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Nagano Olympic Winter Games

Olympic Village opens in Nagano



The Olympic Village which opened in Kawanakajima-Imai, Nagano today.

NAGANO, Japan, Jan. 24 Kyodo - The Olympic Village, home to some 3,000 athletes and officials for next month's Nagano Winter Games, opened Saturday to mark the start of the final two-week countdown for the opening of the games.

About 400 officials of the Nagano Olympic organizing committee (NAOC) and games volunteers attended the opening ceremony held at the rotary in front of the village.

Village Mayor Shozo Sasahara and guests including Parliamentary Vice Minister of Education Kensaku Morita and Nagano Gov. Goro Yoshimura greeted those who gathered as a light snowfall dusted the crowd.

Yasuko Konoe, a cousin of Emperor Akihito and honorary mayor of the Olympic Village, declared the village open.

The flags of Japan, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and NAOC were hoisted as Japanese Olympic Committee President Hironoshin Furuhashi cut the ribbon to open the village.

Located in the Kawanakajima district south of downtown Nagano, the 19-hectare complex features a cafeteria with a capacity for 1,000 people, a general store, post office, a medical clinic, disco, theater and a bank handling 19 foreign currencies.

Following the opening ceremony, the first

group of athletes and officials taking part in the Feb. 7-22 winter games started to move into the village.

Olympic delegation officials from the United States, Canada, Italy, Poland and eight other national Olympic committees checked into the village along with athletes from Taiwan and the Virgin Islands.

NAOC said eight athletes and 66 officials are expected to arrive throughout the day.

The Main Press Center and the International Broadcasting Center are also slated to open Saturday.

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