

## Tokyo Torch: Mitsubishi Estate to Build Japan's Tallest Building in Tokyo

The story dates back to when the world spoke only one language. People built a city on the vast land and started erecting a gigantic tower.

“Let’s build a tower that reaches heaven and let us make a name for ourselves,” the people said. Unhappy with their plan, God decided to split them up by scattering different languages upon the earth.

Not to mention the confusion among the people, the unfinished tower disappeared into thin air, its whereabouts unknown.

This is the well-known story of The Tower of Babel, which also appears in the Old Testament. Back in the day, the tower represented the arrogance of humankind and the Bible’s warning of God’s judgments.

Still, people seem to reach for the heavens.

Tokyo, Today

Is this attempt by modern humankind bold or reckless?

An enormous skyscraper will soon rise to pierce through the capital city’s skies. Envisioned to become Japan’s tallest building at 390 meters, it will be erected in front of Tokyo Station. It has been given the name Tokyo Torch Tower.

The name derives from hope that the tower will become a torchlight that illuminates every corner of Japan.

However, there are concerns about the plan for this building. As currently drawn, most of its 63 floors will be dedicated to office space.

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Remote work has surged in the age of the coronavirus pandemic, producing office vacancies in buildings across Tokyo. Recently, for example, Toshiba put forth a plan to reduce the workspace they occupy. Moreover, it is doubtful that we will return to our pre-pandemic lifestyle, when people used to gather in landmark towers.

In an era when we are able to choose our work style and location, supreme location is still a selling point. But it is not a deciding factor. A much stronger appeal would be needed in order to bring back companies that have given up their city center locations.

Without doubt, the project will test the wit of the developers. Being the country's tallest building just won't be enough.

Regardless, a dazzling fire lit up in the middle of the capital city is not a bad vision for the future. The construction of the skyscraper is scheduled to be finished in seven years.

Will the tower be erected before the worldwide turmoil settles, or will calmness return to our lives first?

The new building will become a tower of hope, and, hopefully, won't turn out to be a modern-day Tower of Babel. Although once it's on shore, we pray, perhaps this time, we won't be punished for pleading with God.

Source: Tokyo Torch: Mitsubishi Estate to Build Japan's Tallest Building in Tokyo  
<https://japan-forward.com/tokyo-torch-mitsubishi-estate-to-build-japans-tallest-building-in-tokyo/>

## 日本を照らす希望の塔に

世界に言語が一つしかなかった頃の話という。人々は広い平野に街を造り、巨大な塔の建設に着手した。「天まで届く塔を築き、私たちの名を残そう」と。その企てに神は眉をひそめ、地上に多くの言語をまき散らした。

人々の混乱は言うに及ばず、塔は未完のまま砂塵（さじん）の中に姿を消し、行方は知る由もない。『旧約聖書』の中でもよく知られた「バベルの塔」の物語である。千古、塔は人のおごりを表し、聖書は神の裁きをもって戒めとした。それでも人は天を目指す一ものらしい。

現代人のこの試みは、果敢か無謀かどちらだろう。首都の空をうがう巨大な塔が生まれようとしている。東京駅前に計画された日本で最も高い390メートルの高層ビルは、「トーチタワー」と命名された。日本を隅々まで照らす松明（たいまつ）であれ、との願いが名の由来という。

多くをオフィスが占める地上63階建ての計画には、懸念もある。コロナ禍でテレワークへの移行が進み、都心のビルは空きも目につく。先日は東芝が、職場面積の削減を打ち出した。そもそもランドマークに集った以前の生活様式に、人々が回帰するのかもしれない。

働き方も働く場所も選べるこの時代に、立地の良さは売りの一つになっても決め手にはならない。都心に見切りをつけた企業を呼び戻すには、より強い磁力が必要になろう。開発を進める事業者の、知恵が問われる計画には違いない。日本一は高さだけ、では困る。

とまれ、まばゆい火が首都の真ん中にともる未来図は悪くない。完成は7年後という。世の混乱が収まる前にタワーが建つか、われわれが穏やかな日々を取り戻すのが先か。現代版の「バベル」に終わらせたくない希望の塔である。苦しいときの神頼みでも罰は当たるまい。

出典：日本を照らす希望の塔に

<https://japan-forward.com/japanese/日本を照らす希望の塔に/>