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会見

INTERVIEW

## “The performances of the athletes will move viewers”

Interview with Mr Kentaro Sugino, reporter at Yomiuri Shimbun



Japan's National Stadium designed by Mr Kengo Kuma and rebuilt on the foundation of the old stadium which hosted the 1964 summer games. Local wood has been used extensively to reduce the environmental footprint.

For the second time, Japan will host the Olympic and Paralympic summer Games after the remarkable 1964 edition. This year, several concessions had to be made because of the COVID-19, but everything is done to have a great time.

We discussed the upcoming event with Mr Kentaro Sugino who works for Yomiuri Shimbun, the newspaper with the largest circulation in the world.

### *Could you please introduce yourself to our readers?*

I joined Yomiuri Shimbun in 2002 and worked as a reporter in the Social News Department and Sports Department in To-

kyo. Since 2018, I have been working as a correspondent in Geneva. I write articles covering international organizations, Switzerland and sports. I also covered the Rio de Janeiro Games in 2016.

### *You are shortly flying back to Japan to cover the Olympic and Paralympic Games, what is your general feeling?*

I feel really sorry that the people have lost the opportunity to interact with each other, which is one of the main reasons for holding the Olympic Games because of the COVID-19.

Tokyo has a lot to offer. The city has more restaurants listed on the Michelin Guide than any oth-

er city in the world. Japanese people are very friendly and helpful, although their English level is surprisingly poor. It would have been a great opportunity to let the world know about Tokyo and Japanese people's qualities. And vice versa, it would have been an opportunity for people in Japan and Tokyo to interact with people from all over the world.

While fighting the spread of the disease, I hope that the tournament will still see many athletes perform at their best, and the Japanese hosts will do their best even in the face of adversity.

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# 会見

INTERVIEW

## “The performances of the athletes will move viewers”

(continued from page 1)

*Several concessions had to be made because of the pandemic, can the Games be the happy event we hope for?*

At the European Football Championship, many fans could attend the games. This certainly contributed to the success of the event.

Due to the COVID-19, the Tokyo Olympics will be held behind closed doors. The cheering of the spectators is an essential element that contributes to the excitement of the Games. It is disappointing for both athletes and those who wanted to watch them.

For this edition, it is especially difficult to imagine how things will go. Many major hurdles have got in the way so it will be hard to make this edition of the Olympic Games a good one. However, I expect the performances of the athletes to convey something that will move viewers all over the world.

*From an athletic perspective, what do you expect from these Games (new records, surprising victories, etc.)?*

Because of the pandemic and the related sanitary measures, it was more difficult for athletes to practices and take part to other competitions. Hence, preparing for the games has been more difficult than usual. It is expected that world records will decrease compared to past Olympics.

*Five years ago, Japanese athletes did very well, winning 41 medals.*



Mr Sugino Kentaro

*Can they do better competing at home?*

They will attend the competitions with no fans to support them, but it is still an advantage to compete at home. In addition, the Japanese government has increased its sports-related budget over the past few years, including training facilities and coach.

There is nothing guaranteed, but I expect the number of medals to increase from the previous Games.

*The Games in Rio were also good for Swiss athletes, who won 7 medals in total. What is your educated guess on Switzerland's chances this year?*

World superstar Roger Federer has announced his absence from the Olympics. I wonder if this will reduce the number of medals. Swiss people like sports, I look forward to the success of the Swiss athletes.

*Have you noticed differences in the way the preparation of the*

*Games was covered by the press in Japan and Europe?*

I feel that this edition of the Olympic Games is being favorably received in Europe in spite of it all. I think that the fact that various sports competitions have already resumed has also had an impact.

On the other hand, in Japan some people have called for the cancellation of the related event pointing out their concerns and requesting countermeasures against the new coronavirus.

Of course, it is challenging, but many measures have been taken to cope with the risks.

*In Switzerland and Europe, the press is struggling with decreasing audiences and revenue. What about Japan?*

Due to the declining population and the rise of the Internet, sales of media such as Japanese newspapers and television programs are declining, as in other parts of the world. The media are changing to keep up with the Internet's increase in popularity. News can be read for free on the Internet, but it is costly to produce such news content, and we think that readers and viewers must understand that the media also support society and democracy.

## Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic 2020 Games: Facts and Program

A few facts about the world largest sport event:

- 206 National Olympic Committees + the IOC Refugee Olympic Team
- 33 sports
- 32 International Federations
- 339 medals in total
- Over 11,000 athletes with 48.8% of women
- 42 competitions

More facts and figures can be found [here](#)

### Olympic Games

The Tokyo Olympic Games will take place from July 21 to August 3. To see the schedule and the results of the Olympic games, you can check this [page](#). It shows the information for all the events taking place sport by sport and day by day, including the competitions and medals ceremonies.

The opening ceremony is on Friday, July 23, at 8pm JST. For Switzerland, it will be at 1pm, this Friday.

Although the opening ceremony is taking place on Friday, a few competitions such as baseball and football will start as early as this Wednesday.

### Paralympic Games

The Tokyo Paralympic Games will take place from August 24 to September 5.

The schedule for the 23 different competitions is available on this [page](#).

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EVENT

## Be better, together - For the planet and the people

Tokyo 2020 set the sustainability concept of the Games as "[Be better, together - For the planet and the people](#)." Hence, many projects have taken place to promote climate protection and better resource management. "Toward Zero Carbon", means that, with renewable energy and savings, the games are aiming zero emissions. The unreducible emissions are compensated with other projects.

With Zero Wasting, the 3R (reduce, reuse, recycle) helped to significantly reduce the waste of resources. The most symbolic measure may be the fact that all the medals are made using precious metals recycled from old smartphones collected all over Japan.

This is also true for the necessary infrastructures such the [National Stadium](#) for which local wood has been used to lower its environmental footprint.



A dream for many athletes

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## "Moving Forward", "United by Emotion", "Worlds we share"

Those three concepts are those under which the four opening and closing ceremonies of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games will take place.

By "Moving Forward", the Games will show "that everything that

happens in this world is connected, and we are all affected no matter how far apart we are".

"Through these Games, we will acknowledge the way the world came together to face a global threat, while recognising, lauding

and demonstrating our sincere gratitude for the immeasurable support and efforts of all those who made Tokyo 2020 possible."

To read more about these concepts, you can check [this special page](#).

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EVENT



## 革新

INNOVATION

## Tokyo 2020 Robot Project

Robots are becoming more common. This is especially true in Japan, where interacting with robots in daily life is more frequent.

We would like to focus on two robots that are part of the [Tokyo 2020 Robot Project](#) that truly have the potential to improve many people's lives. They have been developed by Toyota and Panasonic, two important sponsors of the Games.

## Human Support Robot and Delivery Support Robot

Developed by Toyota Motor Corporation, the Human Support Robot (HSR) and Deliver Support Robot were meant to support wheelchair users by assisting with the delivery of goods and guidance to seats. More broadly, Toyota's HSR is a mobile robot that can perform physical tasks thanks to

its articulated arm. It has been successfully used for elderly people and people with disabilities.

Check out the demonstration [video](#) here.

## Power-Assist Suits

Panasonic has provided several units of [Atoun Model](#), a power-assisted suit which is easy to wear

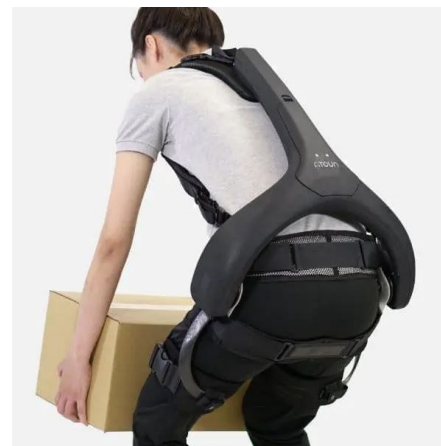
and can greatly alleviate the burden of workers when lifting and lowering a heavy load, such as luggage or construction materials.

Thanks to its advanced sensing and powerful motor, it provides a smooth and efficient assistance which protects the workers' health.

Check the demonstration [video](#) here.



Toyota's Human Support Robot



Panasonic's Atoun power-assist suit

## Agenda

## 日程

AGENDA

- ✓ NET ZERO Leaders Summit (Japan Business Conference 2021)  
Organizers: Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)  
Event date: From Wednesday July 28, 2021, online  
More information on: <https://www.jetro.go.jp/en/events/jbc/>  
To register: <https://www.jetro.go.jp/en/events/jbc/>  
Free of charge

JETRO is a government-related organization that works to promote mutual trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world. Originally established in 1958 to promote Japanese exports abroad, JETRO's core focus in the 21st century has shifted toward promoting foreign direct investment into Japan and helping small to medium size Japanese firms maximize their global export potential.

The JETRO Switzerland Newsletter can also be viewed and/or downloaded online:  
<http://www.jetro.go.jp/switzerland/newsletter>

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