

SWIMMING WORLD EDITORIAL TEAM

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Tokyo 2020 To Become Tokyo 2021

The International Olympic Committee has announced the postponement of the Olympic Games to 2021 “at the latest” as the coronavirus (COVID-21) pandemic continues its relentless march across the world.

The decision marks the first time in Olympic history that the Games have been postponed. The Olympics of 1916, 1940 and 1944 were cancelled owing to the First and Second World Wars.

The Games will remain as Tokyo 2020 in brand and name in Tokyo 2021.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe had earlier confirmed plans for a one-year delay to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games to summer 2021. In a short address to the Japanese media, he also said that **Thomas Bach**, the head of the **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** was in “100% agreement”.

The Japanese leader told the Japanese media before a joint IOC/Tokyo 2020 statement was issued:

“I proposed to postpone for about a year and [IOC] president Thomas Bach responded with 100% agreement. This will make it possible for athletes to play in the best condition, and will make the event a safe and secure one for spectators.”

A First For Olympic History

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The decision also means the **Tokyo Paralympic Games** will be subject to a one-year delay.

A joint statement from the IOC and Tokyo 2020 organizing committee read:

“In the present circumstances and based on the information provided by the WHO today, the IOC President and the Prime Minister of Japan have concluded that the Games of the XXXII Olympiad in Tokyo must be rescheduled to a date beyond 2020

but not later than summer 2021, to safeguard the health of the athletes, everybody involved in the Olympic Games and the international community.

‘The leaders agreed that the Olympic Games in Tokyo could stand as a beacon of hope to the world during these troubled times and that the Olympic flame could become the light at the end of the tunnel in which the world finds itself at present.

“Therefore, it was agreed that the Olympic flame will stay in Japan. It was also agreed that the Games will keep the name Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020.”