

## NIIT Imperia Leadership Series

Session with

# World Chess Champion Viswanathan Anand

on

## Strategies in Tough Times: Lessons from Chess



# Snapshots of Management strategy session with World Chess Champion Viswanathan Anand



World Chess Champion &  
NIIT MindChampion Viswanathan Anand

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## NIIT Imperia holds 19 city strategy session with World Chess Champion Viswanathan Anand

*- Synchronous Learning Technology enables management students and professionals across the nation interact simultaneously with World No. 1*

**New Delhi, December 19, 2008:** World Chess Champion and NIIT MindChampion Viswanathan Anand, addressed management students and professionals simultaneously across 19 cities in the country on Management Strategy, through NIIT Imperia's Synchronous Learning Technology. Organized as a part of **NIIT Imperia Leadership Series**, Anand shared his insights on how to excel in business by using the strategies and moves applied in Chess.

The session saw record turn out with large number of participants tuning in from New Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Pune, Ludhiana, Chandigarh, Lucknow, Bhopal, Patna, Jamshedpur, Bhubaneswar, Nasik, Nagpur, Vizag and Mysore to hear and interact with Anand, who took the session while being at the Delhi studio of NIIT Imperia Centre for Advanced Learning.

Emphasizing the similarity between Chess and management principles of Business, Anand shared his secret moves on **“Strategies in Tough Times: Lessons from Chess”**, as part of NIIT Imperia Leadership series. Some of the pearls of wisdom shared by Anand included insights on: knowing your goals, striving for objectivity, how not to worry about things you cannot control but to strengthen the areas you can, how having an in-depth knowledge of your opponent helps, how to use your intuition and finally learning how to take the loss in your stride, so that you can move on to the next battle.

Addressing the students, NIIT MindChampion Viswanathan Anand said, **“Whether it is management or a game of Chess, a good strategy sets direction towards the ultimate goal. It felt great to reach out to so many management students & professionals across the country using NIIT Imperia's technology, which seems to make distances disappear due to the high level of interactivity.”**

World Chess Champion, Anand, interacted with management students and responded to their queries, using NIIT Imperia's Synchronous Learning Technology platform. The technology connects remote classrooms live with faculty for imparting executive management programs from premier business schools such as the IIMs (Ahmedabad, Indore, Kolkata, and Lucknow), IMT Ghaziabad and IIFT New Delhi. It allows working professionals to pursue management education within their city after office hours or on weekends from premier institutes.

Welcoming Anand, and the students, Shraman Jha, Head, NIIT Imperia said, **“We have instituted ‘NIIT Imperia Leadership Series’ to provide a platform to our students, to learn from the experiences of stalwarts who have excelled in their chosen field. It is an honour to have World Chess Champion Viswanathan Anand among us today as part of the series. At NIIT Imperia, it is our constant endeavour to equip our students with strategic inputs and I am sure that Anand's sharp insights will prove valuable for all of us.”**

This session was in continuation to **“NIIT Imperia Leadership Series”**, initiated by NIIT Imperia, for bringing thought leaders to share their experiences with management students & professionals across geographies. Some of the past sessions of the series were delivered by eminent personalities like Mr Ben Verwaayen, BT Group CEO and Dr. Jean-Pierre Lehmann, Professor of International Political Economy, IMD Lausanne, Switzerland & Founding Director of the Evian group.

The Executive Management programs at NIIT Imperia are designed and developed by the IIMs, who provide faculty and certification for these programs. The technology, synchronous classrooms across the country and the management of the distributed education system is being provided by NIIT. NIIT has also integrated its Learning Management and e-learning systems with this technology, and is implementing and managing the overall student experience.

Synchronous learning is an effective tool to bring together the faculty and students, otherwise separated by significant distances, using cutting-edge technology. Through the new high-tech environment, students can experience learning almost in the same way as they would if they were in a normal classroom, querying their instructor and answering questions. Dedicated broadband two-way audio-video, together with special software to replicate face-to-face teaching, are used in this application.

Hundreds of working professionals comprising of middle and senior level managers have already enrolled for NIIT Imperia programs since its inception. Nearly one-third of NIIT Imperia students come from the IT industry including top IT companies such as Infosys, Wipro, IBM, HCL, Oracle, Accenture, TCS, Cognizant, Satyam, Dell, Ernst & Young, Boston Consulting Group, Yahoo and Oracle. Many come from organizations in the Financial, Manufacturing and the Services sector, such as Genpact, ICICI, HDFC, Citigroup, HSBC, American Express, Standard Chartered, SBI, Godrej, ITC, Reliance Industries, L&T, Bharti Enterprises, Motorola, HUL, Raymonds, Dr Reddy's, Coca Cola, , Pepsi, Fedex among others.

For more details on NIIT Imperia, please visit [www.niitimperia.com](http://www.niitimperia.com).

# Anand shows his moves

World champion doubles up as motivational speaker and agony uncle



Vishwanathan Anand demonstrates a chess game through an interactive video conference in New Delhi on Friday. AP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

DECEMBER 19

**V**ISHWANATHAN Anand is used to playing chess with several rivals simultaneously. But facing 200 ardent Anand-watchers during a nation-wide webcast interaction wasn't quite a cakewalk. And since the varied questions thrown at the chess whiz were at times miles away from the game of 64 squares, Anand was understandably stumped by some unusual queries.

Business professionals asked for a solution to the complex question relating to the tensions created at home because of problems at office. Parents wanted to know how to cut the pocket money their kids were getting. Someone wanted to know the formula of being aggressive without being confident. It took all kinds to complete the Q&A session organised as part of

Anand's sponsors NIIT.

Anand did his best as he doubled as a motivational speaker and agony uncle. But there was one question that saw the quick-witted champ throw his hands up. How do I deal with a non-supportive life partner? He was ready for all kinds of role-playing but wasn't in a mood to be a marriage counselor.

Anand's advice about the mundane query on pocket money was simple but it was coming from someone who is into long-term planning. "A parent should give pocket money for five months at one go. And after that, kids should be taught to manage his finances," he said.

Anand gave a few words of wisdom when he asked about the way in which one can deal with negative thoughts. "Try to be calm by lowering your expectations. Don't try to win every time, sometimes a draw is a good morale booster." He also advised youngsters to

be careful in choosing their role models. "I know a few players who are brilliant on the field but are lousy role models. So just be careful," he said.

There was the obvious question about cricket killing other sports, but Anand didn't quite indulge in willow-bashing. "Cricket is not destroying other sports, it is just promoting itself. I have seen when I do well and win something, I get better coverage. So basically to get promoted you need to perform," he said.

Anand also emphasised the importance of education to the young webcast watchers. "Education is important because it opens up a lot more opportunities. But for sportspersons or cricketers, they have to decide at a very young age whether to go for career or education. Once they are involved with the game, there are so busy that taking up education becomes a bit difficult then," he said.



## Viswanathan Anand spoke to the nation on checkmating tough times. We figured out five pearls of wisdom...

*"It is only when the tide goes out that you learn who's been swimming naked."*

—Chess Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand quoting American businessman Warren Buffet in response to a question regarding recession

**W**e're all reeling under the greatest Depression we've ever seen and suddenly everyone has an opinion about it. However, when the geniuses speak, the world is all ears. Viswanathan Anand, currently the greatest chess

player on the planet, addressed youngsters across 19 cities yesterday at NIIT Imperia's Leadership session. Though he gave ~~gwan~~ <sup>gwan</sup> on winning the many battles of life, we figured out five everyday challenges Vishy's game has solutions for...

**1 COPING WITH NEGATIVE PLAYERS**  
Chess too, has its share of players who adopt such a strategy of pulling others down. For instance, last year before our game, (Vladimir) Kramnik started giving interviews aimed at upsetting my state of mind. My response was to simply block my mind and ignore all his mentions in the media. Also, during the tournament, I would remain secluded; always walking with my face

down. It helped me focus on my job a lot better.

When opponents try to pull you down, calm down and extrapolate the situation. If you don't figure how to beat them, you'll eventually at least learn how to cope with it.

Lastly, sometimes it benefits you to not be an overly good listener. Paying attention to what everyone says about your battle can skew your mindset.

**THE ART OF WAR**  
What do you do when your cards run out in a prolonged corporate battle? In chess, they say "In a bad position, all your moves are bad." If you think you're in a spot you won't get out of, there is no use hoping for a miracle. Just fight as hard as you can, you will at least gain some respect from the opponent by resisting longer. And

then, if luckily you get a half chance, it's a lottery. Also, next time, make sure you don't carry the baggage from your defeat. Start each game afresh.

Also, even when the chips are down, don't stop hunting for new opportunities and thinking out of the box. If nothing is working out, you probably need to re-align your goals.

**3 SACRIFICE TO WIN**  
Chess requires various values to be traded off to achieve your goal. For instance, to reach the king, you would have to sacrifice some knights or even the queen. Similarly, your sacrifices of time and space are valued too. Your business/life goal might not be as distinctly visible as 'the king'. Be judicious while sacrificing to reach it; the space and time you give away will never return.

**TAKING WORK STRESS HOME**  
Here too, I empathise with all those in the above fix, since there are times for me when I simply can't help getting stressed thinking about that one wrong move or getting anxious about an upcoming tournament. At such times, it helps when I go for a walk. It may not solve the problem at hand, but it at least gives me a breather. It is crucial

to have hobbies and interests. If you're obsessed with your profession, you may stop getting optimum results from yourself after a point in time.

Also, having a supportive partner, like I do, helps as well. But in the end, each individual has to devise his/her own way to fight stress. All you have to aim to do is to break the monotony in the mind.

### CONTROLLING NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

Even I am not always able to control negative thoughts, especially when I'm waiting for the opponent to make his next move. I try to calm

myself by lowering my expectations, for instance settling for a draw. If you have the resistance, there won't be many problems in letting the negativity pass over. —AS TOLD TO MALAY DESAI

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World champion  
is now focussing  
on his favourite  
tournament  
in Linares

Viswanathan Anand will defend his world championship title either against Veselin Topalov or Gata Kamsky next year

QAMAR SIBTAN

# 'I would never try to lose on purpose'

By **Shweta Thampan**  
in New Delhi

IT'S not many a times that World champion Viswanathan Anand admits to complacency. The usually down-to-earth Vishy, though, did so on Friday during a NIIT session — Strategies in tough times: Lessons from chess.

Anand talked of how his overconfidence lost him the Dortmund SuperGM tournament in July 2001.

"I was coming after a good season, but didn't win a single game and suffered four losses. It was a rude shock to me," he said. "The fact is that because of my successes, I had overlooked my weaknesses."

And that was when he learnt the lesson he will remember for the rest of his life. "Taking risks is the most important thing. If you are in a bad situation, you have two choices — either you play it safe or take risks. But, once you know you can't win, the positive way to go about your job is to relax and have some fun. Make life difficult for your opponent, until he offers you a draw," Anand said with a smile.

And if you thought sledging only existed in cricket, well, Anand revealed that chess was

**'There are always verbal jousts by which we try to upset opponents'**

no different, though he wouldn't call it so.

"There are always verbal jousts by which we try to upset opponents. I, usually try not to read newspapers before important matches and ask people not to give me any gossip. Even during the match, you are constantly looking for the twitches of eyes etc. to gauge your opponent's moves, giving nothing away yourself," Anand divulged.

"But, then he is doing the same, and after a while you wonder who is fooling who."

And one such strategy was not revealing Magnus Carlsen's role in his preparation for the World Championship against Vladimir Kramnik. "It was definitely a part of the strategy. People had asked me about Carlsen com-

ing to my place and helping me in my preparation. But, I kept it vague," he said.

But, that was where all the scheming ended, as Anand made it clear that his loss in Bilbao Masters before the competition was certainly not any planned move. "I would never try and lose a match on purpose. Since I had been preparing all through the year for the World Championship, I could not concentrate much," he said.

The world champion is now focussing on his favourite tournament in Linares. "I am concentrating on defending my title in Linares. But, of course, the World Championship will be the most important event."

The winner of the match between Veselin Topalov and Gata Kamsky early next year, will be Anand's challenger for the world title in 2009. But Anand denied having any preferences. "Well, in chess they say you should never prefer to play someone because you always get the other one," he said.

But whatever he might say, the fact remains the way Topalov beat Anand in Bilbao this September, Anand would rather play Kamsky. Chess apart, for now, Anand is taking a break and spending his time reading, listening to music and watching movies, which he misses for most part of the year. And his book collection certainly is interesting. "I just finished reading the biography of Mayawati."

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## Can't have any links with Pak: Anand

**New Delhi:** Agreeing with the government's stance of not sending the cricket team to Pakistan in the wake of the Mumbai terror attacks, three-time World chess Champion V Anand said the prevailing circumstances were not conducive to continue (sporting) links with Islamabad.

"It's easy to understand the decision. It would be highly insensitive to the victims (if the team goes to play in Pakistan), we can't have any links with Islamabad in the present circumstances. It is a completely normal decision and it applies to any sports," Anand told reporters here.

India's cricket tour of Pakistan was Thursday officially scrapped after the government refused to grant permission in the aftermath of the Mumbai massacre, carried out by people from the neighbouring country. But Anand advised people to stay calm in such a critical situation as he felt terrorism was aimed at attacking the confidence of people and countries.

"It's most important that

### SL agree to tour

**Karachi:** Sri Lanka have confirmed they will tour Pakistan next month in place of India, who on Thursday cancelled their five-week series over the Mumbai attacks. "We are thankful to Sri Lanka for confirming the tour in place of India," Pakistan Cricket Board chief operating officer Salim Altaf said. Lanka will play three Tests, three ODIs and a Twenty20 game in Pakistan. PTI

people in the country be calm. Essentially terrorism is creating panic in people's mind. So it should be looked after that the society is not turning on itself," said the Chennai-born, who visited the capital for the first time after retaining his World Championship title in Bonn, Germany, by defeating Russia's Vladimir Kramnik.

"It is simply a strategy to affect the victims' confidence. But you've to deal with it objectively and with practical details," he added. PTI



World Champion V Anand at New Delhi on Friday

ACE ANCHOR

WORLD CHAMPION THINKS ONE CAN BE AGGRESSIVE AND YET FEEL SAFE

# Safety is an illusion, says Anand

DHANANJAY KHADILKAR, Mumbai

Viswanathan Anand is used to solve the trickiest problems on a chess board but on Friday, the world chess champion was busy giving advice to people on almost all the topics under the sun... from Rahul Dravid's form to children's pocket money and from terrorism to relations with Pakistan. Anand was giving a lecture on 'Lessons from chess' through video conferencing to an audience spanning 19 cities across the country.

Anand said that there are number of lessons to be learnt from chess that have use in day-to-day life. One of the first is to know your goals and to be objective. "The aim in chess is to win the game. Therefore, one needs to think rationally even if it means being merciless while doing self analysis. Objectivity allows you to grow," he said.

He said that like in chess, in life too, you should know what opposition one is facing. "One should have a fair idea of the opponent. This evaluation is of great help in preparing yourself for the battle ahead," he remarked.

Risk-taking was the biggest lesson that Anand has learnt from chess. "Safety is an illusion. Many a time, not taking risk is not the best strategy. What I have learnt is that you can be aggressive and yet safe."

He further added that if risks should be based on sound preparation. "It is important to be passionate for what you do. So, even in a worst-case scenario, the risk doesn't pay off, there is no regret about what you have done as your passion never fails you," he said.

Citing the example of the recently held



Viswanathan Anand during a video conference in New Delhi on Friday —AP

World Championship match against Kramnik, Anand said he had deviated from his usual opening move as he knew the Russian was comfortable with that strategy.

"Shifting to d4 from e4 was a risk. However, I had prepared for close to a year. Regardless of the outcome, I knew this strategy would not only surprise Kramnik, but also broaden my horizon," he said.

Anand however admitted that in chess and life, there are situations which are completely out of your control. "In such a scenario, you have to trust your intuition and make the best practical decision. Also, one should lower expectations and fight till the end," he said.

The audience bombarded Anand with questions that were related to everything but chess. These ranged from terrorism, Dravid's woeful form, investment banking, unfair office competition, Indo-Pak relations and ways to reverse the economic downturn.

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## KING'S MOVES

### On cancelled Pak tour

The government's decision is understandable in the present circumstances. We cannot have sports at this time, it will be insensitive to the victims of the Mumbai attacks. Pakistan's complicity is a key factor and we cannot have links with Islamabad at this point," Anand told reporters here on the sidelines of a promotional event.

### On terrorism

The government has to undertake reforms so that it becomes more difficult for terrorists. It's most important that people in the country be calm. Essentially terrorism is creating panic in people's mind. So it should be looked after that the society is not turning on itself. Also, one should not forget the other important issues like diseases and hunger that kill more people than terrorism.

### On Dravid

I have also gone through a lean phase for a considerable amount of time in 2001. It was a difficult time and at times, I was becoming desperate as things were not working out. The way out of this is to keep on experimenting. It took me 8 months to get out of it. Dravid should also experiment. Hopefully, he will be able to get out of this faster.

The Hindu  
Chennai  
December 20, 2008

## Viswanathan Anand airs his views on various topics

Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI:** Since landing in Chennai last month, Viswanathan Anand, currently on his routine winter vacation in India, and wife Aruna quietly escaped to a forest resort in Madhya Pradesh. Back in the Capital on a day's visit, the NIT's Brand Ambassador, interacted with students from 19 cities using NIT's interactive software.

He was made to air his views on Friday on various subjects.

Anand, who revealed having just finished reading Mayawati's biography *Behenji* and Andrew Hodges' *One to Nine — The inner life of numbers*, however, opted to reserve his views on the proposed changes in the World chess championship format. "Once the present state of flux is over, I will surely tell you," promised Anand.

On tackling terrorism: If I knew I would have slain many gunmen long ago. But seriously, you need to give police better equipment, as terrorism is a global phenomenon these days. It's most important that people in the country be calm. In fact, all diseases and hunger are killing more people than all the terrorism in the world. These problems are also as important.

On India calling off cricket tour to Pakistan: It's easy to



**EXPERT OPINION:** Vishwanathan Anand during his interaction with students. — PHOTO: SANDEEP SAXENA

understand the decision. It would be highly insensitive to the victims (if the team goes to play in Pakistan), we can't have any links with Islamabad in the present circumstances.

On Rahul Dravid's search for form: (Anand recalled his slump in form in 2001 at the Dortmund tournament and said fully he knew how it felt to lose form) What I did after Dortmund was that I kept on experimenting for seven to eight months. In that period also I could not really recover as I was experimenting only randomly. Rahul, too, can try to experiment. Perhaps, that will see him recover faster.

On Sourav Ganguly's last

first-class game: It's an end to a wonderful career, which he could justifiably be proud of.

It must be funny to know this is your last match. (Former World champion) Garry Kasparov had said the same thing. The rest of the world would be looking back but you have to sit and play or stand and play in his (Ganguly's) case, he said.

On his brief meeting with Mahendra Singh Dhoni: I was meeting him for the first time. He came across as a very warm person. But I think he was very playful. Before he presented the ring to me he said, "I hope Bhabhi (Aruna) will allow me to present you this ring."



# Anand's mantra: Follow the sport, not the player

Anupma Tripathi  
New Delhi, December 19

"WHY DOES one need a role model? A sportsperson may do exceptionally well in his field but he could be a lousy role model. Follow the sport but don't follow in the footsteps of players, it's not advisable," Viswanathan Anand said sarcastically to the select audience. The world champion was in the Capital on Friday to address management professionals and students as part of the NIIT Imperia leadership series.

Anand touched upon several issues, ranging from global recession to management skills. Asked about his opinion on something as sensitive as terrorism, the normally expressionless face cringed. Explaining his viewpoint using chess terminology, he said, "Terrorism is a sim-



SUSHIL KUMAR/HT

Viswanathan Anand at the NIIT Studio in the Capital on Friday.

ple strategy to affect the victim, who is us in this case. Like if I make some bad moves, I do it deliberately to provoke the opponent into making a blunder. Likewise, we must not get provoked by these terror elements and play our own game. Also, dis-

ease and hunger are killing more people than terrorism in the world. These problems are also as important."

He also backed the government's decision to cancel the cricket team's tour of Pakistan. "We cannot have sport at this

time, it will be insensitive to the victims of the Mumbai attacks. Pakistan's complicity is a key factor and we cannot have links with Islamabad at this point," he said. Explaining his stand, Anand said the sole motive of terrorists was to create panic.

"This happens in chess as well. When we have a time constraint, we often press the panic button. "But I generally play calm to think and proceed with a positive frame of mind. The society needs to have a calm look as well to counter terrorism in its own way."

Reacting to the global meltdown, Anand, who is currently reading Mayawati's biography to take his mind off chess, said: "The need is to recognize your weaker areas and look out for new areas where you can work on and then wait for opportunity to strike."

## We can't have links with Pak: Anand



NEW DELHI, DEC 19

AGREEING with the government's stance of not sending the cricket team to Pakistan in the wake of the Mumbai terror attacks, three-time World chess Champion Viswanathan Anand today said the prevailing circumstances were not conducive to continue (sporting) links with Islamabad.

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calm in such a critical situation as he felt terrorism was aimed at attacking the confidence of people and countries.

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"It is simply a strategy to affect the victims' confidence. But you've to deal with it objectively and with practical details," he added.

Asked how exactly terrorism could be tackled, Anand first quipped: "If I knew I would have slain many gunmen long ago." But on a serious note he suggested measures like "you need to give police a better equipment as it (terrorism) had become a global phenomenon now".

Having said that, Anand felt like terrorism, deadly diseases and hunger were also important issues and needed to be dealt with urgently.

"All diseases and hunger are killing more people than all the terrorism in the world. These problems are also as important," he said.

Anand, who is based in Spain, is the only chess player in the world to have won the World Championships in all the three formats of the game — knock-out, round robin and match-play.

Anand is also reigning supreme in the world in the Rapid version of the game. — PTI

## Taking risks in life is important, says Anand

Statesman News Service

KOLKATA, Dec 19: Vishwanathan Anand (In photo) emphasized over and over again that taking risks is very essential in life. If one does not take risks, depending on the situation and position one is in, how can one move forward?

Holding a very interesting session with the Press and management students across 19 cities labeled 'strategies in tough times: lessons from chess' today in the city, the three time World chess champion suggested to all to be enterprising in these troubled times after assessing the opportunities available. "Risk taking in chess is very important, depending on the position of the player. One can be aggressive or defensive. The safe approach is not always the best," said the chess champion via the NIIT Imperia

synchronous learning technology from New Delhi to scribes logged in at various places in the country. This was his first visit to the capital after retaining his World champion title at Bonn.

Dealing with failures is a common story but for Anand, it means coming to terms with it when in a losing position. "One has to be realistic. The balance of the game must be maintained. A win is always a miracle from that position," he claimed.

About the inevitable comparison with cricket - the two C's of Indian sports - Anand said that the former was a great sport, extremely popular in India. "With the NIIT Mind champion chess academies, I'm trying to popularise chess," said the NIIT Mind Champion. His prediction for Rahul Dravid seemed almost



prophetic. Anand claimed that Dravid would come out of his slump soon. Dravid proved his mettle at Mohali today in the second Test against England making 65 not out.

On a personal front, Anand felt that the year had its ups and downs. "Winning in Bonn and Linares was great but then losing

in Nice and Bilbao was tough," he said. "It was tough to play in Bilbao because I had to hide many of my moves for Bonn and the Vladimir Kramnik challenge, but never should one play a bad or a second best game. One has to change strategies accordingly."

He said that he is learning from the youngsters who are currently making a mark in the chess fraternity, especially 17-year-old Norwegian Magnus Carlsen. "It's interesting to learn from the young as they bring a fresh approach." He predicted that Carlsen would be a force to reckon with soon. He also emphasized the importance of education. "It's important to finish at least the school level if one wants to pursue a career in sports. I could only manage till Bcom."

Anand was extremely sympathetic to the terror threats in the

world but also claimed it had become a global phenomenon. Without losing track of other problems at hand, people should get used to it. "It's most important that people in the country be calm. Essentially terrorism is creating panic in people's minds and a strategy to affect the victims' confidence." He supported the government's decision to call off India's tour of Pakistan next year.

Anand is looking forward to a good 2009 and will start preparing for Morelia-Linares soon, keeping world championship matches in mind. Before signing off to play a round of chess with the Press on a nationwide basis via webcams after the interactive session, the 39-year-old said he was not interested in seeing which Indian would succeed him because "I'm still around for a long time!"

## 'Experimentation key to finding form'

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Dec. 19: World chess champion Viswanathan Anand feels out-of-form batsman Rahul Dravid should experiment with his technique to regain his touch.

Speaking at a press conference organised by his sponsors NIIT, Anand said he could empathise with the former India captain as he had undergone a similar lean patch in his early years.

The chess ace said he felt woefully out-of-touch during the 2000 Dortmund tournament. What was most puzzling for Anand, at the time, was why his game had gone awry after a successful run that year. "Once I started doing badly I thought of drawing my remaining games," Anand said, hinting that the defensive strategy



World chess champion Vishwanathan Anand demonstrates his skills during an event in New Delhi on Friday. — AP

did not work. "What I did after Dortmund was to keep experimenting for 7-8

months. In that period I could not really recover as I was experimenting only

randomly. It was just very difficult. (But) perhaps that will help him (Dravid)

recover faster," he said.

Anand, who recently thwarted Russian Vladimir Kramnik's challenge to retain his World Championship title in Bonn, Germany, was visiting the capital for the first time after his extraordinary feat of winning the honour in all three formats of game — knock-out, round-robin and match-play.

Anand, asked to say a few words about former cricket captain Sourav Ganguly, who is playing the last first-class game, said: "It must be funny to know this is your last match. Kasparov had said the same thing. The rest of the world will be looking back but you have to sit and play or stand and play in his case," he said. "It's an end to a wonderful career, which he can justifiably be proud of," Anand added.



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## Chess moves to checkmate meltdown

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
DECEMBER 19

**T**HE current economic slowdown is like a particularly tough move in chess and to negotiate both, the same skills are required, according to world chess champion Vishwanathan Anand.

At such difficult times, a sharp focus on the goal, objective criticism of oneself and calculated risks are needed, as in chess, he said, speaking from Delhi on a videoconference with reporters in 19 cities, on 'strategies in tough times: lessons from chess.'

"When I am in a tough spot in a game and defeat seems imminent, I try to delay the inevitable as much as I can. I believe it improves my fighting spirit. We must go over our failures, find what exactly went wrong and look to improve," said the king of world chess.

"When dealing with critical times, one must be confident, optimistic and enthusiastic before the opponent, while remaining calm and objective within. There is no point worrying about things not in our control," Anand said.

On what the nation's strategy should be in these critical times, he said it was necessary to tweak the economic policy to keep a plan ready during the next slowdown. "The slowdown is not forever, but we must be prepared for such difficult times," he said.

Anand narrated one of his experiences. "In one tournament a few years ago, I lost the first game. I decided to play safe and went on backfoot. I ended up losing three games and drawing two."

"It hurt my morale. I had a year to prepare for my game against Vladimir Kramnik and concentrated on his strength. He was surprised by my new tactic and eventually lost. I realised I could use the same strategy of risk-taking in good times as well," Anand said.

Anand went on to talk about the NIIT Mind Champions Academy, a countrywide chess academy founded by him in collaboration with NIIT. "The objective of the academy is to teach chess to as many students in the country as possible. This will allow them to develop concentration skills and improve memory," he said.



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— PTI



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