

IOC President arrives for the opening ceremony of Santiago 2023



Thomas Bach and Neven Ilic

Santiago de Chile, October 19 (JIT) - The president of the International Olympic Committee, the German Thomas Bach, arrived Thursday morning in this capital to participate in the opening ceremony of the XIX Pan American Games and -presumably- in the closing ceremony of the LXI General Assembly of Panam Sports.

Bach was received by the Chilean Neven Ilic, head of Panam Sports, at the doors of the Sheraton Hotel, headquarters of the Pan American family. Hugs and smiles marked the effusive greeting in front of the press cameras.

Bach is attending a historic event: the first time that Chile hosts the biggest sports festival in the Americas, after two failed attempts during the years of Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship.

He arrives in a city that is tense a few hours before the official start of the Games, as several facilities and exteriors receive the final touches, adjustments are announced in the city roads and in the operation of the subway.

Security issues are also at the center of attention of organizers and police officers, especially after the three robberies that took place during the previous days.

The most notorious of all occurred at the heart of the event, Chile's National Stadium, where a container belonging to a television company from Spain and Portugal was broken into and equipment valued at more than 100 million Chilean pesos was stolen.

Almost at the same time, a Ukrainian boxing judge was robbed of her passport wallet and more than two million pesos; and a Venezuelan man's car was broken into and his suitcases and about 750 thousand in cash were stolen.

The carabineros announced today the rescue of part of the stolen television equipment, found thanks to the tracking by video cameras to a house located 20 kilometers from the Stadium, in a commune called La Granja.

They also confirmed the reinforcement of security measures in all the venues, while the organizers expressed their aspiration that these facts do not tarnish the celebration of the event.

On the strictly sporting side, the water failure in the swimming pool complex was solved; the crisis of identification of the keys of the apartments in the village was solved and the signs with English translation errors, which raised many criticisms and memes on the Internet social networks, were replaced.

Wednesday's day, the fourth anniversary of the social outburst of October 18, 2019, ended with 33 arrested and several stores and institutions vandalized. None related to the Games, according to local media.

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