



SAI Cycling Academy gets International Recognition

12th February, New Delhi: Sports Authority of India (SAI) and Cycling Federation of India on Wednesday entered into an MoU with world Cycling body Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI), Switzerland, to start a satellite training center of UCI at the SAI velodrome at Indira Gandhi stadium.

A MoU to this effect was signed by UCI President Brian Cookson, Hira Ballabh, Secretary, SAI and Sh. Onkar Singh, Secretary General, Cycling Federation of India recently on 9.2.2015 during a meeting in Thailand.

In its endeavour to develop and promote cycling to the World class standards, this tripartite MOU will go long way in achieving its goals of Excellency. The Sports Authority of India will back up the project by the way of infrastructure and finance, the Federation will be responsible for selection and the training of the cyclists while the UCI will put in all the ability with advanced training methods, technical support fully backed with specific training of cyclists as well as coaches.

The idea which was conceived three years ago with a vision to take cycling to International standards and make New Delhi, a cycling hub of scientific and advanced training with world class ultra modern facilities, the Federation was able to convince the Ministry of Sports/ Sports Authority of India to partner into this venture and is grateful to the authorities for this progressive approach. It will not be out of place to mention that this is the only satellite center of the World Cycling Center, Aigle (Switzerland) supported by UCI in the developing countries in the world. This indoor facility will not only showcase the dedication of the Cycling Federation of India towards its goal of excellency but will open the gates of opportunities for the budding cyclists of Country as well as to the cyclists of all Asian countries giving them the opportunity to use this ultra modern facilities with specific and advance training methods. The prime object will be not only to train cyclists, but to make our coaches, trainers and the officials conversant with latest techniques in training and officiating converting them into world class coaches and commissaries.

The UCI's satellite World Cycling Centre (WCC), will not only serve the interests of the cyclists from India and help to give shape to SAI's commitment to start the state-of-art Cycling academy and promote the sport across the country, it will also provide opportunities for Middle and East Asian countries to come and train at the Indira Gandhi Stadium Cycling Velodrome.

SAI and Cycling Federation have already identified a group of 500 youngsters in the age group of 14-16 for induction into the academy following a nationwide talent hunt and some of the national players have already started training at the academy. This recognition by UCI will only go a long way in improving and giving exposure to these players.

Indian cyclists recent medal hauls in various Asian Challengers will only get a huge boost as WCC's primary objective will be to develop and coach the track team of India, maximize the use of existing structures to develop cycling activities in the country.

The fully air-conditioned velodrome at IGS, Delhi is one of the best facility in the world and second best in Asia and can attract cyclist from all over Asia to train in New Delhi. Athletes from world over can train at this center, since it would provide a standard training system that can be followed by cyclists from any country.

Speaking about the initiative, ***MOS (IC) Shri Sarbananda Sonowal said, "setting up of this academy was a vision that we had been working to realise and today we are happy that our efforts have been recognized by UCI by approving the Velodrome as one of their prestigious Satellite Center."***

"The SAI Academy with state of the art training facilities being already in place this strategic recognition will help us to develop the sport and train future cyclists in a big way in India as well as lend helping hand for athletes coming from abroad to train at the Academy." he added.

Mr. Briyan Cookson, signing on behalf of UCI along with Mr. James Carr, Director, International Relations, UCI reiterated that they were prompted to decide on the project after observing the dedication of the Cycling Federation of India and the consistent improved performance of its cyclists towards goals of excellence. This innovative initiative to start the center will open the opportunities to all developing nations of Asia, who otherwise were deprived of the modern training facilities. This is the first step of the UCI in its commitments to facilitate and improve the standard of Cycling in all developing nations of the world.

Mr. Onkar Singh, Secretary General, CFI said, "I am really thankful to Ministry of Sports for this conscious decision for the purpose of proper utilization of the world class infrastructure and to become part of this dream project of Cycling Federation of India for the purpose it was created and to carry forward the legacy of Commonwealth Games, 2010."

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