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5 lakh take part in NIIT's national chess tourney

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July 7: With the aim of popularising the game of chess among youths, well known computer education institute NIIT has set up the Mind Champion Academy in collaboration with world chess champion Vishwanathan Anand.

The Academy is now eight-year-old and recently its national-level annual championship witnessed a participation of whopping five lakh students from across the country.

This was disclosed by NIIT general manager Debdash Banerjee during a courtesy visit to Lokmat Bhavan, along with Grandmaster Vishwanathan Anand on Thursday. They were welcomed by chairman of Lokmat Media Limited and MP Vijay Darda.

Banerjee said that the Academy today has more than a million students from different Indian schools and have formed more than 11,000 Chess



Debdash Banerjee

clubs across the nation in the past eight years. "It has become a movement of sorts for us," he asserted adding that around 90 per cent of the members of the Academy are from rural areas.

"There are many organisations promoting Chess but reaching out to talent in rural areas was our priority," explained divisional manager (Teachers train-

ing) Jaya Chakraborty, who accompanied Banerjee. She also informed about a recent tie-up between the NIIT and the IGNOU for the first of its kind certification programme in proficiency in the game of Chess.

Speaking about other educational endeavours of NIIT, Banerjee informed that having made its presence felt in 44 countries over three decades, the institute wanted to do something unique in the field of education. "The thought of making learning more easy through computer applications germinated and became their next mission. Using ICT as a tool, they started working with the State government to introduce computer technology as a teaching aid, he said.

He also revealed that around 1,500 private schools across India have also joined hands with the NIIT in computerising teaching methods.