

WEATHER

Today's
forecast

Nanjing	21/26 Rainy
Suzhou	21/26 Rainy
Wuxi	22/25 Rainy
Yangzhou	21/26 Rainy
Xuzhou	20/29 Cloudy
Changzhou	22/26 Rainy
Nantong	21/25 Rainy
Lianyungang	20/27 Rainy
Huai'an	20/27 Rainy
Yancheng	21/26 Rainy
Zhenjiang	22/26 Rainy
Taizhou	21/25 Rainy
Suqian	20/27 Cloudy

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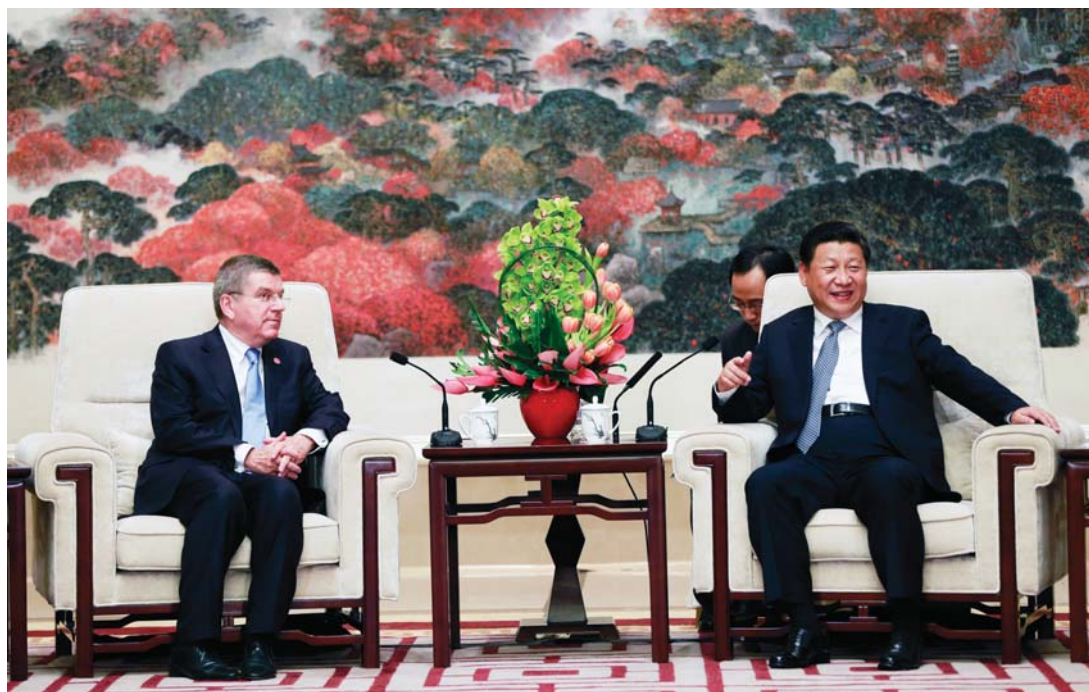
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President Xi Jinping meets International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach in Nanjing on Saturday before the opening of the Youth Olympic Games. PHOTO BY FENG YONGBIN / CHINA DAILY

IOC BOSS: Games
will be a success

By ZHAO SHENGNAN

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On the opening day of the second Summer Youth Olympic Games on Saturday, President Xi Jinping voiced China's commitment to the Olympic Movement in a meeting with International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach in the hopes of bidding successfully for the 2022 Winter Olympics.

With Beijing and the northern Chinese city of Zhangjiakou bidding for the Winter Games, China is taking the opportunity in Nanjing to contribute significantly to the IOC's goal of educating youth through sports, Xi told IOC chief Thomas Bach in Nanjing.

Hailing the Chinese government's efforts in boosting sports, Bach wished Beijing and the Hebei provincial city of Zhangjiakou good luck in their combined bid.

Experts claim if the Nanjing Games go smoothly, China will benefit politically and economically in its bid for the Winter Games. Bach lauded China's preparation in hosting the second Summer Youth Olympics and added that Nanjing is setting a good example in using sports to help promote economic and social development.

The Nanjing Youth Olympics will be a huge success and will leave a legacy in Olympic history, he said.

Bach has said success in Nanjing

would benefit the ongoing bid by Beijing and Zhangjiakou. If the two cities succeed, it would be a historic victory for Beijing, which hosted the 2008 Summer Olympics.

It was the third meeting between Xi and Bach during the former German fencer's 11-month presidency at the IOC. Both attended the opening ceremony of the Youth Olympics on Saturday evening.

Xi said the Youth Olympics integrate culture and education into sports, adding that it is not only an arena where young athletes can compete but also a platform for communication.

The Youth Olympics help promote the Olympic spirit of solidarity, friendship and peace and it introduces the correct way of life for young people, Xi said.

"Every family is familiar with the (Olympic) motto: faster, higher and stronger," he told Bach.

The Chinese president expressed appreciation and support of the IOC's work to promote sports.

Bach said the IOC endeavors to promote the Olympic spirit around the globe and to use sports as a tool to enhance world peace and sustainable development.

Ren Hai, professor of physical education at Beijing Sport University, said the Youth Olympics in Nanjing, with both competitive sports and youth exchanges, will likely encourage Chinese youth to learn more about social rules and physical exercise.

"Most youths are the only child in their family. Through the Games, which is highlighting key social values like solidarity and cooperation, they will know more about how to get along with their peers," Ren said.

Xinhua contributed to this story.



IOC president Thomas Bach takes a selfie with participants at the opening ceremony on Saturday. PHOTO BY FENG YONGBIN / CHINA DAILY

President
applauds
German
Cup win

By ZHAO SHENGNAN

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About a month after the FIFA World Cup, President Xi Jinping could not get soccer off his mind while meeting the president of the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach.

"The German team was blessed with good luck. But on the most serious note, Germany had far better overall competence, especially in the collaboration and coordination between its team members," Xi said of champion side Germany, for which Bach used to be an Olympic fencer.

Xi has made no secret of his passion for sports. In China, cartoons have appeared online showing Xi living out his dream as a soccer star.

Xi's interest in sports have sparked hopes of a revival in games like soccer, which has long been dogged by poor international performances.

Even Bach joked during the meeting that since Xi and the Chinese people are "very well known for achieving their targets very early," that the Chinese team may grow so rapidly that this year might be "the last opportunity for Germany to win the World Cup."

Bach was apparently referring to Xi's stated wishes for the Chinese soccer in several occasions: first, that China hosts the World Cup; second, that the national team qualify for the finals; and, third, that one day the Chinese team would win the event.

China ranked second on the gold and overall medal lists at the 2012 Olympic Games in London. However, the country lags behind others in terms of public involvement in sporting endeavors and the development of the so-called three big-ball games: soccer, basketball and volleyball.

The development of those sports was a symbol of a sporting power, Xi told young Chinese basketball players at the Youth Olympic Village in Nanjing on Friday.

The basketball team could set a higher target and achieve better results. The young generation is very promising, Xi said at a training center in the village on the eve of the opening of the second Youth Olympic Games on Saturday.