New World Record of 20,000 Simultaneous Chess Players to be set on December 24

Gujarat organizes 'Swarnim Chess Mahotsav' along with World Chess Champion & NIIT MindChampion Viswanathan Anand

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

Ahmedabad, December 21, 2010: Swarnim Chess Mahotsav 2010 Gujarat, is set to create a new world record with 20,000 players playing simultaneous chess at Gujarat University Grounds in Ahmedabad, on December 24th 2010. The record breaking event will be 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. The current record is of 13,446 players at Mexico City, in 2006.

A unique initiative by the Government of Gujarat, Gujarat State Chess Association and NIIT Limited, 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.

Speaking on the significance of Swarnim Chess Mahotsav 2010, Mr. Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat, remarked during its launch earlier this year that, it was his dream to make Chess a popular game in Gujarat. "Chess can unleash the spirit of sportsmanship in people and make life a festival. Combining education with sports would lead to success," he said.

World Chess Champion and NIIT MindChampion Viswanathan Anand remarked, *"I am very excited about this event that is set to take the game of chess to new heights by scripting a new world record. I am sure this unique endeavour will be a very inspiring milestone for Chess players in Gujarat and across India."*

Mr. Rajendra S Pawar, Chairman NIIT Ltd. said, *"20,000 participants, playing Chess simultaneously will be a new world record."*

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

Chess Association of Gujarat will provide around 1000 Masters and Grandmasters for the Swarnim Chess Mahotsav 2010 to be held at Ahmedabad. As a run up to the grand event, NIIT MindChampions Academy will popularize Chess amongst students by forming Chess clubs in schools within the State of Gujarat, which will make available a pool of Chess Players, for participating 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 attempts to 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, will endeavour to get 20,000 players to come together to play simultaneous Chess, to break the current record of Mexico City's 13,446 simultaneous Chess players.

For more details of the record breaking attempt, please visit http://playchessgujarat.com/

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 1 Million students as its member, by the end of December 2010.

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

NIIT Mind Champions' 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).

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