

## Ahn Jun-ho, coach of the 男 national team, said, "Slowly like an honest cow...

Trying to advance to the 2028 Olympic finals."

South Korean men's basketball national team coach Ahn Joon-ho expressed his determination to move toward the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic finals in a "Ubo Man-ri" position.

The South Korean men's basketball team, led by head coach Ahn Joon-ho, returned home on the 8th after two warm-up matches with the Japanese national team in Tokyo, Japan, on the 5th and 7th.

Prior to the warm-up match, the prevailing analysis was that Japan ranked 26th in the FIBA rankings and South Korea ranked 50th, with a wide gap, and that the power gap with Japan ahead of the Paris Olympics would be significant.

However, after unexpected performance in the first round on Saturday, Korea won the match 85-84 by one point. Although the team lost 80-88 in the second round on Sunday, it surprised spectators by showing a tight race until the end of the match.

In particular, through the two consecutive games, young players born in 1999-2001 won one game against Japan, which is considered one-up, earning income from experience and confidence together.

Coach Ahn Joon-ho praised the players in an interview after returning home, saying, "Japan is a team that goes to the Olympics, so it has a lot of training, a lot of organization, and a solid team. We were made up of young players, and although the practice period was only four days, we were able to play on par with Japan with spirit and fighting spirit." <u>HPT-ELALOTE</u> Coach Ahn, who returned to the basketball court in 13 years after taking the helm of the national team in December last year, said, "The players who went on the road to Japan are the present and future of Korean basketball. We have not been able to go to the Olympics since the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, but we will move forward with a mid- to long-term plan until the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics."

Meanwhile, South Korea, which gained confidence through a warm-up match against Japan, will play a preliminary match for the Asian Cup in November.