

Press Release: A Talk On 'My Journey In Chess' By Viswanathan Anand

Kanpur, UP: Mr. Viswanathan Anand visited Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur to receive his Honorary Doctorate at the 49th convocation ceremony, following which he held two sessions – one a demo of a chess game he had played earlier and the other a talk on his journey in chess.

In his first session, he analyzed one of the games he had played against Anish Giri. He described how and why he played several of his moves in that game, along with a demonstration of the possible options he had at the time.

In the second and more personal talk, Mr. Anand talked about how he started playing chess at the age of six, learning first from his mother and later during Sunday practice sessions at a nearby chess club. His education later continued in Philippines, a country with one of the best chess setups in Asia at the time, where his family had moved for an year.

It was in 1985 that he started to try for the Grandmaster title but had to take a break for his school exams after 2 years. Anand stressed that this break was very good for his game as he came back refreshed and it was soon after in 1988 that he became the first Indian to win the Grandmaster title.

Anand said that the win made him complacent and his score began decline. Stressing the need to set goals in life, he said, *"Because of the lack of goals after the title, I began to drift away. I then aimed for the World Championship and soon after, my game picked up. It really helps to have specific goals."*

After three years of competing for the World Champion title, he finally won it in 2000. Anand reminisced about the time after winning the title, saying that it was both challenging and rewarding in terms of trying to keep his game at the same level.

Anand also talked about the need to take risks in one's life, which he did when he went up against Vladimir Kramnik in 2008 at Bonn. He prepared a strategy for the game, something he hadn't done before, and also took a risk in his game, which fortunately paid off. He concluded by saying, *"Sometimes when you do things simply to have fun, it works out very nicely."*

Picture Caption: Prof. Indranil Manna, Director, IIT Kanpur (left) felicitating Mr. Viswanathan Anand (right)