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Robo-One Competition
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Robots Fight to the Death in Japan

Biannual robot competition comes to an end

"Fight, fight, fight... kill the Robot!" would scream people in some futuristic movie. However, this is hardly the case for the Robo-One Championships that took place in Korakuen stadium hall in Tokyo. Instead, the robot fighters were accompanied by applause. Don't expect any heavyweight machines either, as the contenders are diminutive humanoid robots built and controlled by the participants. There were 112 robots registered in the competition, each being unique in shape. After the first day, 45 contenders remained in the tournament in the heavyweight and featherweight divisions. In the featherweight division 'Automo03- Sandan' was defeated by 'Leghorn', a chicken-like robot, while in the lightweight division Teakwon-V destroyed its opponent, thus bringing to his maker, the South Korean Jeon Young Sun, a prize of 12,500 US dollars. Robot-One Committee Chairman Terukazu Nishimura said that "Japanese children have all been brought up watching animation and there is a lot of interest in robot battle, so this Robo-One competition is all about making this a reality." Secondly, Robo-One gives Japan a chance to display its advancements into robot technology, as lightweight winner Jeon Young Sun considers. Sun continues: "Some people say that South Korea's Technology is unsatisfactory, but I would like to show that South Korea's robot technology is doing really well by continuing to participate in robot competitions and walking shoulder to shoulder with Japan's teams until we develop our technology and do even better." According to estimations, Japan currently produces about 40 percent of the world's robots, which explains why amateur programmers invest so much money into creating the ideal robot. Nonetheless, large electronic companies seem to find it harder and harder to build new innovative robots, due to high development costs. Heavyweight division winner Naoki Maru argues that big companies aren't interested to create new robots any more, which should give new opportunities to amateur developers. "You see a lot of technological breakthroughs in these kind of fighting robots. This competition, for example, happens twice a year, but every time we gather you witness here some incredible technological revolution in robotics," says Maru. The heavyweight winning robot 'King Kaiser', built by Maru, beat the lightweight winner 'Teakwon-V' in the final leg of the competition, the All Class division which puts heavyweight and lightweight robots together. According to Reuters, 'King Kaiser' was controlled by Maru's 12 and 9-year old children in the final stage of the tournament.