

**Minutes of the Virtual Meeting with Directors of Sports from All Four Zones Organized by the Association of Indian Universities (AIU)**

**Date:** 06 August 2025

**Time:** 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM

**Platform:** Microsoft Teams

**Presided by : Prof. Vinay Kumar Pathak**, Hon'ble President, AIU  
**Introductory Remarks : Dr. Pankaj Mittal**, Hon'ble Secretary General, AIU

Dr. Binu George Varghese, Joint Secretary (Sports), Association of Indian Universities, warmly welcomed the participants and set the tone for a transformative dialogue. He spoke of a shared vision to make AIU Sports Programs more transparent, credible, and centered around student-athletes.

From the outset, the meeting resonated with unity and positivity. Directors of Sports from all zones expressed deep appreciation for the opportunity to share their views directly with AIU leadership. Many stated this was the first time they felt genuinely recognized and included in shaping national university sports. This collective acknowledgment instilled a strong sense of "we-feeling" and ownership among all attendees.

Dr. Pankaj Mittal, Hon'ble Secretary General of AIU, assured everyone that these interactive sessions would be institutionalized as part of a broader vision to make university sports more inclusive and effective. She articulated AIU's renewed direction, grounded in collaboration, transparency, and student-centricity, while aligning with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's Vision 2036. She outlined a future where Indian university athletes emerge as Olympic contenders, backed by systems that are fair, digital, and athlete-first. She mentioned that AIU proposes to create a uniform SOP for all Inter-University Sports competitions, implement real time result tracking, involve national sports federations to improve the quality of AIU sports, establish Sports Excellence Centers in Universities to promote AIU branding. She also emphasized that we should focus more on Olympic sports with 2036 in view when India is hosting Olympics.

Prof. Vinay Kumar Pathak, Hon'ble President of AIU, built upon this message with clarity and resolve. He emphasized that AIU is committed to restoring trust, eliminating biases, and establishing a culture of meritocracy in sports. He proposed sports must be a platform for building national pride and empowering youth from every corner of India.

The AIU's comprehensive reform proposal was unanimously welcomed by all participants. Every university pledged full support to the roadmap anchored in integrity, innovation, and inclusive governance.

**Zone-wise Deliberations and Action Points**

## **1. North Zone (30 Participants)**

North Zone participants welcomed the proposed reforms with enthusiasm and expressed several key expectations. A major emphasis was placed on finalizing the AIU Sports Calendar well in advance to avoid clashes with university examinations. They proposed reintroducing railway concessions to alleviate travel costs for student-athletes. The zone also highlighted the need for blockchain-based certificate verification and demanded transparency in the appointment of referees and observers. Concerns about unauthenticated federations conducting events were discussed in depth.

### **Action Points:**

- Finalize and circulate the AIU Sports Calendar at the beginning of each academic year.
- Engage with the Ministry of Sports and Railways to reinstate travel concessions.
- Implement blockchain-backed certificate verification to curb forgery.
- Ensure the presence of neutral observers and promote live streaming for transparency.
- Blacklist unrecognized federations and publish a list of approved bodies.
- Introduce a uniform On Duty (OD) policy across universities.
- Involve recognized federations for technical conduct of AIU Sports.

## **2. West Zone (94 Participants)**

The West Zone shared concerns regarding logistical challenges due to delayed communication from AIU. Participants raised red flags about the prevalence of unauthorized federations and underqualified officials. A poignant moment came when the tragic loss of a university athlete was mentioned, emphasizing the need for emergency medical preparedness. The zone also discussed integrating AIU branding into events and building regional training hubs for officials and athletes.

### **Action Points:**

- Release an approved list of technical federations and ban non-accredited ones.
- Communicate tournament dates at least three months in advance.
- Mandate medical personnel and insurance coverage at all events.
- Investigate and prevent commercial misuse of athlete certificates.
- Create grievance redressal systems for student-athletes.
- Expand AIU's brand visibility and pursue CSR funding.
- Establish regional training and grooming centers.
- Ensure anti-doping through NADA.

### **3. South Zone (84 Participants)**

South Zone representatives focused on fairness, clarity, and digital readiness. They called for eligibility criteria to be published at least three months before the season begins. They raised concerns about exploitation through unofficial entry fees and emphasized the importance of standardizing hospitality costs. The zone supported the idea of a national athlete census and pushed for the inclusion of Para Sports. Strengthening digital capacity in rural universities and establishing OD norms were also strongly advocated.

#### **Action Points:**

- Digitize the entire AIU sports.
- Publish eligibility norms (25-year age cap, 8-year participation window) well in advance.
- Publicly ban unofficial fees collected from athletes.
- Standardize and cap food and lodging charges at events.
- Conduct a national Sports Infrastructure census in the member universities.
- Launch Para Sports with two pilot disciplines.
- Enforce uniform OD policies and provide financial aid for FISU/ AUSF World University Games/ Championships.
- AIU should create Excellence centers in Universities with good infrastructure and facilities for different sports.

### **4. East Zone (33 Participants)**

The East Zone emphasized equity, integrity, and representation. Concerns were raised about biased officiating and the absence of qualified referees. The group advocated for better hospitality standards and requested digital tools for document verification. They also demanded stronger enforcement of migration and eligibility rules and suggested observer deployment and zonal workshops to build awareness.

#### **Action Points:**

- Improve AIU Sports branding through digital, print & social media.
- Appoint only vetted officials from recognized bodies; blacklist unauthorized federations.
- Improve hospitality and logistical planning at host venues.
- Enforce digital verification of documents.
- Strictly apply migration and eligibility criteria.
- Deploy neutral observers and make their reports public.
- Organize zonal awareness and capacity-building workshops.
- Ensure equitable representation from East Zone in AIU decision-making.
- Introduce structured post-event feedback mechanisms.

- SOP for selection trials should be available in advance.

## **Cross-Cutting Themes and Reforms**

### **1. Standardization of Competitions**

AIU will revise and enforce a comprehensive Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to ensure consistency in the conduct of inter-university tournaments. The AIU Handbook of Rules will also be updated before the next academic cycle, covering everything from fixtures to food and accommodation standards. Qualifying standards for all games shall be made.

### **2. Centralized Digital Sports Platform**

The AIU Sports Management Portal will serve as a single-window platform for:

- Online athlete and official registrations
- Fixture generation
- Real-time upload of match results and observer reports
- Document verification and eligibility checks

### **3. Decentralized Zonal Governance**

Each zone will have a dedicated Zonal Sports Coordinator and a zonal committee with equal representation from each state. These bodies will ensure regional-level tournament management, grievance redressal, and talent scouting.

### **4. Accredited Technical Officials**

Only referees and umpires certified by recognized national/state federations will be appointed. A verified list of such officials will be maintained and shared. AIU will strictly blacklist any unrecognized or fraudulent federations.

### **5. Athlete Welfare**

Mandatory medical aid at all venues, and financial support for international participants will be introduced. AIU will also launch a national athleteSports infrastructure census in member universities. AIU will ensure the presence of NADA at AIU Competitions.

### **6. Branding and CSR Engagement**

AIU events will adopt unified branding to enhance visibility. All the teams of Members Universities team will bear AIU logo in the Sports apparel of their athletes and officials from this season.

Partnerships with corporations through CSR funds will be explored for sponsorships, scholarships, and infrastructure support.

## **7. Inclusion and Equity**

AIU will introduce Para Sports competitions and ensure participation opportunities for institutions from underserved zones.

## **8. Feedback and Review Mechanisms**

Structured post-tournament reviews will be mandated to drive continuous improvement. Universities will be invited to submit detailed feedback on conduct and management.

## **9. Transparency and Accountability**

AIU will adopt a zero-tolerance policy against malpractices. Digital tracking, observer reporting, and grievance mechanisms will uphold integrity across competitions.

## **Concluding Remarks**

The virtual meeting concluded on a highly positive and collaborative note. Prof. Vinay Kumar Pathak, Hon'ble President thanked all participants for their valuable inputs and reiterated that university sports must become a vehicle for national pride and youth empowerment. He underscored AIU's commitment to implementing reforms with integrity and speed.

Dr. Pankaj Mittal, Hon'ble Secretary General closed the session with a forwardlooking statement that, these discussions are just the beginning. AIU will continue to engage regularly with Directors of Sports across India to ensure that the voices from every zone are heard and acted upon. Together, AIU and its member universities can transform the future of Indian university sports, creating champions, building character, and realizing the dream of Olympic glory under Vision 2036. The AIU Sports should bear in mind that credibility, integrity and quality are of paramount importance.

