

Koike opens political school in possible precursor to starting new party

- 1) Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike has opened her political school, a move believed to be part of her apparent efforts to form her own political party.
- 2) The school “aims to help you become actual players, not critics, to make good politics in Japan,” Koike said in a speech Sunday at its opening ceremony.
- 3) About 4,800 people from across Japan applied for the school, of whom 2,902 were accepted.
- 4) Koike told reporters after her speech she found it encouraging that so many people will be coming to the school with a sense of hope.
- 5) The school is supposed to focus on human resources development to implement drastic reforms in politics, society and the economy, not aiming to support specific candidates in public office elections.
- 6) But it is expected to remain the focus of political attention, as Koike is viewed by some to be aiming to field her own candidates in next summer’s Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election.
- 7) Hakubun Shimomura, executive acting secretary-general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and chief of the party’s Tokyo chapter, said he doesn’t know whether Koike is planning a new party.
- 8) Shimomura said that his top priority as Tokyo chapter chief is to consider ways of securing victories for all LDP candidates in the metropolitan assembly election.
- 9) Renho, leader of the major opposition Democratic Party, said she supports any move to give people interested in politics chances to act.
- 10) On Monday, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said the school’s popularity shows that public interest in politics is high.
- 11) The school plans to hold lectures once a month until March on topics such as public finances, local governments and election systems.
- 12) The fee for the course of six lectures is ¥50,000 for men, ¥40,000 for women and ¥30,000 for students aged 25 or younger.
- 13) Although Koike, on the surface, says that the political school doesn’t have anything to do with the creation of a new party, few in Nagatacho, Tokyo’s political district, believe it.
- 14) When the political school mailed the notification to those who were granted admission, it included a questionnaire on whether the applicant plans to run someday for public office. The school is considering offering classes on how to run an election campaign.
- 15) “Considering the fact that the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election is slated for summer next year, it’s not unrelated to creating a new party,” a close aide to Koike said on condition of anonymity.
- 16) The ruling coalition is also feeling threatened by the move.
- 17) “If a new party were to be founded, it would be a considerable threat,” said a lawmaker in the coalition.

But whatever Koike’s plan is, the focus for now is on how she can promote her policies in the Tokyo Metropolitan Government. 【Oct 31, 2016／JIJI, Kyodo】

- precursor 先駆者
- 5) human resources development 人材開発
 - implement 実行する
 - public office election 公職選挙
 - 6) field candidate 候補者を擁立する
 - 12) fee 授業料
 - lecture 講義
 - 13) have something to do with～ ～を関連がある
 - 14) notification 通知
 - grant admission 入会を許可する
 - questionnaire アンケート
 - 15) be slated for ～に予定されている
 - close aide 側近
 - on condition of anonymity 匿名を条件に
 - 16) ruling coalition 連立与党
 - 17) considerable かなりの



☆Ice breaker for active discussion

1. What do you know about Ms. Koike?
2. Do you want to attend political schools? Why or why not?
3. What are some of the importance of such political schools?
4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of having many political parties?
5. Make sentences using the following words: implement, candidate, fee, have something to do with, on condition of and considerable.