



# Minister Yoo In-chon vs Chairman Lee Ki-heung head-to-head

***Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism Yoo In-chon and President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Lee Kiheung***

***Culture, Sports and Tourism Minister Yoo In-chon and Korean Olympic Committee (KOC) President and International Olympic Committee (IOC) member Lee Kiheung are on a head-to-head collision course. The long-standing conflict between the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MOCST) and the Korean Olympic Committee (KOC) has been getting worse in recent days, and it is expected to be a battle of cobwebs that neither side can back down from.***

***The KFA opened the door first. The KFA held an extraordinary general assembly of delegates at the Olympic Parktel in Songpa-gu, Seoul, on the 1st of this month to discuss and resolve the revision of the articles of association and the operation plan for the Lausanne office. The establishment of the Lausanne Overseas Liaison Office is a key project of the KOC to send resident staff to Lausanne, which is home to 49 international sports organizations, to realize mid- and long-term goals such as strengthening international cooperation in sports and establishing a training base center for Korean athletes in Europe. The KOC has secured a government budget of 800 million won for the project this year and 400 million won for next year. The NOC emphasized that the establishment of the Lausanne office is directly in line with the government's policy of fostering global talent in sports and strengthening international sports diplomacy. However, the NOC expressed frustration that the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism is not approving the project, which has undergone budget deliberations in the National Assembly.***

**► [Exclusive] MOCA "Lausanne office not needed" (Nov. 8)**

***The NOC also pointed out that the MOC had not responded to its request to amend its bylaws, which had been discussed by legal experts and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to strengthen its political neutrality. The NOC, through a resolution of the General Assembly of Delegates, changed the words "National Assembly member,***

**head of local government, local councilor" to "National Assembly member, head of local government, local councilor" in Article 30, paragraph 1, item 6 of the Articles of Association, which specifies the reasons for disqualification of officers, to "National Assembly member, head of local government, local councilor" (including persons who have not been in such positions for one year from the date they ceased to be in such positions). The MOC has not approved the change in the Articles of Association, considering the sensitivity of the issue. As the request for approval of the bylaws change, which was duly voted on by the General Assembly of Delegates, and the promotion of the Lausanne overseas liaison office were blocked by the MFA, the NOCs and delegates responded that it was disrespectful to sports organizations and that the MFA's interference went too far, and even threatened collective action.**

**In response to the strong response from the KFA and athletes, Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism Yoo In-chon gave an interview to a Korean media outlet on the 18th. Yoo first clarified his opposition to the Lausanne office, saying, "I don't see the need for it at this point." "No other country in the world has an office in Lausanne, and if the goal is to attract international competitions, it can be set up and taken down when needed. The current bid is for the 2036 Summer Olympics. [바카라사이트](#)**

**In a tight fiscal situation, it is better to spend the hundreds of millions of won in local operating costs every year on the development of athletes, which is needed immediately."Regarding the training of the national marines conducted by the Korea Sports Federation from the 16th to the 18th of this month, Minister Yoo In-chon said, "We need to improve their performance through scientific training for each sport, but this is an outdated idea. To prepare for the Summer Olympics, we need to further research customized training methods that will allow our athletes to excel. Mental training can be done in the athletes' village, and there are concerns about athletes getting injured in the cold. I watched it because I thought it would be called interference, but it's not in line with the times," he wrote. This was a direct shot at the president of the Korean Olympic Committee, Lee Ki-heung, as he was the one who spearheaded the marines' training.**

**The minister didn't stop there, however, as he also addressed the Korean Olympic Committee's (IOC) "Achilles' heel," the separation of the two organizations. "We need to consider separating the Korean Olympic Committee (KOC) from the Korean Sports Association, which is a long-standing debate in the sports world, for the sake of sports for life and elite development," Yoo said. The separation of the KOC from the IOC has long been opposed by the KOC and its president, Lee Ki-heung, as it would effectively mean the loss of a 'chapeau'.**

***So why are Minister Yoo In-chon and KFA President Lee Ki-heung making such a big deal out of it? Here is the analysis of Mr. A, who is well versed in the Korean sports scene.***

***Both Minister Yoo In-chon and Chairman Lee Ki-heung are analyzed as so-called 'fighting chicken' styles. The consensus among those in and outside the sports world is that they are stronger at using force to overpower their opponents rather than dialog and compromise, so there is no sign that the conflict between the two organizations will be resolved anytime soon.***

***Lee did not even attend the National Sports Policy Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Policy Committee), a joint public-private body that coordinates Korea's sports policy. The Policy Committee, co-chaired by Prime Minister Han Deok-soo and former Taereung Sports Complex head Lee Lisa, held its first meeting at the Government Complex on the 20th and began its work in earnest by announcing a five-year sports promotion master plan. The absence of Lee, a natural civilian member, is analyzed as a sign of dissatisfaction with the MOC's unilateral composition of the committee.***

***Of particular interest going forward is that Lee's faction, the Korea Sports Federation, as well as its member sports organizations, city and county athletic associations, will hold a large-scale "Athletes' Convention" in Seoul on the 16th of next month, at which athletes are expected to strongly condemn the MOC. In other words, it's a "MOCA rally" just over two months before the April 10 parliamentary elections. The government and the ruling party are desperate for votes ahead of the general election, and it will be interesting to see what cards the MOC will play, as it is not easy to turn many athletes into 'enemies'.***