independent newcomer Ishimaru earned more votes than opposition's Renhou.** The success of his intentional break from traditional party politics and his digital-first campaign tactics may signal generational and gender divisions in Japanese politics. He teased the idea of contesting Prime Minister Kishida's constituency in Hiroshima.



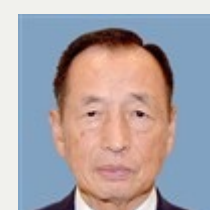
KOIKE Yuriko (3rd Term)
Current Governor
Re-elected with 42.8%



ISHIMARU Shinji
Former mayor of a local city
1st Runner-up: 24.3%



RENHOU
Current Upper House MP
2nd Runner-up: 18.8%



TAMOGAMI Toshio
Former JASDF Chief of Staff
3rd Runner-up: 3.9%

Candidate photos via NHK

Tokyo Assembly By-Elections

- **Contests for 9 vacant seats likely temper any LDP hopes about Koike's result.** The ruling party in national politics won only 2 of the 8 constituencies where it fielded candidates, resulting in an overall loss of 3 seats in the Tokyo Assembly; worse still for LDP: it lost both head-to-head contests vs. opposition candidates.
- **Koike "coat tails" suggest a distinct political brand vs. traditional parties.** Her local Tomin First Party won 3 of the contested seats, a net gain of +1, which raises a question about the depth of voter distrust for both LDP and CDP.
- **Results reinforce challenges for opposition parties.** Coordination for single-member districts remains one of several key obstacles to a proper coalition.

Potential Implications

- **Historically low approval continues to drag down the national ruling party.** Losses in Tokyo Assembly constituencies fit the pattern of results that the Liberal Democratic Party suffered in by-elections throughout Japan earlier this spring.
- **Likewise, PM Kishida's leadership of the LDP remains subject of speculation.** With many of the party's major factions disbanded after the slush fund scandal, personality politics and deal-making could be more critical factors in the LDP presidential election in September; potential candidates may use the string of electoral losses to strengthen the case for replacing Prime Minister Kishida.
- **Contest for CDP president likely to get more competitive, too.** With public mood turned against the ruling LDP, the leading opposition party will try to learn from Renhou's attempt, and that may lead them away from Izumi Kenta.
- **Timing of snap election depends on party elections.** Diet elections will be held no later than October 2025—and likely sooner under different scenarios.