**Beijing Olympics 2022**

[**Yasir Habib Khan**](https://nation.com.pk/Columnist/yasir-habib-khan)

February 03, 2022

The world has few sources of inspiration. The Beijing Winter Olympics 2022, given the plethora of challenges, is a new source. The credit for this goes to the Communist Party of China (CPC), its top leadership and President Xi Jinping for the XXIV Olympics Winter Games, ready to be held on February 4 with great fanfare.

There were attempts to politicise the mega sports event in the grab of human rights issues. Amnesty International pressed hard on the international community not to allow China to use the Winter Olympics in Beijing as a “sportswashing opportunity”. In order to vilify China, obnoxious voices were raised pressuring UN human rights officials to release a report on Xinjiang—where Washington accuses China of perpetrating a genocide against minority Uyghur Muslims—before the onset of the Olympics.

However, with a congenial strategy instead of adversarial, first Beijing took the world in confidence by stating that Xinjiang is thriving and claims with credence that Xinjiang contains no concertation cells rather camps are “vocational training centres” that are operational to support employment and fight religious extremism. Now there are reports that China has agreed to allow United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR) Michelle Bachelet to visit Xinjiang in the first half of 2022 after the Beijing Winter Olympic Games.

[Pakistan condemns hijab ban on Muslim students in Indian state of Karnataka](https://nation.com.pk/09-Feb-2022/pakistan-condemns-hijab-ban-on-muslim-students-in-indian-state-of-karnataka)

From the Chinese side, all emphasis is on keeping the winter Olympics aloof from geo-political and geo-strategic dynamics. Indeed, the Olympics is a sport arena which welcomes solely games and athletes all over the world beyond any interests, tenets and affiliations.

Ensuring a zero Covid policy for the event, strict new COVID-19 restrictions have come into force in Beijing. All visitors to the capital must now show a negative COVID test result from the past 48 hours, while flights from higher risk areas within China will be cancelled or limited to one a day at reduced capacity. And the estimated 2,900 athletes must be fully vaccinated or face 21 days’ quarantine upon arrival. They will also be tested daily.

Notwithstanding the stern zero-covid strategy, the Chinese government has not tried to downplay the truth about the threat of the spread of Omicron. The Deputy Director of Epidemic Prevention and Control Office of Beijing, Winter Olympic Organising Committee, Huang Chun, said that China is fully prepared for possible Covid-19 infections inside the games bubble.

[FM Qureshi, Sheikh Abdullah agree to further enhance bilateral cooperation](https://nation.com.pk/09-Feb-2022/fm-qureshi-sheikh-abdullah-agree-to-further-enhance-bilateral-cooperation)

China has promised to deliver a “green and clean” Winter Olympics event, which gets underway on February 4. Organisers say they have prioritised protecting native species, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and cutting down on resources used.

The Olympics are hosted across three sites, and Yanqing will host the popular Alpine ski events. But the ski runs have been constructed in the middle of the Songshan nature reserve in Yanqing—over an area bigger than a thousand football pitches. The construction required removing more than 20,000 trees, which was done during the last few years.

The Beijing Olympics Committee (BOC) pledged to transplant the trees—along with 81 hectares (over 200 acres) of topsoil—to another location in the mountains north of the city. It worked closely with Beijing Forestry University, and claims that more than 90 percent of the trees have survived the move.

The organisers plan the Beijing Winter Olympics as the “first carbon-neutral games”. China has set an ambitious goal of delivering the games using 100 percent renewable energy. Over six years, the organisers have been constructing new wind and solar projects to deliver enough clean energy, not just for the Games, but for the whole of Beijing.

[Bilal Yasin case: Naseem Vicky's father, brother granted interim bail](https://nation.com.pk/09-Feb-2022/bilal-yasin-case-naseem-vicky-s-father-brother-granted-interim-bail)

The authorities have also announced restrictions in the Beijing area on vehicles and industries that emit the most CO2. The organisers have incidentally managed to reduce travel emissions by deciding not to let in foreign spectators for Covid safety reasons—with only local spectators allowed.