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BRIDGESTONE INDIA ANNOUNCES 4 NEW ATHLETES TO 'TEAM BRIDGESTONE'

Mumbai 20th February 2018: Bridgestone India, a subsidiary of the world's largest Tyre and Rubber Company and a Worldwide Olympic Partner, today announced partnerships with new members of 'Team Bridgestone' under its Worldwide Olympic Partnership. The team is comprised of Olympians and ace athletes Mary Kom (Boxing), Sakshi Malik (Freestyle Wrestling), Lalita Babar (Long-distance Running), and Srikanth Kidambi (Badminton). The group joins Bridgestone India's first Olympics Brand Ambassador PV Sindhu as a part of a global roster of more than 50 athletes on 'Team Bridgestone'.

Speaking about the collaboration, **Mr. Parag Satpute, Managing Director, Bridgestone India Pvt. Ltd.** said, *"It is an extremely proud moment for Bridgestone India, to join hands with a team of such talented individuals who have excelled in their respective fields with perseverance, hard work and integrity; values which resonate the ethos and beliefs of Bridgestone. These athletes will be a part of **Team Bridgestone**, of which Ms. P V Sindhu is also a member since August 2017. This union is aimed at making one realise their true potential and have the courage to 'Chase Your Dream'."*

Mary Kom is a five time world champion in boxing, an achievement that defines her as one of the best women boxers across the world. She was the only Indian woman boxer to qualify for the Olympic Games London 2012, where she earned a Bronze for the country. Being drawn to sports from the very beginning, Mary was inspired to make a career in boxing after the glorious win of Manipuri boxer Dingko Singh in 1998. She has been awarded with Padma Bhushan (2013), Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award (2009) Padma Shri (2006), and Arjuna Award (2003) for her contribution to sports and has been a source of inspiration to many.

Sakshi Malik is the first female wrestler of the country to win a medal (bronze) at the Olympic Games Rio 2016. Sakshi's grandfather, who was also a wrestler, inspired her to take up the sport and she began training since the young age of 12. She won her first bronze medal at the Junior World Championship (2010) in the 58 Kg Freestyle event and it fuelled her passion to excel. Sakshi qualified for the Olympic Games Rio 2016 by defeating China's Zhang Lan. She went on to win a bronze medal at the event with a masterful victory of 8-5 against Aisuluu Tynybekova from Kyrgyzstan. Currently employed in the Indian railways, Sakshi was promoted to Gazetted Officer rank for her victory in Rio 2016.

Lalita Babar is the current Indian national record holder in 3000 Metre Steeplechase. Lalita belongs to Satara, a small district of Maharashtra, which was often affected with droughts and did not provide adequate infrastructure. This led to Lalita travelling long distances on foot and later motivated her to mould her strength into professional athletics. She won her first Gold Medal at the young age of 17, in the U-20 National Championship in 2005. During the 2015 Asian Championships, Lalita simultaneously broke her personal record, Indian record and the game record with a timing of 9:34.13. She is the recipient of Sports person of the Year Award

(2015), an honour extended by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports of India.

Srikanth Kidambi is the first Indian Badminton player to win a Super Series Premier Men's title (2014). He currently holds the No. 3 spot in World rankings. Srikanth started his professional career by winning 2 medals at the Commonwealth Games. In 2015, Srikanth won a gold at the Swiss Open Grand prix Gold by defeating Viktor Axelsen 21-15, 12-21, 21-14 and became the first Indian male player to have won a gold at the event. Currently hailed as the best male badminton player of the country, Srikanth was awarded with Padma Shri in 2018.

On her partnership with Bridgestone India, **Mary Kom** said, *"Bridgestone, a brand that people trust, has placed its faith in me, to let the youth of our country know, that it is possible to realize one's true potential if one decides never to give up. I feel honored to be part of a Team which has people, who are not only exceptional athletes, but also inspiring individuals with a great zeal to overcome challenges and persevere."*

The national record holding runner, **Lalita Babar** said, *"Through my journey with Bridgestone, I want the youth of our nation to know, that opportunities can be found anywhere, if you are willing to be dedicated and work hard for success."*

As the first brand ambassador of Bridgestone India, star athlete **P V Sindhu** addressed the dais saying, *"I have learned that the brand (Bridgestone) is highly aware and invested in their Mission of 'Serving Society with Superior Quality'. The new additions to 'Team Bridgestone' are an extension of their commitment to make their Olympic movement in the nation worthwhile. I am happy to see that brilliant athletes from various sports and various parts of our country have come forward on this platform, and are talking about their journey."*

Highlighting the importance of raising awareness about Olympic Games in the country, Freestyle wrestler **Sakshi Malik** said, *"Olympic Games in India is currently undergoing transition. As more people become acquainted to this platform and understand it, the more positively they welcome it. The biggest challenge for any aspirant in the country is that people are not aware of the immense opportunities this platform provides, and thus, a lot of dreams go unfulfilled. In such scenario, the importance of Bridgestone coming forward to support these dreams becomes vital."*

Badminton Ace **Srikanth Kidambi** mentioned, *"Throughout the journey, I always had the support of family, friends, coaches and my dear countrymen. And I can say this with conviction that support is immensely powerful. It fuels passion, provides faith and gives Courage to 'Chase your dreams'. I thank Bridgestone, for believing in the cause of sports and supporting this spirit."*

The Olympic Games are the biggest international sports platform providing a stage to numerous athletes to showcase their athletic skills. Bridgestone as one of just 13 Worldwide Olympic Partners, aims to promote and highlight these athletes. The athletes have been chosen for their relentless pursuit of success, hard work and perseverance; the key qualities which identify with Bridgestone's 'Chase your Dream' manifesto. Bridgestone is focused on leveraging the goodwill of these ambassadors to connect with the masses while being a partner to their journey in Olympic Games. Bridgestone has planned an integrated approach involving customers, dealers and employees as the three pillars to scale up the union.

Bridgestone announced its Worldwide Olympic Partnership in 2014, making a long-term commitment to the International Olympic Committee that continues through 2024. Through its

business activities, Bridgestone will support this partnership by showcasing the values of community service, social responsibility, and respect for diversity that it shares with the Olympic Movement. Bridgestone also became the first Founding Partner of the Olympic Channel in August 2016, signing a four-year agreement to support the ground-breaking digital platform in its mission to celebrate the Olympic spirit and the world's greatest athletes every day of the year.

About Bridgestone India:

Bridgestone India Pvt Ltd started its operations in 1996. In March 1998 with the setup of its manufacturing facility in Kheda, Madhya Pradesh, Bridgestone achieved its objective of running Indian manufactured Bridgestone tyres on Indian Roads. It expanded its facilities by setting up one more facility in Chakan, Pune in 2013. In a short stint of 20 years, Bridgestone India Pvt Ltd has become one of the leading tyre companies in both the OEM & Replacement market.

About Bridgestone Corporation:

Bridgestone Corporation, headquartered in Tokyo, is the world's largest tyre and rubber company. In addition to tyres for use in a wide variety of applications, it also manufactures a broad range of diversified products, which include industrial rubber and chemical products and sporting goods. Its products are sold in over 150 nations and territories around the world.

About Bridgestone Corporation's Worldwide TOP Olympic Partnership:

Bridgestone Corporation proudly announced its agreement to become an official Worldwide Partner of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on June 13, 2014. The 10-year partnership will see Bridgestone Corporation serve as a Worldwide Olympic Partner at the Olympic Winter Games PyeongChang 2018, the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020, where the company's global headquarters are located, the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022, and the Olympic Games Paris 2024. The Partnership also includes support for the next two Youth Olympic Games. The long-term commitment to the Olympic Movement furthers Bridgestone Corporation's proud sporting heritage and history of innovation, which extends more than 100 years, and will showcase Bridgestone Corporation's respect for diversity, commitment to community service, social responsibility, and environmental stewardship – all tenets of the Olympic Charter that also lie at the heart of the Bridgestone brand.
