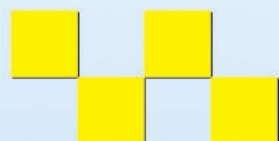


**The NIIT  
MindChampions'  
Academy**

A joint initiative with Viswanathan Anand



The NIIT MindChampions' Academy (MCA), a not-for-profit initiative has been set up as a joint initiative by Grand Master Viswanathan Anand and NIIT Limited, leading Global Talent Development Organisation and Asia's largest IT Trainer, with the objective of promoting Chess in schools to enable development of young minds. Studies have shown that Chess improves concentration and diligence, thus helping students performs better academically.

Established in 2002, the Academy has fostered over 11,200 Chess clubs with over 1 Million students as its members, in schools across India.

World Chess Champion and NIIT MindChampion Viswanathan Anand has personally traveled to various parts across India - Agartala, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Mumbai, New Delhi, Jaipur, Patna, Raipur, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Pune, Ahmedabad and has visited countries like Africa & China, spreading the message and motivating the school students to start playing Chess.

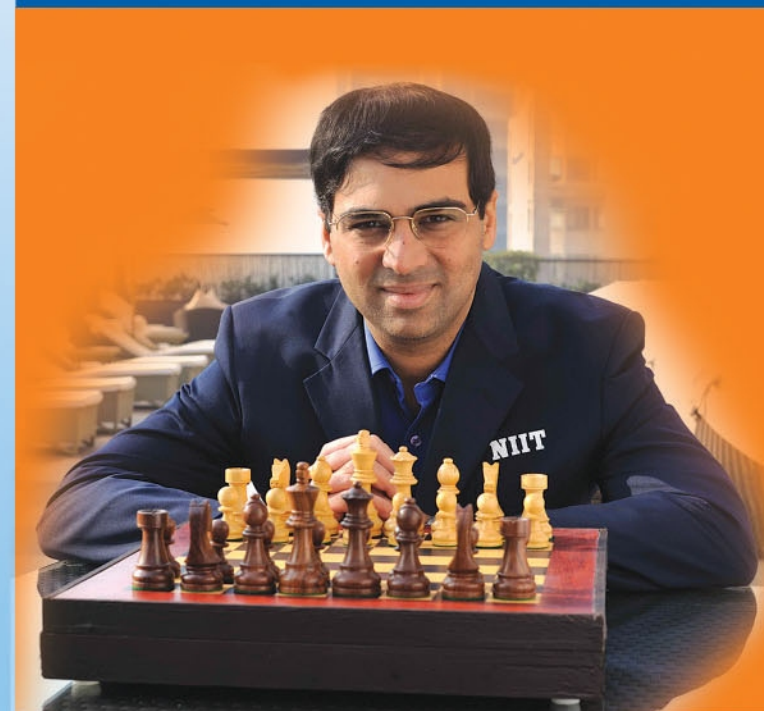
NIIT MindChampions' Academy conducts the hugely popular Annual Event, known as Chess Master for school children across India within the NIIT network of schools where it provides IT education. It is also the first institution in India to launch a certificate program in Chess under a Central Government University umbrella- Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU).

**NIIT**

85, Sector 32, Institutional  
Gurgaon 122001, Haryana, India  
Ph. +91 (124) 4293000. Fax: +91 (124) 4293333

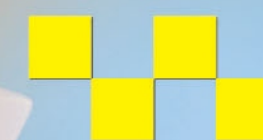
**NIIT**

## India Creates a **New World Record** of 20,480 Simultaneous Chess Players



World Chess Champion and  
NIIT MindChampion  
**Viswanathan Anand**  
Spearheads Record Breaking  
Event at Swarnim Chess  
Mahotsav 2010, Gujarat

An endeavor by the  
Government of Gujarat,  
Gujarat State Chess  
Association and NIIT to  
popularize Chess amongst  
school children



**The NIIT  
MindChampions'  
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## India Creates a New Guinness World Record of 20,480 Simultaneous Chess Players

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Swarnim Chess Mahotsav 2010, Gujarat  
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and NIIT to popularize Chess amongst school children

**Ahmedabad, December 24, 2010 :** A new world record was created at Swarnim Chess Mahotsav 2010 Gujarat, with 20,480 players playing simultaneous Chess at Gujarat University Grounds in Ahmedabad. The earlier record was of 13,446 players at Mexico City in 2006.

The record breaking event was held in the presence of Mr. Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat; World Chess Champion and NIIT MindChampion, Viswanathan Anand and Mr. Rajendra S Pawar, Chairman, NIIT Limited. Ms. Tarika Vara, Adjudication Executive, Guinness World Records was also present on the occasion to verify the new record on behalf of Guinness World Records.

A unique initiative by the Government of Gujarat, Gujarat State Chess Association and NIIT Limited, the leading Global Talent Development Corporation and Asia's largest IT trainer- "**Swarnim Chess Mahotsav 2010, Gujarat**", was announced earlier this year to popularize the game of Chess in the state. NIIT MindChampions Academy set up Chess Clubs in 1,575 computerized schools of Gujarat to facilitate maximum participation in the mega Chess event.

*World Chess Champion and NIIT MindChampion Viswanathan Anand remarked, "This is a historic day for Indian Chess, and I feel proud to be a part of it. This achievement will go a long way in inspiring young people take up this sport, which has a positive impact on development of young minds."*

*Mr. Rajendra S Pawar, Chairman NIIT Ltd. said, "The NIIT MindChampions' Academy is popularizing Chess in schools and this record breaking event is a great milestone in that journey".*

The venue layout of the record breaking event was a visual delight. The Gujarat University Grounds of Ahmedabad has been turned into a giant Chess Board with 64 alternating black & white squares. The players were segregated equally within the squares which were either black or white, just as in a Chess Board. The imposing 29,000 square meters of Chess Board, created through perfect colour coordination could be viewed even from the air.

Chess Association of Gujarat provided around 1000 Masters and Grandmasters for the Swarnim Chess Mahotsav 2010 held at Ahmedabad. As a run up to the grand event, NIIT MindChampions Academy popularized Chess amongst students by forming Chess clubs in schools within the State of Gujarat, which made available a pool of Chess Players, who participated in the Swarnim Gujarat Chess Mahotsav.



## About Swarnim Chess Mahotsav 2010, Gujarat

Swarnim Chess Mahotsav is a part of the ambitious Khel Mahakumbh, launched by the Government of Gujarat, to popularize Chess in the State. Under the guidance of World Chess Champion and NIIT MindChampion Viswanathan Anand, the mega event set a new World Record for the maximum number of simultaneous Chess players in Ahmedabad, India, on December 24, 2010. The record breaking attempt, jointly organized by State Government of Gujarat, Gujarat Chess Association & NIIT, had Chess players coming together to play simultaneous Chess, to break the existing record of Mexico City's 13,446 simultaneous Chess players.

## About NIIT MindChampions' Academy

The NIIT MindChampions' Academy (MCA), a not-for-profit initiative has been set up as a joint initiative by Grand Master Viswanathan Anand and NIIT Limited, leading Global Talent Development Organisation and Asia's largest IT Trainer, with the objective of promoting Chess in schools to enable development of young minds. Studies have shown that Chess improves concentration and diligence, thus helping students performs better academically.

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★ ★ ★ ★





The Times of India, Ahmedabad  
December 23, 2010

# Ahmedabad all set to checkmate Mexico

Lady Adjudicator From Guinness Book Arriving In City From London Today

Ajit Bezbaruah | TNN

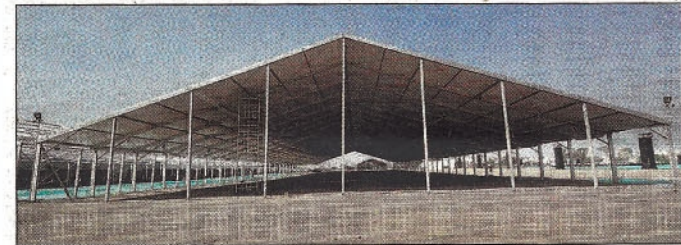
Ahmedabad: With less than 48 hours to go for the mega event on December 24 when 20,000 players will gather at the GMDC ground here to play chess, and in the process, checkmate Mexico's Guinness world record of the largest number of chess players

the Guinness Book has already started from London. "We can't divulge the name of the adjudicator now but yes it is true that she is a lady and is coming from London," said a source closely associated with the event.

Participants from distant places like Saurashtra, Surat and Nadiad are arriving on

arbitrators, one technical official and one computer controller who will keep tab of the results.

"We have already forwarded the guidelines to the organizers some four-five months ago and are here to guide them to successfully stage the event," a consultant of a private firm which is working closely with



One of the makeshift halls for the world record-breaking chess event at GMDC ground in Ahmedabad

playing the game together at the same time.

El Zocalo, Mexico City's central square, holds the record with 13,446 players assembling to play chess on October 21, 2006. Former world champion Anatoly Karpov was the guest of honour then. It will be current world champion Viswanathan Anand here.

For more than 10 months now, Gujarat State Chess Association (GSCA), NIIT and the Gujarat government have been working together to make this event a success. And now everything is in place. A lady adjudicator from

Thursday. The venue is getting last-minute attention and officials are busy arranging for the visitors accommodation etc. Gujarat's only grand-

## RECORD MOVE

master Tejas Bakre will also take part in the event and Pravin Thipsay will be keeping Anand company.

That day will see 1000 masters play simultaneously against 20,000 participants (one master against 20), divided in 64 squares with 320 participants in one square where there will be 16 masters, three

The Times of India, Lucknow  
December 24, 2010

# 20,000 chess players to create Guinness record

Ajit Bezbaruah | TNN

Ahmedabad: The board is ready and so are all the pieces, players and judges. The city is all decked up and the wait is just for the referee to ring the bell on Friday afternoon when 20,000 players and 1200 masters will gather at the GMDC ground here to play chess, and in the process, break Mexico's Guinness world record of the largest number of chess players playing the game together at the same time.

El Zocalo, Mexico City's central square, holds the record with 13,446 players assembling to play chess on October 21, 2006. Former world champion Anatoly Karpov was the guest of honour in Mexico and it will be current world champion Viswanathan Anand here in Ahmedabad.

After his first world championship title in 2000, Viswanathan Anand nurtured a secret desire to make India the epicentre of chess. And, for the last 10 years, Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi was looking for a way to bring chess to the collective consciousness of Gujaratis. And more than 10 months now, Gujarat State Chess Association (GSCA), NIIT and the Gujarat Government have been working together to make this event a success. And now everything is in place.

A lady adjudicator from the Guinness Book is already here from London. "We can't divulge the name of the adjudicator now but yes it is true that she has already arrived from London," said a source closely associated with the event.

Participants from distant places like Saurashtra, Surat and Nadiad have already arrived. The venue is getting last-minute at-

tention and officials are busy arranging for the visitors accommodation etc.

Friday will see 1000 masters play simultaneously against 20,000 participants (one master against 20), divided in 64 squares with 320 participants in one square where there will be 16 masters, three arbiters, one technical official and one computer controller who will keep tab of the results.

"We had already forwarded the guidelines to the organizers some four-five months ago and are here to guide them to successfully stage the event," a consultant of a private firm which is working closely with the organizers said on condition of anonymity.

There are some basic points in the guidelines which needs to be adhered, like the duration of play—all matches should be complete within two hours and mandatory numbers of masters, arbiters and technical officials who should be part of the event.

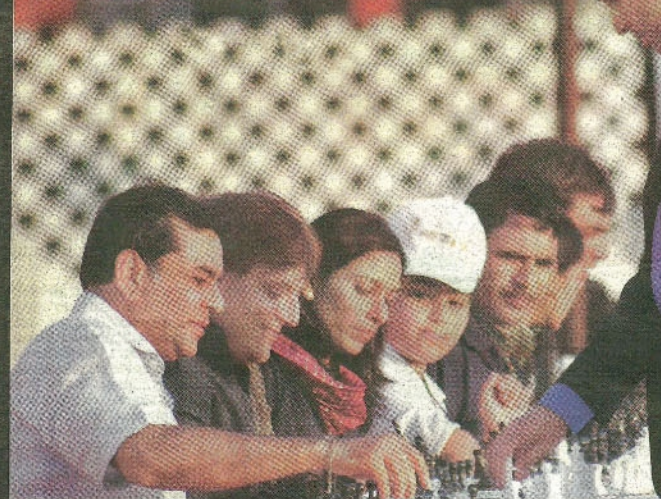
More importantly 80 per cent of the matches have to be complete for the event to be registered in the Guinness Book," the consultant added.

"We have never attempted anything on this scale, which makes it unique and will be a very important feat both for Gujarat and as well for Indian chess," Anand said in an interview with TOI in the build-up to this event. "This event is only the beginning of a chess revolution," he said.

"Making chess part of the school time is one of the cornerstones in finding new chess champions. Making chess a movement is important. It will help identify children with potential. I feel that this is a model structure to follow for success of chess in the country," said the recipient of the Padma Vibhushan.

Mail Today, New Delhi  
December 25, 2010

# 22,480 ENTHUSIASTS SET CHESS WORLD RECORD



World Chess Champion Viswanathan Anand plays with Bollywood actor Paresh Rawal (extreme left)

By Kapil Dave  
in Ahmedabad

A NEW world record was set in Ahmedabad on Friday when 22,480 people played chess simultaneously. The feat surpassed the previous mark of 13,446 players set in Mexico in October 21, 2006.

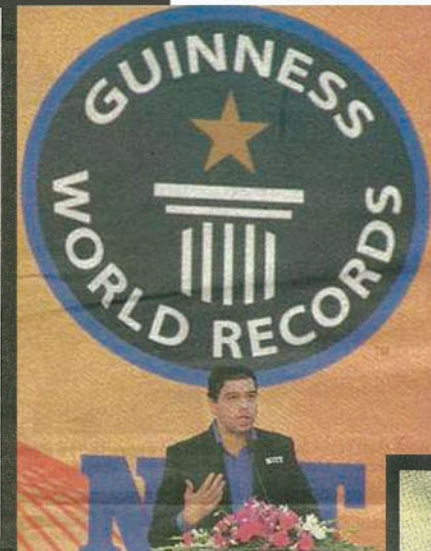
Chess world champion Viswanathan Anand and Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi were present at the occasion. Guinness Book of World Records representative Tarika Vara awarded the certificate to both of them after witnessing the event with her team.

More than 20,000 students and 1,200 experts gathered at around 5.00 pm and played chess simultaneously to break the world record. Each expert took on 20 players. Another 200 experts were on standby. The event was organized by Gujarat State Chess Association, NIIT and the Gujarat Sports Authority after 10 months of preparation. The Gujarat University ground was divided into 64 squares

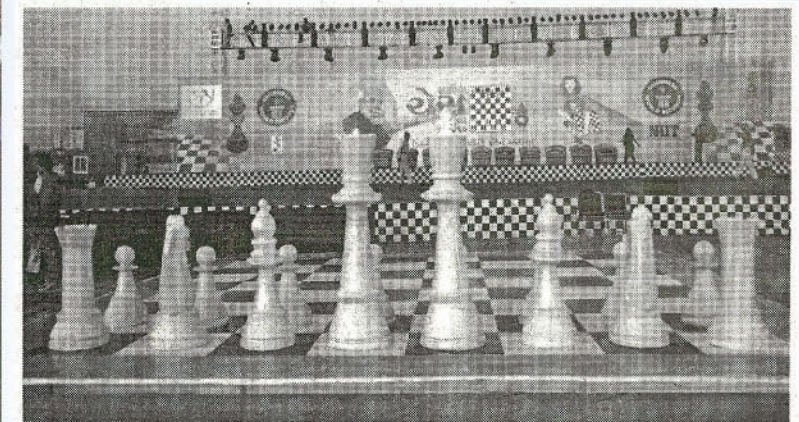
with 320 participants in one square. From top of the GMDC building, the venue looked like a big chess board.

"I can't tell you how incredibly proud I am at this point of time. This is an amazing event," Anand said. "I feel like I won one of the biggest titles in chess today. I always wanted to do something more for the game apart from just playing it so I started efforts for popularising it across the nation. I am really proud to be the part of this record-breaking event and will work for spreading awareness for chess in Gujarat."

Modi pointed out that India has now completed 300 world records and thanked Anand for his help. "I am thankful to Anand because he came to Gujarat more than once, he guided the players, and instilled the faith that this was possible," Tarika said. "I am truly amazed with the talent and turnout here. It's a great pleasure to announce that 22,480 played chess at this place simultaneously, and have set a new world record."



Western Times, Ahmedabad  
December 25, 2010



MASS CHESS RECORD: Venue of a chess tournament in which 20,000 people are participating to win an entry for Gujarat in the Guinness Book of World Record, in Ahmedabad. UNI

Asian Age, New Delhi  
December 25, 2010



Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand makes a move against one of his opponents in the Swarnim Chess Mahotsav 2010 in Ahmedabad on Friday. Over 20,000 players created a new Guinness world record by taking part in the event. PHOTO: PTI

Hindustan Times, New Delhi  
December 25, 2010

# Ahmedabad sets Guinness mark in chess

Mahesh Langa

■ sportsdesk@hindustantimes.com

AHMEDABAD: The sprawling grounds at the Gujarat University in Ahmedabad looked like one giant chess board with as many as 20,480 players packed into the area divided into 64 huge squares on Friday. The end result was an entry into the Guinness Book of World Records for most number of chess games played simultaneously at a single venue.

The festive atmosphere at the venue was boosted by the presence of world champion Viswanathan Anand, who oversaw Ahmedabad break the previous record, set in 2004 involving 13,446 players in Mexico City. Around 140 visually challenged players also took part in the record-breaking effort.

Anand was delighted: "It is no doubt one of the best days of my life," he said. "I've never seen a chess event of this scale. I am sure we will



■ Viswanathan Anand makes a move here. HT PHOTO

produce many more world masters now." The special representative from the Guinness Book of

World Records, Tarika Vara, said at the conclusion that it was indeed a record. "I am truly amazed with the talent and turnout here. It is a great pleasure to announce that 20,480 played chess at this place simultaneously, and have created a new world record," she announced.

Anand later played simultaneous chess against 64 players, including film star Paresh Rawal and theatre personality Mohan Joshi to wrap up the event.



The Times of India, Ahmedabad  
December 25, 2010

## 20480 chess players create Guinness record

### A'bad Checkmates Mexico's Count In Massive Mobilisation

Ajit Bezbaruah | TNN

**Ahmedabad:** December 24 holds a special place in Viswanathan Anand's life — he had won his first world championship on this day in 2000 beating Alexi Shirov in Tehran.

On Friday, the chess champion also anchored Ahmedabad to a new Guinness record — where the highest number of chess players congregated to play the game.

A smiling Anand who rang the bell to start the proceedings, and was in the thick of things all through the mega event, was visibly thrilled to



**MEGA MOVE:** The record-breaking chess event at GMDC ground on Friday

see Ahmedabad create the new record. In all 20,480 players got to-

gether to play chess against 1,024 masters and break Mexico's existing record of 13,446 players created in 2006. There was a thunderous roar of approval from the crowd when Guinness adjudicator Tarika Wala announced that Ahmedabad holds the new record. She also applauded the fact that there were 140 blind players in the line-up.

"One can't imagine how incredibly proud I am today. I have never been involved in something so big and I am thrilled to be part of this event today. This event will be as close to my heart as all my world championship titles. It is a very important day in my life," said Anand. Chief minister Narendra Modi, who helped facilitate the world record-breaking event, thanked all the participants.

► **Checkmate: Ahmedabad blitzes into record books, P 22**

## Checkmate: Ahmedabad blitzes into record books

Swarnim Gujarat Chess Mahotsav Smashes Mexico City's 2006 Records With 20480 Players Playing Chess Simultaneously

Ajit Bezbaruah | TNN

**Ahmedabad:** "When I first heard about this attempt, I thought it is like any other random announcement that politicians mostly make. But this is just incredible. I never actually thought that we will be able to achieve this. But as a chess player from Gujarat I am really feeling very proud of the whole thing," said Gujarat's only grandmaster Tulas Bakre.

This was just a wish. A dream to achieve something big. But that all the people involved in this exercise was actually able to achieve this stupendous feat was something extraordinary. More so when one realises that more than 90 per cent of the participants are school children.

"I am amazed to see the participation and excitement," said Guinness Book adjudicator Tarika Wala.

### CHESS MAHOTSAV WORLD RECORD

rika Wala. Making Gujarat a chess-playing state is one of Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi's long standing dream. But implementing that dream by making chess a compulsory subject in schools is something even world champion Viswanathan Anand says should be the model other states should follow.

Popularising chess among the masses was an idea that Anand thought up when he became the first world champion from India 10 years ago. It was Modi who threw this challenge of breaking Mexico's record last year and since then the Gujarat state chess association, NIIT and Sports Authority of Gujarat worked relentlessly to make this event a success.



**Clickwise from above**

1) View of the GMDC ground with the 20,480 participants

2) Gujarat CM Narendra Modi walks amid the life-sized chess pieces

3) Modi accepts the certificate from the Guinness Book of World Records adjudicator Tarika Wala

4) Actors Parash Rawal and Manoj Joshi play against

World Champion Viswanathan Anand

5) A player shakes hands

with the world champion

after the game

6) A player shakes hands

with the world champion

after the game

7) A player shakes hands

with the world champion

after the game

8) A player shakes hands

with the world champion

after the game

9) A player shakes hands

with the world champion

after the game

10) A player shakes hands

with the world champion

after the game

11) A player shakes hands

with the world champion

after the game

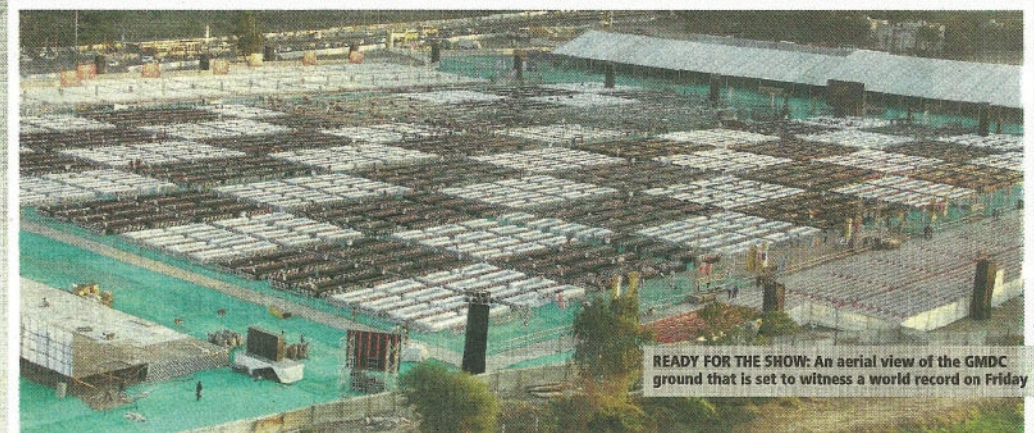
12) A player shakes hands

with the world champion

after the game



Ahmedabad Mirror, Ahmedabad  
December 24, 2010



**READY FOR THE SHOW:** An aerial view of the GMDC ground that is set to witness a world record on Friday

## DAY OF RECKONING

Led by world champions Viswanathan Anand, 20,000 players to play chess simultaneously with 16 masters at GMDC ground today to set a world record

**AHMEDABAD MIRROR BUREAU**

**H**istoric achievement by Gujarat sportsmen are few and far between. But the GMDC ground in Ahmedabad is all set to witness a record being set on Friday.

Twenty thousand people will assemble at the ground and play chess in an attempt to create a Guinness world record in chess of the largest number of players playing the game simultaneously

at one venue.

The current record is held by Mexico City. They set a new record for simultaneous chess games in December 2006 when 13,446 players faced off at the same time in a vast Spanish colonial square at the heart of the former Aztec empire.

The initiative to set a record in chess was taken by none other than Chief Minister Narendra Modi almost a year back. Ever since, the government machinery,

the Gujarat State Chess Association and NIIT have been working hand in hand to make the event a success.

The record breaking event will be led by world chess champion Viswanathan Anand, who will play with 50 players.

The ground has been divided into eight squares. Each square will have 320 players and 16 masters. One master will play with 20 players. Eighty per cent of the matches have to be completed in

a span of two hours for the record to be notified in the Guinness Book. An adjudicator from the Guinness Book has already arrived in the city from London and she will confirm the record as and when the games are over.

"All arrangements are in place. We are really hopeful that by Friday evening the grand chess event at GMDC ground will find its name in Guinness Book of Records," said Mayur Patel, secretary Gujarat State Chess Association.

The Times of India, Ahmedabad  
December 24, 2010

## Guinness record move: Let the games begin

Amdavad's Campaign To Enter Record Book Reaches Its Crescendo At GMDC Ground Today

**TIMES NEWS NETWORK**

**Ahmedabad:** "Everything is in place. We have left no stone unturned in trying to make this event a success. Now we can just pray that no untoward incident mars the day," a consultant of from private firm which is working closely with the organizers said on condition of anonymity.

What more for preparation when one finds the cooks at work from Thursday evening onwards in preparation for Friday's breakfast, lunch and dinner for the participants and guests. More than 700 volunteers and 600 sector supervisor will be on duty to monitor each and every squares on the "chess board" that has been created on the GMDC ground.

"We have tried to take into account every details starting from the players arrival, where they will sit, where they will collect their lunch coupon, where they will eat and which way they will proceed once the game is over. We have also kept 200 masters on standby in case of any emergency," the consultant added.

"No one can even imagine that this was that barren GMDC ground here till yesterday. We actually saw a picture of Mexico taken from a helicopter where they have created a similar setting. We went one step ahead in giving similar coloured clothing to the participants as well. So all participants in the white block will be wearing white caps and white T-shirt and same goes for the black block as well," an official said.

Participants are expected to stream in from 7 am in the morning and registration will start from 9 am onwards. The actual event will get under way at 2 pm and it should be over within two hours in keeping with Guinness guidelines. The lady adjudicator from London's Guinness office is scheduled to make the announcement at the completion of the event. Keep all fingers crossed.



**CHEQUERED FUTURE:** The tables to accommodate 20,000 chess players arranged in the 64 squares of the chess board at GMDC ground



Ahmedabad Mirror,  
Ahmedabad  
December 25, 2010



BIRD'S EYE VIEW: An overview of the GMDC ground as 20,480 players made their moves to set a world record



RECORD THIS MOMENT: Tarika Vara, adjudicator from Guinness Book, handing over the Record Certificate to Modi in the presence of Anand

## Gujarat will produce world chess champs

PAGE 1

thereby eclipsing the record set in Mexico City four years ago. Anand was as ecstatic after the record as he was after his maiden world championship title. Excerpts from an interview with the world champion:

**How do you feel after Amdavad rewrote history books today (Friday)?**  
I have never participated in an event of such magnitude. I don't have words to describe what I am feeling right now. To have 20,480 people playing chess was incredible. It was a celebration of chess. Truly phenomenal.

**How different is it to guide a city to a world record from winning a world chess championship?**  
The emotions are the same. Happy and ecstatic. But this was a different challenge. I have been involved in this record setting exercise for the last 10 months. And to pull it off on Friday, I feel really proud.

**How did this all begin? Was it you who gave the idea to the Gujarat chief minister?**  
Not exactly. Both of us knew about the event in Mexico. So when I met the chief minister 10 months back, he expressed his desire to popularise chess. But he wanted to do something different in Gujarat's golden jubilee. He said let's do this world record and that's how the process

started. Gujarat government, the state chess association and NIIT all contributed to it.

**What was your role in the whole event?**  
My role was limited to the game. I had to guide the masters as they had to take on a large number of challengers in a limited time. The masters had no experience of participating in such events neither did I. But I utilised my experience of playing the game at various levels to guide them.

**You said that the endeavour to popularise the game should continue in the state. How will you be associated?**  
I am involved with NIIT's mind championship academy, which is playing an active role in taking the game to the school level with the support of the government. I think they will be extending their operations in the state soon. Chess, I believe, can play a vital role in a child's development. And we hope to sustain our efforts in the state.

**So are you hopeful of Gujarat producing more Viswanathan Anands in the years to come?**  
With what I witnessed today, I am sure Gujarat will produce champion chess players in the years ahead. I have not seen this kind of passion for the game anywhere else in the country. That excites me. If this passion is maintained and the players are given good guidance and training, Gujarat chess is going to have a very exciting future.



MASTER AT HIS CRAFT: A chess master (in blue) making a move against a challenger in the world record event. 1,024 masters were pitted against 20,480 players at the GMDC ground on Friday

The New Indian Express, Bangalore  
December 25, 2010



Viswanathan Anand plays with other finalists during the Swarnim Chess Mahotsav 2010 in Ahmedabad on Friday

## 'Chess Mahotsav' enters Guinness Book

Ahmedabad: Organisers of the 'Swarnim Chess Mahotsav 2010' on Friday claimed to have created a new world record with over 20,000 chess players playing simultaneously in presence of world champion Viswanathan Anand at Gujarat University Grounds here.

The event entered the 'Guinness Book of World Records' for most number of chess games played simultaneously at a single venue.

Over 20,000 players from across the city belonging to various age groups, played

I am incredibly proud to be part of such an event. I have never been involved in an event of this scale.

—Viswanathan Anand

chess simultaneously at the GMDC ground here creating a world record which was previously held by Mexico City where over 13,000 players had participated in a similar event. Adjudicator from the 'Guinness Book of World Records', Tarika Wala, who was present at the venue, said the feat now belongs to Gujarat.

Wala said it was an extraordinary day for her to see such overwhelming response to the event. She said that she was also amazed at the level of talent of the young players who participated in the 64-square game. Anand described the event as one of the most important days of his life.

I am incredibly proud to be part of such an event. I have never been involved in an event of this scale," Anand said while addressing the young chess aspirants.

The world champion said that he did not have words to describe his feeling as he felt very much overwhelmed with the response. Anand said that he would like to take this collaboration with Gujarat government forward in order to popularise chess in other parts of the state.

The Times of India, New Delhi  
December 25, 2010

## 20,480 chess players create Guinness record

Ajit Bezbaruah | TNN

Ahmedabad: December 24 holds a special place in Viswanathan Anand's life — he won his first World championship on this day in 2000 beating Alexi Shirov in Tehran.

On Saturday, the chess champion also anchored Ahmedabad to a new Guinness record: the highest number of chess players congregated to play the game here. A smiling Anand who rang the bell to start the proceedings, and was in the thick of things all through the event, was visibly thrilled to see Ahmedabad create the new record. In all 20,480 players got together to play chess against 1,024 masters to break Mexico's existing record of 13,446 players created in 2006. There was a thunderous roar of approval from the crowd when Guinness adjudicator Tarika Wala announced that Ahmedabad now holds the new record.



'This world record is a celebration'

Viswanathan Anand hails Gujarat for setting world record in simultaneous chess

PRASANTH MENON

On December 24, 2010 Viswanathan Anand won his maiden World Chess Championship by defeating Alexei Shirov in Tehran. Ten years later, on the same day, the now six-time world champion led Ahmedabad city to a world record.

Under the watchful eyes of the grandmaster, 20,480 people assembled at the GMDC ground to set a world record in simultaneous chess.

PAGE 21

# AHMEDABAD CHECKMATES MEXICO CITY

20,480 people play chess simultaneously to eclipse Mexico City's record of 13,446

AHMEDABAD MIRROR BUREAU

When Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi announced 10 months ago that Ahmedabad would attempt to create a world record in simultaneous chess, many chess enthusiasts in the city laughed at the idea. But Modi is a man of big dreams.

On Friday, all those who laughed at the idea joined hands with the chief minister and world chess champion Viswanathan Anand to translate this dream into a reality. As many as 20,480 people assembled at the GMDC ground and took on 1,024 masters to set a world record in simultaneous chess.

The previous record was set in Mexico City, when 13,446 players faced off at the same time at a vast Spanish colonial square in the heart of the former Aztec empire.

But it took only 10 months of meticulous planning by Gujarat government, Gujarat State Chess Association



THIRD UMPIRE: Narendra Modi watching visually impaired chess players in action

guidance of Anand that saw Ahmedabad eclipse Mexico City's record.

There was a lot of confusion and apprehension when the registration for the event started early on Friday morning. But once the bell announcing the commencement of the event began at 2.50 pm, everything worked to clockwork precision.

The 20,480 players sat in eight squares allotted to them. The 1,024 masters moved

around the squares to take on the challengers. It was just not about playing the game for the sake of it. According to the Guinness Book of Records, the masters had to have an 80 per cent winning percentage to stake a claim for the world record. What made the event even more special was 140 visually impaired players also participated in the record-breaking feat.

After almost three hours and as the sun descended across the GMDC ground, Tarika Wala, adjudicator from the Guinness

All the players were talking about this event when I was playing in Delhi. It has given chess a huge facelift

—Gujarat's only Grandmaster Tejas Bakri

Book of Records, announced: "It has been an extraordinary day. I am overwhelmed I am amazed to see the level of talent for chess in the state. 20,480 people have set a world record for simultaneous chess at a single venue."

The thunderous applause of more than 25,000 people created a deafening noise as the guests on the dias congratulated each other. Modi hailed the record as an example of people's empowerment. "I don't want to stop here. I urge all those who played here to train five people. We can soon have a record for over 1 lakh people playing chess simultaneously," said the chief minister.

It could only be a matter of time before Amdavadis break their own record.









### World simultaneous chess record broken in India

25.12.2010 – The venue was magnificently decked up like a chess board across 91 thousand square feet, 1024 masters played simuls against a total of 20,480 players, and deafening applause broke out when the Guinness adjudicator finally announced that a new Guinness World Record had been set. The patron of the event was World Champion Vishy Anand, who was blown away by the scope of the event.



### World Record for Simultaneous Chess broken

#### Gujarat organized the Guinness Record with World Chess Champion & NIIT MindChampion Viswanathan Anand

20,480 was the magical number at the GMDC Ground in Ahmedabad which eclipsed Mexico's earlier record of 13,446 set in 2006 for the maximum number of chess players playing chess simultaneously. 24th December was also 'date destiny', for it was on this day in 2000 that India got its first World Chess Champion in Viswanathan Anand and again on this day, it was Anand who spearheaded India to the latest record breaking attempt. It was all hush for a moment when Guinness World Record adjudicator Tarika Vara first rose to speak after the simultaneous games but then a deafening applause broke across when she did announce that the new Guinness World Record had been set.



The world record effort under way, with over 20,000 participants

The players playing in White squares sported White T-shirts and caps while the black squared players donned black coloured outfits. The Gujarat Government with its Chief Minister Narendra Modi, leading from the fore front, Anand and NIIT were the organizers of this event. A huge shamiana (tent) was erected for players to have their breakfast and lunch.

The GMDC ground was magnificently decked up like a chess board across 91 thousand square feet, and it was a smiling Anand who rang the bell for the games to begin. 1024 masters played against 20,480 players and also comprised of 140 blind players for the first time. Apart from chess players, 480 VIPs, including ministers, film stars, television actors, also participated in the simultaneous. There were 12,000 school children out of which 11,000 were from the NIIT MindChampion's Academy, 3000 college students and around 5000 players from various chess clubs.



The Chairman of NIIT, Rajendra S Pawar, with Vishy Anand

"The numbers are just mesmerizing and my eyes cannot take in 10,000 players, leave alone 20,000", beamed Anand just as the event started.

### About NIIT MindChampions' Academy

The NIIT MindChampions' Academy (MCA), a not-for-profit initiative has been set up as a joint initiative by Grand Master Viswanathan Anand and NIIT Limited, leading Global Talent Development Organisation and Asia's largest IT Trainer, with the objective of promoting Chess in schools to enable development of young minds. Studies have shown that Chess improves concentration and diligence, thus helping students performs better academically.

Established in 2002, the Academy has fostered over 11,200 Chess clubs with over 900,000 students as its members, in schools across India. MCA will cross the cumulative mark of one million students as its members, by the end of December 2010.



## THE TIMES OF INDIA | Ahmedabad

### 20480 chess players create Guinness record

Ajit Bezbaruah, TNN, Dec 25, 2010, 04.25am

AHMEDABAD: December 24 holds a special place in Viswanathan Anand's life - he had won his first world championship on this day in 2000 beating Alexi Shirov in Tehran.

On Friday, the chess champion also anchored Ahmedabad to a new Guinness record - where the highest number of chess players congregated to play the game.

A smiling Anand who rang the bell to start the proceedings, and was in the thick of things all through the mega event, was visibly thrilled to see Ahmedabad create the new record. In all 20,480 players got together to play chess against 1,024 masters and break Mexico's existing record of 13,446 players created in 2006.

There was a thunderous roar of approval from the crowd when Guinness adjudicator Tarika Wala announced that Ahmedabad holds the new record. She also applauded the fact that there were 140 blind players in the line-up.

"One can't imagine how incredibly proud I am today. I have never been involved in something so big and I am thrilled to be part of this event today. This event will be as close to my heart as all my world championship titles. It is a very important day in my life," said Anand. Chief minister Narendra Modi, who helped facilitate the world record-breaking event, thanked all the participants.



## hindustantimes

## Ahmedabad sets Guinness mark in chess

Ahmedabad, December 25, 2010

The sprawling grounds at the Gujarat University in Ahmedabad looked like one giant chess board with as many as 20,480 players packed into the area divided into 64 huge squares on Friday. The end result was an entry into the Guinness Book of World Records for most number of chess games played simultaneously at a single venue.

The festive atmosphere at the venue was boosted by the presence of world champion Viswanathan Anand, who oversaw Ahmedabad break the previous record, set in 2004 involving 13,446 players in Mexico City.

Around 140 visually challenged players also took part in the record-breaking effort.

Anand was delighted: "It is no doubt one of the best days of my life," he said. "I've never seen a chess event of this scale. I am sure we will produce many more world masters now."

The special representative from the Guinness Book of World Records, Tarika Vara, said at the conclusion that it was indeed a record.

"I am truly amazed with the talent and turnout here. It is a great pleasure to announce that 20,480 played chess at this place simultaneously, and have created a new world record," she announced.

Anand later played simultaneous chess against 64 players, including film star Paresh Rawal and theatre personality Mohan Joshi to wrap up the event.



## Chess event enters Guinness Book for most players at a venue

Ahmedabad, Dec 24

*Organisers of the 'Swarnim Chess Mahotsav 2010' today claimed to have created a new world record with over 20,000 chess players playing simultaneously in presence of world champion Vishwanathan Anand at Gujarat University Grounds here.*

The event entered the 'Guinness Book of World Records' for most number of chess games played simultaneously at a single venue.

Over 20,000 players from across the city belonging to various age groups, played chess simultaneously at the GMDC ground here creating a world record which was previously held by Mexico City where over 13,000 players had participated in a similar event.

Adjudicator from the 'Guinness Book of World Records', Tarika Wara, who was present at the venue, said the feat now belongs to Gujarat.

Wara said it was an extraordinary day for her to see such overwhelming response to the event. She said that she was also amazed at the level of talent of the young players who participated in the 64-square game.

Anand described the event as one of the most important days of his life.

"I am incredibly proud to be part of such an event. I have never been involved in an event of this scale," Anand said while addressing the young chess aspirants.

The world champion said that he did not have words to describe his feeling as he felt very much overwhelmed with the response.

Anand said that he would like to take this collaboration with Gujarat government forward in order to popularise chess in other parts of the state.



## IndiaReport

On the wonder we call INDIA

## Chess event enters Guinness Book for most players at a venue

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## AHMEDABD MIRROR.com

## 'This world record is a celebration'

Viswanathan Anand hails Gujarat for setting world record in simultaneous chess

Saturday, December 25, 2010

On December 24, 2010 Viswanathan Anand won his maiden World Chess Championship by defeating Alexei Shirov in Tehran. Ten years later, on the same day, the now six-time world champion led Ahmedabad city to a world record.

Under the watchful eyes of the grandmaster, 20,480 people assembled at the GMDC ground to set a world record in simultaneous chess, thereby eclipsing the record set in Mexico City four years ago.

Anand was as ecstatic after the record as he was after his maiden world championship title.

*How do you feel after Ahmedabad rewrote history books today (Friday)?*

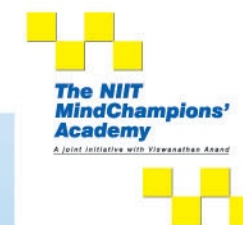
I have never participated in an event of such magnitude. I don't have words to describe what I am feeling right now. To have 20,480 people playing chess was incredible. It was a celebration of chess. Truly phenomenal.

*How different is it to guide a city to a world record from winning a world chess championship?*

The emotions are the same. Happy and ecstatic. But this was a different challenge. I have been involved in this record setting exercise for the last 10 months. And to pull it off on Friday, I feel really proud.

*How did this all begin? Was it you who gave the idea to the Gujarat chief minister?*

Not exactly. Both of us knew about the event in Mexico. So when I met the chief minister 10 months back, he expressed his desire to popularise chess. But he wanted to do something different in Gujarat's golden jubilee. He said let's do this world record and that's how the process started. Gujarat government, the state chess association and NIIT all contributed to it.







## Gujarat Chess Event Enters Guinness Records

Ahmedabad | Dec 24, 2010

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The world champion also played chess with 64 dignitaries who were present on the dais.

For the event the entire GMDC ground was set up in form of a chess board with 64 blocks and all tables and chairs covered in black and white cloth.

Even the participants were dressed in black and white t-Shirts.

Gujarat chief minister Modi too was dressed for the occasion with a white blazer, black shirt and pants.

Modi describing the game of chess as one that helps develop the mind, asked participants to train five persons each to play chess.

"Chess should reach every house of the state. That is my aim. It should connect to each and every school and young mind. The game helps develop patience. It prepares a person to face all kind of situations in life," Modi said.

Veteran actor Paresh Rawal was also present during the function.

