## GOVERSTORY The Tokyo Olympics & Paralympics in 2020 A Message from the Japanese Sports Community

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By Minato Takeda & Masahiko Inami



## **Cover lead**

If you stay in a hotel near the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, you will see many people – old and young, men and women – jogging around the 5-kilometer periphery of the palace. Physical recreation in gyms is also now a very popular pastime in Japan for keeping in good shape, while swimming pools in civic halls are full of patently unskillful swimmers all year round. The Japanese today consider sport as an important means of maintaining good health. As the aging of society proceeds, this trend must be further strengthened in the future.

Tokyo won the bid to be the host city for the Olympics and Paralympics in 2020 partly by promoting the notion of *omotenashi* – the spirit of Japanese hospitality – as a particular feature of its ability to stage a big global sports event. Tokyo previously hosted the Olympic Games in 1964, when it took advantage of that occasion to develop fully modernized urban and social infrastructures, which subsequently led to its unprecedentedly high economic growth.

What might be the consequences for Japan of the second Tokyo Olympics in 2020? Will it contribute further to the already growing popularity of sports in Japan. Will it help to enhance business support for sports and athletes, particularly professional ones? Will it have any knock-on effects on other lines of business, such as general tourism, or the practice of

If you stay in a hotel near the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, you yoga, or robots for use in helping the elderly or disabled?

This huge international event could lead to a more open and liberal society, since it will be supported by a wide range of volunteers who will be closely linked with the athletes and tourists coming from all over the world, and thus such relations among the citizens of numerous countries will expand. We may see a new society built on the perception of sports as being an intrinsic part of our culture through which all people can be connected.

This is a brief introduction of our cover story's main topics in this issue, which introduces a few of the possible consequences of the Tokyo Olympics in 2020. We also include articles on the legacy of the 2012 London Olympics and the possible effects on Brazil of the upcoming 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. I hope you enjoy reading these articles and interviews by experts in the sports community.

In due course, we will prepare a cover story on the same subject from a different angle, such as the possible transformation of Tokyo from a city of business into a city of culture.

Naoyuki Haraoka, executive managing director, editor-in-chief of Japan SPOTLIGHT

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