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## FINA President pays visit to FINA Development Centre in Kazan

FINA Communications Department & Kazan DC

FINA President Dr. Julio C. Maglione paid a visit to the brand new FINA Aquatics Development Centre in Kazan, Russia, on April 14 as the complex opened its doors to the first Scholarship holders about a month ago.

Although the centre was officially inaugurated in September 2018, the purpose of the visit was also to inspect the progress of the preparations to the FINA Artistic Swimming World Series 2019 to be held for the first time in Kazan this weekend, from April 19-21.

President Maglione took a tour of the facilities while the athletes were doing their afternoon practice session and praised the work of the centre which is serving as a catalyst in young Aquatics talent's sport careers.



On the occasion, school kids were also invited to visit the state-of-the-art Aquatics Palace of Kazan, the venue which staged the highly successful diving and water polo competitions of the 16th FINA World Championships in July / August 2015.

President Maglione had a meeting with Head Coach Gulnara Garipova, Director General of ANO Directorate for Sports and

Social Projects, Azat Kadyrov, and Centre Coordinator Ranko Tepavcevic, also Deputy Director General of ANO Directorate for Sports and Social Projects.

On February 15, Kristina Panasenko of Kyrgyzstan was the first ever athlete to integrate the Development Centre and she was then joined by another six young athletes from Georgia, Latvia, Moldova, Montenegro and Pakistan (2), all aged between 16 and 21 years old.

“As of today only swimmers have been offered the opportunity to train here, but divers will join them soon. This centre is one of very few others that is ready to provide world-class infrastructure for swimmers and divers”, noted FINA President.



“All athletes started their training and there is a warm atmosphere within the group. The athletes became friends, which helps them to adapt to their new strict but productive living conditions. They have a good motivation to improve their results and nothing distracts them from the training process – this is the main thing!” Azat Kadyrov added.

The FINA Development Centre in Kazan provides athletes with conditions for professional growth. Being located in Kazan also allows them to take part in the FINA competitions, for example, the Swimming World Cup or the Diving World Series (which take place annually in Kazan) without additional travel expenses and with the opportunity to compete in the pool which has become famous on the world sport stage.

“Together with the FINA Centre in Thailand, we have planned an annual educational experience sharing programme. As part of this programme, we will arrange joint training camps here before the Kazan leg of the FINA Swimming World Cup. 20 athletes training at the FINA Centre in Thailand will join the students of our centre. An opportunity to participate in the top world competitions is also part of the educational programme of our centre”, Ranko Tepavcevic explained.



Training courses for coaches and officials as part of FINA scholarship programmes and FINA schools with the assistance of leading international experts are also expected to be organised every year at FINA Centre in Kazan. Thus, on 18-21 April, as part of the educational module of the FINA Centre, a seminar for artistic swimming coaches will be held, at the end of which its participants will receive a FINA certificate.

On the same dates, the FINA School for Judges will be organised. Participating judges will pass a qualifying exam at the end of the school.



Also as part of its Development activities, FINA launched in April the FINA Scholarships Programme for Diving athletes. The main goal of this initiative is to identify, prepare and qualify a limited number of athletes aspiring to participate in the upcoming editions of the FINA World Championships and Olympic Games. 19 promising athletes coming from the five continents were selected at this initial stage of the FINA Scholarship Programme for Diving.

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