International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach has expressed his “respect and gratitude” to the Government and people of Japan in a meeting with Japanese Prime Minister SUGA Yoshihide to discuss the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020. With the Games nine days away on 23 July, the meeting was also attended by Tokyo 2020 President HASHIMOTO Seiko, and the IOC President thanked her and the Prime Minister.

“I would like to express my heartfelt respect and gratitude to the Government and the people of Japan for welcoming us,” said President Bach. “The Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee has done a fantastic job in preparing for these Games and to make Tokyo the best-prepared Olympic city ever. Achieving this was only possible because of the fantastic volunteers and dedicated staff.”

The safety of the Games was at the heart of the meeting, and President Bach continued: “Athletes from all over the world are now arriving into Tokyo. Eighty-five per cent of the athletes and officials who will live in the Olympic Village, and almost 100 per cent of the IOC Members and IOC staff, are either vaccinated or immune.”

The IOC was informed by the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee about the 8,000+ people involved in the Games who travelled to Japan between 1 and 13 July. All were subject to the Tokyo 2020 screening testing regime, and all underwent pre-departure tests and health checks. Only three tested positive for COVID-19 after arrival and were immediately isolated, while the close contacts have been subject to the relevant quarantine measures.

“These Games will be followed by billions of people around the globe,” said Bach. “They will admire what the Japanese people have achieved under these difficult circumstances. The Games will unite the world in all our diversity. They will show that we are stronger together in all our solidarity.”
SHOTLIST:
00:02 Wide Prime Minister’s Office. IOC President Thomas Bach (end left). Government of Japan & Tokyo 2020 officials including Japan Prime Minister SUGA Yoshihide (end right).
00:09 Close single President Bach in conversation with Japan PM SUGA Yoshihide
00:12 Close single Japan PM SUGA Yoshihide listening
00:16 Mid shot President Bach and Japan PM SUGA Yoshihide in conversation
00:19 **SOUNDBITE: Thomas Bach, IOC President (English Language)**

“We have been informed by the Organising Committee just today that there were only three positive cases and that they have been isolated and that their close contacts are under the relevant quarantine regime. So, you can see that the system is working and is enforced and I would like to thank the Organising Committee for all their efforts and for this information which I just conveyed to you.”

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