

'Making chess part of curriculum a good move'

Peter Nazareth | TNN

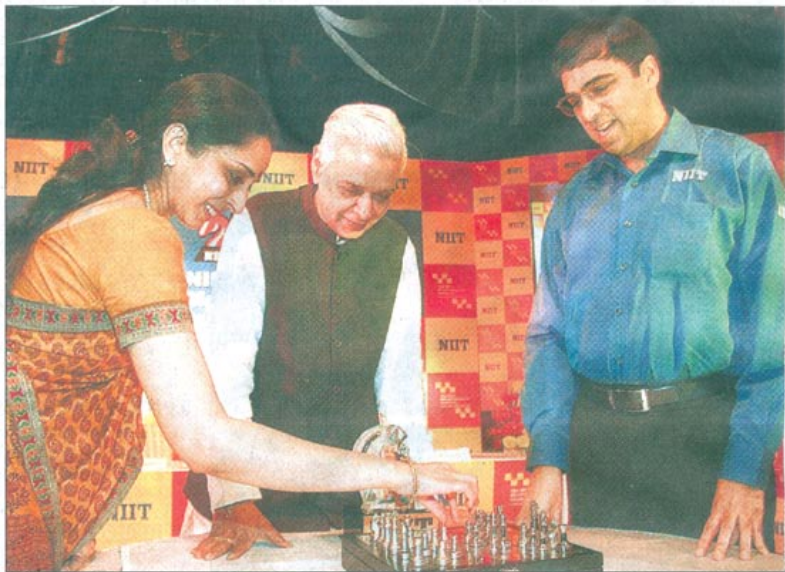
Ahmedabad: World chess No.1 Viswanathan Anand believes that making chess a part of school curriculum as has been done by Gujarat state is a good move and the move should be replicated nationally.

"Just as physical games are introduced so kids exercise their bodies chess too should be made part of schooling. It is a great exercise for the mind and introducing chess to children is a positive move," Anand said at a function to felicitate the national level winners of the NIIT MindChampions Academy Chess Master 2009 in Gandhinagar on Thursday.

On whether being made compulsory would devalue the game or if chess could help only those who were passionate about it, Anand replied, "I think everyone can benefit from the game, and a few hours a week wouldn't hurt. We have been introducing chess to youngsters nationwide as part of this programme."

Anand had also met Gujarat CM during his visit to the city in connection with MindChampions Academy programme and said: "He gave us a lot of support for the programme and we are looking forward to further developing this idea."

Incidentally this was the first time Anand was in Ahmedabad after 26 years. The



Viswanathan Anand with wife Aruna and state assembly speaker Ashok Bhatt in Gandhinagar on Thursday

last time was when he participated in the National chess A Championship and his performance at that tournament took him into the national chess team.

When a scribe asked him as to which had been his most anxious moment in his chess career, Anand said the '84 Nationals was exactly the moment.

"I had lost a few matches and was out of the top six, but I fought hard and got a few wins in the latter stage of the

tournament to finish at the top. In hindsight that was a really anxious time because I had to breach the top six to get a chance to play for India."

The chess whiz acknowledged his wife Aruna's support and patience. "She has been very patient and when I am preparing she makes it possible for me to get into a bubble. She keeps me insulated and also deals with the mood swings that are part of being a chess player."

CHESS MASTER 2009

Aditya Chakraborty from Delhi Public School, Ruby Park, Kolkata was adjudged national champion and Bappi Deb from Teliamura Higher Secondary School, Tripura was named runner-up of the MindChampion Academy Chess Master 2009. 4.5 lakh students participated in the competition. The tournament was implemented, monitored and played electronically. TNN