Breaking News English.com

Japan government creates a minister of loneliness – 25th February, 2021

Level 0

Japan has a "minister of loneliness". Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga wants to stop a rise in suicides. More people are taking their own lives in the coronavirus pandemic. Japan's police said over 20,000 people died by suicide in 2020. The minister said he wants to "improve the ties between people".

There is a 70 per cent rise in suicide among women. Mr Suga said: "Women are suffering from isolation more than men are." A 23-year-old designer said she misses not seeing people smile behind their mask. It makes her feel sad and lonely. She said: "I want to see happy faces."

Level 1

Japan has a "minister of loneliness". Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga created the role in February. Mr Suga wanted to stop the rise in suicide cases. More people are taking their own lives in the pandemic. Japan's police said 20,919 people died by suicide in 2020. This is 750 more than the year before. The minister told reporters: "I hope to promote activities that prevent loneliness and social isolation and to improve the ties between people."

The police said there was a bigger rise in suicide among women. More women are lonely because of the coronavirus pandemic. He told reporters: "Women are suffering from isolation more than men are." There has been a 70 per cent increase in the number of women taking their own lives. A 23-year-old designer said she misses not seeing people smile behind their mask. It makes her feel sad and lonely. She said: "I want to see happy faces."

Level 2

Japan has a "minister of loneliness" for the first time. Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga created the role in early February. Mr Suga wanted to do something about the rise in suicide cases. More people are taking their own lives in the pandemic. Japan's police agency said 20,919 people died by suicide in 2020. This is 750 more than the year before. It is also the first two-year rise in suicides in 11 years. The minister told reporters: "I hope to promote activities that prevent loneliness and social isolation and to improve the ties between people."

The police agency said there was a bigger rise in suicides among women. Prime Minister Suga said women have been struggling with loneliness since the coronavirus pandemic started. He told reporters: "Women are suffering from isolation more than men are, and the number of suicides is...rising." There has been a 70 per cent increase in the number of women taking their own lives. A 23-year-old designer said she has suffered from loneliness. She said: "Not seeing people smile behind their mask makes me sad and lonely." She added: "I want to see happy faces."

Level 3

The Japanese government now has a "minister of loneliness". It is the first time Japan has had such a minister. Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga created the role in early February. He asked Tetsushi Sakamoto to fill the new position. Mr Suga wanted to do something about the rise in suicide cases. The number of people taking their own lives has risen during the pandemic. Japan's National Police Agency showed that 20,919 people died by suicide in 2020. This is 750 more than the previous year. It is also first consecutive rise in suicides in 11 years. Mr Sakamoto told reporters: "I hope to promote activities that prevent loneliness and social isolation and to improve the ties between people."

The police agency reported that there has been a much bigger rise in suicides among women and young people. Prime Minister Suga said women have been struggling with loneliness since the coronavirus pandemic started in early 2020. He told reporters: "Women are suffering from isolation more than men are, and the number of suicides is on a rising trend." There has been a 70 per cent year-on-year increase in the number of women taking their own lives. Yoko Suzuki, a 23-year-old designer who lives in Tokyo, said she has suffered from loneliness since coronavirus started. She said: "Not seeing people smile behind their mask makes me sad and lonely." She added: "I want to see happy faces."