

Sports events cancelled, COVID-19 fears over Olympics

14th March, 2020



The global spread of COVID-19 is playing havoc with sports events worldwide. After the WHO designated the coronavirus as a pandemic, many sports associations have taken measures to curb the spread of the virus.

Major sporting events are being suspended on a daily basis. European football is coming to a standstill as Spain's La Liga, Italy's Serie A and other major leagues have suspended games for the coming weeks. The Champions League could be suspended until next summer. In other sports, the first grand prix of the Formula 1 season has been cancelled in Australia; and the National Hockey League and National Basketball League have been suspended until further notice.

The biggest concern for sports fans is uncertainty over the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Japan's government has called for preparations to continue as scheduled. The minister responsible for the Olympics and Paralympics said it was "inconceivable" they would be cancelled. However, a member of the organizing committee said it was "more realistic" to postpone the Games. U.S. President Donald Trump suggested Japan should consider postponing the Games. He said: "It's a shame because they built some really beautiful buildings." Sport is already being hit in Japan. The nation's 15-day spring sumo tournament is being held behind closed doors in Osaka and a national high school baseball tournament has been cancelled.

Sources: bbc.com / espn.com / skysports.com

Writing

All public gatherings worldwide should be cancelled. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

spread / COVID-19 / pandemic / sports / standstill / major leagues / Formula 1 / concern / Tokyo Olympics / preparations / committee / shame / sumo / baseball

True / False

- a) The WHO said no one can play the sport of havoc during the pandemic. T / F
- b) The WHO earlier designated the pandemic as a coronavirus. T / F
- c) The Champions League could be delayed until next summer. T / F
- d) The whole of the Formula 1 season has been cancelled. T / F
- e) Many people are worried about whether the Olympics will take place. T / F
- f) Donald Trump said to hold the Olympics would be a shame. T / F
- g) A 15-day sumo tournament in Japan has been cancelled. T / F
- h) A high school baseball tournament in Japan has been cancelled. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1. spread | a. unthinkable |
| 2. designated | b. restrain |
| 3. curb | c. postponed |
| 4. standstill | d. called off |
| 5. suspended | e. planned |
| 6. uncertainty | f. classed |
| 7. scheduled | g. proliferation |
| 8. inconceivable | h. pity |
| 9. shame | i. stop |
| 10. cancelled | j. doubt |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) How worried are you about the Olympics being cancelled?
- c) How bad would it be if the Olympics were cancelled?
- d) Would it be OK for the Olympics to take place without spectators?
- e) How would athletes feel about the Olympics being postponed?
- f) Should sports events take place behind closed doors?
- g) How are authorities dealing with COVID-19?
- h) What questions would you like to ask COVID-19 experts?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. COVID-19 is playing | a. is uncertainty |
| 2. After the WHO designated the coronavirus | b. a standstill |
| 3. taken measures to curb the | c. notice |
| 4. European football is coming to | d. closed doors |
| 5. suspended until further | e. as a pandemic |
| 6. The biggest concern for sports fans | f. scheduled |
| 7. continue as | g. postponing the Games |
| 8. it was "inconceivable" they would | h. havoc with sports events |
| 9. Japan should consider | i. be cancelled |
| 10. being held behind | j. spread of the virus |

Discussion – Student B

- What is your favourite sport?
- What events have been cancelled in your country?
- What events should be cancelled in your country?
- Are you surprised that many sports events are still going ahead?
- Do you agree with suspending sports leagues?
- How long do you think sports leagues should be suspended for?
- How has COVID-19 affected your life?
- What advice do you have for sports fans?

Spelling

- playing oahcv with sports events
- eatngsdeid the coronavirus as a pandemic
- ucrb the spread of the virus
- on a daily ssiba
- other major lgsuaee
- sndpsueed until further notice
- nraeutincy over the 2020 Tokyo Olympics
- continue as uehscdeld
- it was boavinielcne they would be cancelled
- more islrtaeic to postpone the Games
- Trump dutgesges Japan should consider
- high school baseball nruetoetanm

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. f	3. b	4. i	5. c
6. j	7. e	8. a	9. h	10. d

Role Play

Role A – Amusement Parks

You think amusement parks are the most important places to close during the COVID-19 outbreak. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why it isn't as important to close their places. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these to close (and why): museums, sports stadia or gyms.

Role B – Museums

You think museums are the most important places to close during the COVID-19 outbreak. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why it isn't as important to close their places. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these to close (and why): amusement parks, sports stadia or gyms.

Role C – Sports Stadia

You think sports stadia are the most important places to close during the COVID-19 outbreak. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why it isn't as important to close their places. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these to close (and why): museums, amusement parks or gyms.

Role D – Gyms

You think gyms are the most important places to close during the COVID-19 outbreak. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why it isn't as important to close their places. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these to close (and why): museums, sports stadia or amusement parks.

Speaking – Closed

Rank these with your partner. Put the things that should close at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| • Horse races | • Amusement parks |
| • Theatres | • Bars and pubs |
| • Museums | • Cinemas |
| • Gyms | • Sports stadia |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.