



The University of Fiji

Press statement

The University of Fiji students have reached new heights in chess by competing in the first **International Chess Federation (FIDE) World University Online Chess Championships**.

The competition will take place on 14-15 March, 2021. The Coach and Co-organiser of The University of Fiji Chess Club, Dr Ricardo Corpuz said the Unifiji competitors were all medical students from the Umanand Prasad School of Medicine and Health Science.

These students will not only represent the University of Fiji but Fiji also with other competitors being University students from all over the world.

Dr. Corpuz says the team had been training face to face and online using lichess and tornello every evening with Mr. Avinesh Nadan, Rating Officer of The University of Fiji partner the Fiji Chess Federation.

“The international exposure will not only help the students build up their confidence and their strategic thinking but will also help to build the chess players in Fiji,” Dr Corpuz said.

The Acting Vice Chancellor of the University, Professor Shaista Shameem said that the students had been encouraged by the partnership between the University and the Fiji Chess Federation. Regular chess competitions for the western division were held on Saturdays at the University of Fiji Saweni Campus to encourage the University players and allow them an opportunity to play with the top players and Grand Masters of Fiji.

The University also had built a lawn chess set which allows everyone to play lawn chess during the lunch hour, she said.

The online tournament will be played over two weekends - 21-22 March and 28-29 March 2021, as a series of individual matches pitting the players' skills against their opponents in what are called "Individual Blitz" (3-minute) and "Individual Rapids" (10-minute) matches.

Over 200 players have registered for the online tournament in the Blitz (218) and Rapid (215) matches. The games will be played under the Swiss 20-Round Format and will begin at 2.00am Fiji Time (2.00pm UTC).

The winners will be announced as the “World University Online Blitz Champion 2021” and awarded a trophy. The highest placed woman chess player shall be announced as the “World University Online Blitz Women’s Champion 2021” and will also be awarded a trophy. First, second and third-place finishers in both the men's and women's categories will be awarded medals.



From left: Nikhat Ali (sitting), Shazia Ahmad, Dr. Ricardo Corpuz, Pavitra Chand, Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Shaista Shameem, Avineet Singh, Aniketh Chand and Tony Chan (sitting). Insert- Navisheel Prasad