

TOKYO UENO STATION

1923 Great Kantō Earthquake

A 7.9 magnitude quake struck the Kantō Plain in Japan on September 1, 1923, resulted in extensive firestorms, a high death toll, and the tragic Kantō Massacre of ethnic Koreans. As people took refuge in an unburnt area of Tokyo, the place was made into Ueno Imperial Gift Park as a gift to the city.

1940 Missing Olympics

The 1940 Summer Olympics, originally planned for Tokyo, were ultimately canceled, becoming the third Olympic Games to be called off because of World War II, along with the 1940 Winter Olympics in Sapporo, Japan.

1945 Bombing of Tokyo

A series of air raids during World War II stands as the most devastating bombing raid in history, causing the destruction of 16 square miles of central Tokyo, the deaths of an estimated 100,000 civilians, and rendering over one million homeless. Again, tens of thousands of people sought refuge in Ueno Park.

1964 Olympic Games

Japan, the first Asian country to hold the games, used migrant labor from the North to build the facilities. However, these workers were benefitted less by the economic boom and diplomatic advantages the games left behind.

1970 Fukushima Power Plant

With less domestic production due to laborers migrating elsewhere, the Fukushima prefecture turned to providing places like Tokyo nuclear power in 1970, an act some consider a form of colonialism by the richer areas of the country.

2014 Triple Disaster

The most powerful ever in Japan caused a devastating tsunami. It resulted in nearly 20,000 deaths, thousands of injuries, and widespread displacement. It triggered the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster, including reactor meltdowns, radioactive water releases, and extensive evacuations due to power loss and hydrogen gas explosions.

2020 Tokyo Olympics & COVID

The city won the bid for the 2020 Olympic Games, which was ultimately cancelled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The government was criticized for focusing more on the games than rebuilding after the nuclear disaster.