



# The University of Fiji

(An Entity of Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Fiji)

## The University of Fiji Hosts BSP Finance Rapid Chess Tournament

As a combined effort to return to all its normal activities, The University of Fiji hosted its first chess tournament of the year on Saturday May 21<sup>st</sup> at the Saweni Campus Hall.

The tournament was held in collaboration with its partner, the Fiji Chess Federation, with support from Bank South Pacific (BSP).

The tournament saw the highest number of participants in Lautoka featuring 56 players competing in 4 categories: Open, Women, Secondary and Primary categories. Candidate Master Manoj Kumar won the much-contested Open Category, Cydel Terubea bagged the first prize in the Women's Category. Rudr Prasad won the Secondary category while Paul Anthony Corpuz won the Primary Category. Yash Maharaj won the Best Upset prize and Aisea Wasalasala walked away with the Best Beginner prize.

Top players in Fiji, including as Candidate Master (CM) Manoj Kumar, CM Ronald Terubea and Cydel Terubea, and the Under-18 chess prodigy duo of Rudr Prasad and Tanvi Prasad from Jai Narayan College participated in the tournament. Swami Vivekananda College also had eighteen students compete in the competition.

Dr Ravikesh Prasad of the Fiji Chess Federation and Tournament Director (of the tournament) said that he was delighted with partnership and support from the University in promoting chess. He said that the organising team were impressed with turnout at the tournament.

He said that chess should be introduced as a part of the formal curriculum in schools. Professor Shameem said that she fully supports that proposal.

Providing support for chess tournaments at national and international levels is included in the University of Fiji's Strategic Plan 2022-2026. The Plan emphasizes holistic education for students of the University.

The Vice Chancellor of the University, Professor Shaista Shameem said that the University focused on extra-curricular activities and events at the same time as emphasizing formal quality-driven qualifications. Students who participated in chess tournaments developed strategic and tactical skills much needed in the world today. Having these skills would allow the University's graduates to become much more employable in future, she said.

The University will be hosting all national, and even international, tournaments in future as requested by the Fiji Chess Federation.

Dr. Ricardo Corpuz, Co-Chair of the University of Fiji Chess Committee said that the tournament on Saturday, with large numbers of young people participating, was a success.

"With the turnout of most students from primary and secondary school this will make chess one of the sports in Fiji for all ages to compete in," he said.

Yash Prasad, 7, said he was thrilled to be a part of the event since it allowed him to win and lose some matches while also gaining experience.

Ronald Terubea, Rudr Prasad, Cydel Terubea, Prashil Prakash, and Tanvi Prasad, tournament participants, are also members of the Olympiad team, which will compete in the event beginning in late July.



7 year old Yash Prasad competing with Ms Mercy Gogoi.



Participants during the final round of the tournament.





Winner of the main chess prize, Mr Manoj Kumar Candidate Master (centre), BSP sponsors on either side, and other winners of different categories of chess players with the Vice Chancellor of the University of Fiji, Professor Shaista Shameem.



Professor Shameem with the Fiji Olympiad Chess Team which will travel to Chennai in October to represent Fiji.



The Swami Vivekananda College chess players with Professor Shameem.

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