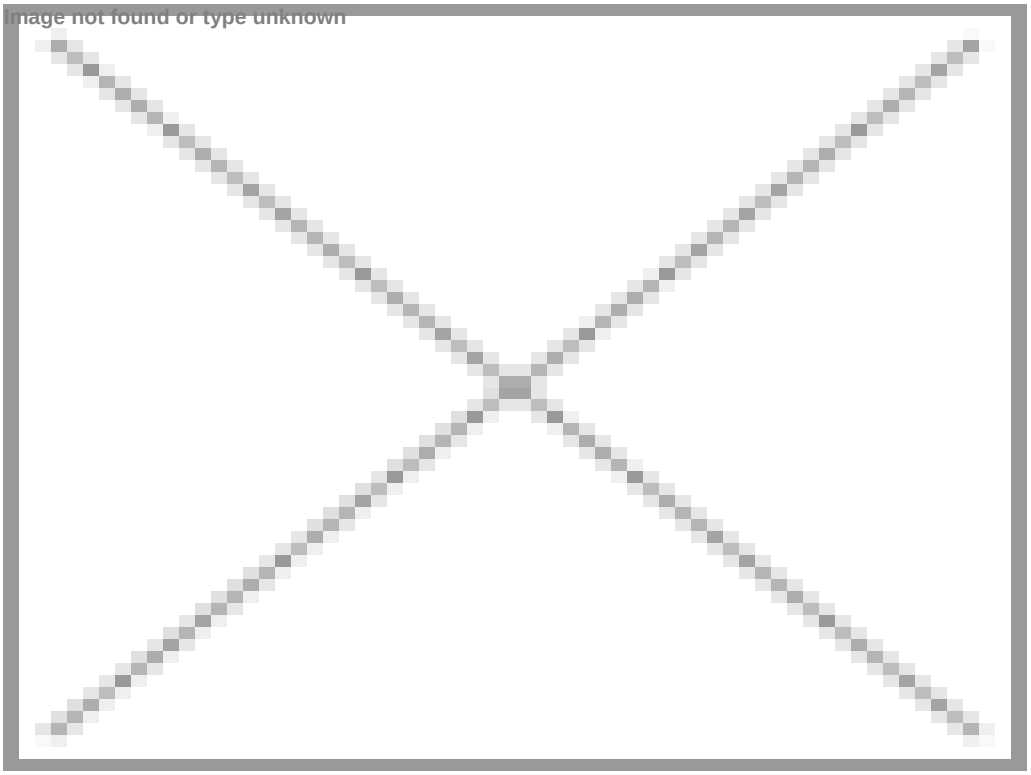
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UIPM SECRETARY GENERAL'S MESSAGE: OBSTACLE TEST WILL PROVIDE A GLIMPSE OF ASIAN POTENTIAL



The upcoming Obstacle Discipline Test Event II in Manila (PHI) is important for many reasons.

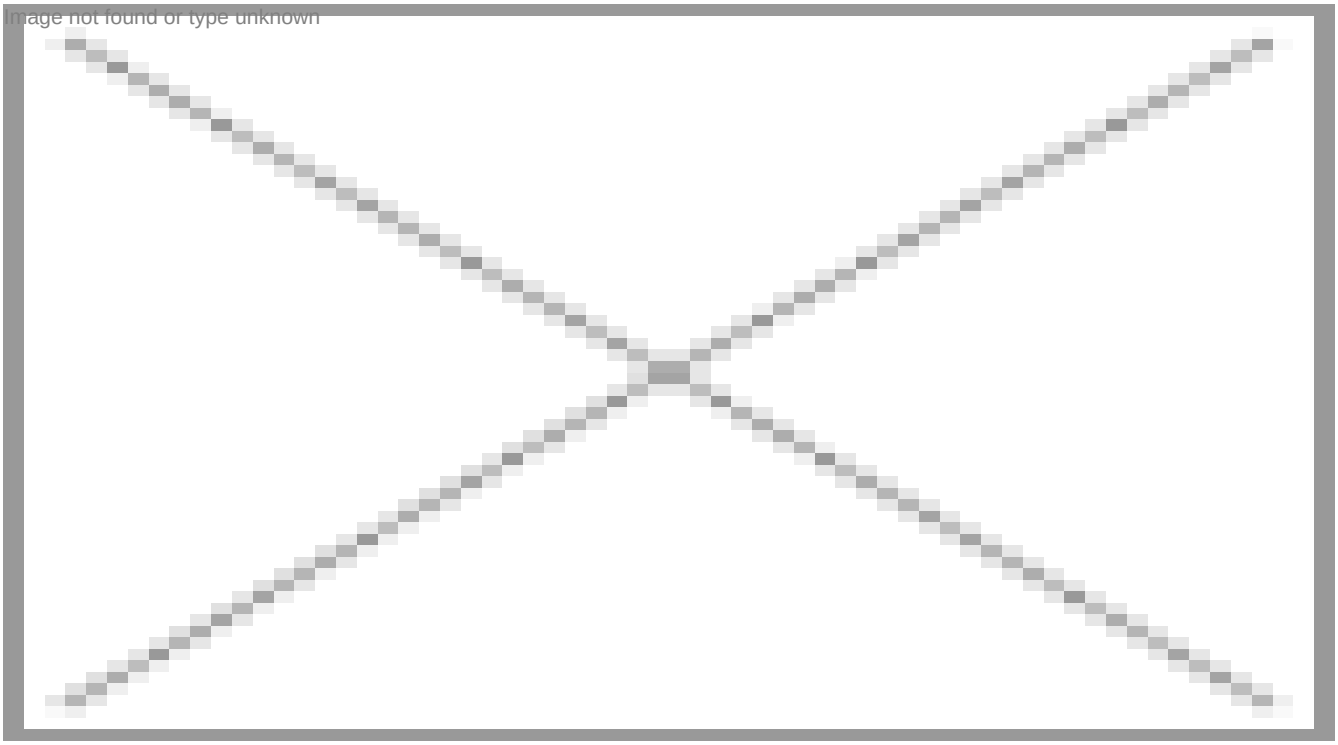
Members of our community in several countries across Asia and Oceania are about to experience a racing concept that has the potential to transform the popularity and accessibility of Modern Pentathlon.

Speaking of potential, Asia itself can be described as a sleeping giant within our movement. The continent is home to more than half of the world's population, and until we harness that potential we cannot say we are making Modern Pentathlon accessible with a product that is sufficiently attractive to young people.

That is why the New Pentathlon Discipline is a game changer – in the continent where the TV

sports phenomenon *Sasuke* (now known globally as *Ninja Warrior)* was born.

There have been numerous highlights – dazzling Olympic medals for China in London 2012 and Korea in Tokyo 2020, unforgettable grassroots events and development milestones – but the truth is that Asia remains a tough nut to crack.



Let’s look at some of the numbers:

- While there are 45 National Olympic Committees (NOCs) in Asia, only about 25 of them have been able to establish fully active Modern Pentathlon National Federations (currently 34 in Asia in total)
- While there are 40 sports on the programme for the 2022 Asian Games, only about 10 NOCs have been able or willing to send pentathletes to compete in Modern Pentathlon competitions within the Games
- While more and more athletes have become active participants in our movement since the UIPM Sports Pyramid was established in 2015, Asian countries sending elite athletes to compete in Pentathlon World Championships and Pentathlon World Cups are still as low as eight or less.

In a continent of 4.5bn people, we must find more touchpoints and reasons for youngsters to be attracted to our Olympic multi-sport. This underlines why we need to continuously innovate Modern Pentathlon, identifying the limits of the sport and addressing them by inserting and replacing new elements.

Our sport can go further in Asia if there is a strong policy of non-discrimination regardless of culture, economy or religion. Let’s shape the sport so that it can be embraced by more people and, at the same time, let's gain the understanding of more existing pentathletes, because they are the most complete athletes, not only with the muscles and physical strength but also with their open minds and open hearts.

For everyone who takes part in Manila this weekend, Test Event II will be a great opportunity, giving Asian athletes the chance to try out Obstacle Discipline and interact with obstacle specialists again after some of them enjoyed the experience in Ankara.

For many of those countries, the reality is they could never produce full pentathletes capable of pursuing their Olympic dream. At least not until now …

By taking a close look at Test Event II in Manila, we will also see a glimpse of Modern Pentathlon development in Asia – and who could fail to be excited about the possibilities there?