

Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election: LDP sweeping victory, JCP comeback, JRP routed

Monday 8 July 2013, by [Kyodo News](#), [Mainichi Shimbun](#) (Date first published: 24 June 2013).

Contents

- [Abe's LDP sweeps Tokyo assembl](#)
- [Japanese Communist Party \(...\)](#)
- [Japan Restoration Party \(...\)](#)
- [LDP leads pack with 28% \(...\)](#)
- [LDP's lead widens as support](#)
- [LDP well ahead of rivals \(...\)](#)
- [Official campaigning starts](#)

Abe's LDP sweeps Tokyo assembly election ahead of upper house contest

TOKYO (Kyodo) — The Liberal Democratic Party won a sweeping election victory Sunday, securing an overall majority in the 127-seat Tokyo metropolitan assembly with its coalition partner the New Komeito party, giving Prime Minister Shinzo Abe a vote of confidence heading into the crucial upper house election next month.

Driven by high expectations for Abe's economic policies, dubbed "Abenomics," the LDP is aiming to build on the momentum to win the House of Councillors election in July, when the prime minister will be tested on his handling of the seven-month-old government.

The LDP and New Komeito are aiming to win control of the upper house so that they no longer need to rely on opposition support to pass legislation.

In the Tokyo assembly race, all 82 candidates running for the LDP and New Komeito won, a remarkable turnaround from the previous election in 2009 that paved the way for the Democratic Party of Japan to take the reins of the central government for the first time.

"We have received a good evaluation of our handling of the government over the past six months," Abe told reporters. "We would like to do our very best so people can feel that the economy is recovering as soon as possible, and win" the next contest in July.

The LDP may need to work to retain its relatively high support, with Japanese share prices having taken a beating and the yen having appreciated since Abe's growth strategy announcement failed to meet market expectations.

For the DPJ, the election proved a disappointment and disaster, marking a rapid descent to fourth place from the first in terms of party strength in the assembly.

DPJ Secretary General Goshi Hosono said the party's calls for social security and administrative reform did not resonate with voters. "We need to take the result seriously," Hosono told a program

on NHK.

The LDP won 59 seats and New Komeito 23, well above the 64 necessary to secure a majority in the assembly. The DPJ only managed to win 15, falling behind the Japanese Communist Party, which increased its seats from eight to 17. Your Party won seven and the Japan Restoration Party secured two.

Tokyo Seikatsusha Network, a local citizens' group, gained three seats while one seat was won by an independent candidate.

Before Sunday's race, the DPJ had 43 seats in the assembly, the LDP 39, New Komeito 23 and the JCP eight.

The Japan Restoration Party faced a public backlash following a series of controversial remarks by co-leader Toru Hashimoto about Japan's wartime military brothels.

Hashimoto, who doubles as Osaka mayor, indicated before the election that he might step down depending on the outcome.

Takao Fujii, the election campaign manager of the Japan Restoration Party, however, denied that Hashimoto will resign over the poor showing in the metropolitan assembly election.

It was the first time for the Japan Restoration Party, established in 2012, to contest the assembly election. The party had three members in the assembly who joined it after the 2009 election.

The main focus of the election was on how voters would evaluate "Abenomics," which combines massive fiscal stimulus, aggressive monetary easing and a growth strategy, and is aimed at pulling the world's third largest economy out of decades of deflation.

Voter turnout stood at 43.50 percent, the second lowest on record and down from 54.49 percent in 2009 when change of government was in the air.

Candidates focused on the challenges facing Tokyo such as disaster prevention and steps to address its aging population during campaigning.

But debate on issues directly affecting the lives of people in Tokyo took a backseat at times as political parties attempted to inject momentum into their campaigns for the upper house election set for July 21.

Kyodo News, June 24, 2013

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20130624p2g00m0dm001000c.html>

Japanese Communist Party makes comeback in Tokyo assembly election

The Japanese Communist Party (JCP) won more than double the party's current seats in the June 23 Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election, securing the right to propose legislation.

Supporters cheered at the party's Tokyo head office in Shibuya Ward on the night of June 23 as the

news came in that the JCP was expected to win more seats than its pre-election eight. In addition, the JCP won more seats than the former ruling Democratic Party of Japan.

Strips with the names of candidates who were certain to be elected covered the wall of a meeting room at the party's office as the election's projected results were announced. The JCP had suffered a slow decline in seat numbers since it won a high of 26 in the 1997 Tokyo assembly election. In this election, however, the party campaigned as "the only true opposition party" and increased its appeal to "those who are not the party's regular supporters," according to Tadayoshi Ichida, head of the JCP's secretariat.

JCP Chairman Kazuo Shii told a predawn news conference on June 24 that the party was determined to improve people's lives and businesses, to prevent nuclear reactor restarts and the export of nuclear technology, and to preserve the Constitution.

"We have gained the power to respond to the voices of Tokyoites," Shii said.

Mainichi Shimbun, June 24, 2013

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20130624p2a00m0na012000c.html>

Japan Restoration Party routed in Tokyo election in wake of Hashimoto remarks

The Japan Restoration Party (JRP) took a drubbing in the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election on June 23, winning only two seats amid a continuing voter backlash against JRP co-leader Toru Hashimoto's "comfort women" remarks.

The party fielded 34 candidates in the 127-member assembly election.

JRP co-leader Shintaro Ishihara's statements on June 18 about Hashimoto's apology and possible responsibility for his controversial remarks exposed an intraparty rift and worked against the party in the Tokyo election.

The JRP's prospects for next month's House of Councillors election remain grim, and a desire to hold Hashimoto accountable for his remarks is smoldering within the party.

Osaka Gov. Ichiro Matsui, the party's secretary general, told reporters on the night of June 23 that failure to win fewer than the current three seats in the Tokyo election would be a setback. However, he added that Hashimoto will not resign as party co-leader. Ishihara telephoned a party executive to say he will work closely with Hashimoto in the upper house election campaign.

Some party members suggest that Hashimoto cannot flee from his responsibility if the party suffers a defeat in the July election.

Coherence is also in short supply. While party executives characterized the Tokyo election as just one more local election, Matsui declared June 20 that keeping the current three seats in the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly was a make-or-break battle. One party executive said Matsui did not understand the basics of national politics.

Meanwhile, Your Party, which has nullified a tentative election cooperation accord with the JRP, raised its strength in the Tokyo assembly from one seat to seven. Your Party leader Yoshimi Watanabe told reporters on the night of June 23 that Tokyo voters appreciated his party's efforts and unwavering posture.

Mainichi Shimbun, June 24, 2013

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20130624p2a00m0na013000c.html>

LDP leads pack with 28% support rate ahead of Upper House poll

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party on Sunday had the highest support rating going into next month's Upper House election, leaving the opposition Democratic Party of Japan far behind, the latest survey says.

The nationwide telephone survey, conducted Saturday and Sunday by Kyodo News, found that 28.8 percent of the respondents intend to vote for the LDP in the proportional representation section of the House of Councilors election and that 8.2 percent plan to vote for the DPJ.

Among the other parties, New Komeito, the LDP's junior coalition partner, drew 6.0 percent support, followed by 4.8 percent for the Japan Restoration Party, 3.9 percent for Your Party, 3.2 percent for the Japanese Communist Party, 0.6 percent for the Social Democratic Party, 0.2 percent for Kokumin no Seikatsu ga Daiichi (People's Life Party), and 0.1 percent apiece for New Party Daichi and Green Wind.

The outcome is far from uncertain, however, because 37.7 percent of the respondents said they still haven't decided who to vote for.

The support rate for the Cabinet of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has meanwhile declined to 65.6 percent from the 68.0 percent logged from June 1 to 2, while its disapproval rate has jumped to 23.6 percent from 16.3 percent.

The latest survey drew responses from 1,224 eligible voters, with 56.4 percent saying they want the LDP-New Komeito ruling coalition to gain a majority in the Upper House poll, and 27.9 percent saying they do not.

The survey also found that 35.4 percent of the public will scrutinize the politicians' economic proposals, especially on jobs, for clues on how to vote.

Another 28.3 percent will examine social security-related policies, such as pension and health care measures.

As for other issues of interest, 8.9 percent mentioned the consumption tax hike and 7.7 percent brought up plans to amend the Constitution.

On revising the Constitution, 50.4 percent expressed support and 33.5 percent expressed opposition.

Kyodo News, June 24, 2013

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2013/06/24/national/ldp-leads-pack-with-28-support-rate-ahead-of->

LDP's lead widens as support expands ahead of election: Kyodo poll

TOKYO (Kyodo) — The ruling Liberal Democratic Party lead in the polls ahead of the looming upper house election has widened over the past week, the results of the latest Kyodo News survey show.

A nationwide telephone survey conducted on Saturday and Sunday found that 31.1 percent of respondents said they intend to vote for the LDP in the proportional representation section of the House of Councillors election, up from 28.8 percent in the previous survey a week earlier.

The support rate for Abe's Cabinet stood at 66.8 percent, up slightly from 65.6 percent in the previous survey.

Kyodo Press, June 30, 2013

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20130630p2g00m0dm067000c.html>

LDP well ahead of rivals in Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election: Mainichi poll

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) is far ahead of the pack in the run-up to the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election, with 26 percent saying they will vote for the LDP, compared with only 8 percent for the closest rival Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), an opinion poll by the Mainichi Shimbun shows.

The Mainichi poll, taken June 15 and 16, shows that 5 percent would vote for the New Komeito, the LDP's partner, and 3 percent each for the Japan Restoration Party (JRP), making its debut in a Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election, and Your Party.

According to the survey and analysis, the LDP is set to recapture the assembly's No. 1 spot from the DPJ and it and New Komeito are projected to garner far more than their combined target of 64 seats out of 127 seats up for grabs in the June 23 election.

But 43 percent of respondents were undecided, suggesting a change in the electoral outcome, the poll found. The Tokyo election is widely believed to be a prelude to the House of Councillors election expected to be held on July 21.

The LDP looks set to sharply increase its strength in the assembly, even only 13 percent of respondents in the poll four years ago had said they would vote for the party. The LDP is backed by high approval ratings of its leader and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's government in the aftermath of the party's landslide victory in the House of Representatives election in 2012 that brought the LDP back to power.

Meanwhile, the DPJ was reduced to less than one-third from 26 percent in 2009.

By party, the latest Mainichi poll shows that 73 percent of LDP supporters would vote for LDP candidates while 59 percent of DPJ supporters would vote for DPJ candidates and 17 percent would vote for LDP candidates.

Among respondents who back no particular political party, only 4 percent each would vote for LDP and DPJ candidates.

According to the poll, 4 percent would vote for candidates of the Japanese Communist Party, 1 percent each for those of the Tokyo Seikatsusha Network, the Social Democratic Party and the Green Wind. The People's Life Party received less than 1 percent.

When asked about constitutional revision, 37 percent were in favor of revising the postwar Constitution and 34 percent were against the move, the poll shows.

Mainichi Shimbun, June 17, 2013

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20130617p2a00m0na011000c.html>

Official campaigning starts for Tokyo assembly election

TOKYO (Kyodo) — Official campaigning began Friday for the Tokyo metropolitan assembly election with 253 candidates vying for the 127 seats, in a prelude to next month's upper house election that will be seen as a judgment on Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's seven-month-old government.

The main focus of the June 23 contest will be how voters evaluate "Abenomics" — a catchword for the government's policies aimed at boosting the deflation-mired Japanese economy through bold monetary easing and massive public spending.

Abe's Liberal Democratic Party, which lost its status as the major party in the 2009 election, is hoping to regain its leading position in the assembly, currently dominated by the Democratic Party of Japan, and maintain an overall majority with the New Komeito party.

The number of candidates outpaced the 221 in 2009, with the LDP fielding 59, the DPJ 44, New Komeito 23 and the Japanese Communist Party 42. A record 53 are women, according to the election board.

For the smaller Japan Restoration Party, which is putting up 34, the election might see a public backlash over controversial remarks by its co-leader Toru Hashimoto about Japan's wartime military brothels that sparked anger abroad, particularly in South Korea. Your Party, which withdrew cooperation with Hashimoto's party after his remarks, has 20 candidates.

A month after the LDP suffered a devastating defeat in the last assembly election in July 2009, it lost to the then opposition DPJ in a House of Representatives general election, paving the way for the DPJ to take the reins of government for the first time.

The DPJ currently holds 43 seats in the assembly, followed by the LDP with 39 and the New Komeito party with 23. The Japanese Communist Party has eight, followed by three for the Japan Restoration

Party.

Kyodo News, June 14, 2013

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20130614p2g00m0dm041000c.html>
