

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY SELVI J JAYALALITHAA,  
HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER OF TAMIL NADU AT THE INAUGURAL  
FUNCTION OF THE WORLD CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP, 2013 HELD ON  
7.11.2013 AT THE JAWAHARLAL NEHRU INDOOR STADIUM, CHENNAI**

I am happy to be here to share this glorious moment with you. This period of time will be hailed in the chronicles of history as the 'Golden era of chess'. For the first time, India, the home of the oldest intellectual game, will witness the complete set of games to be played as part of the World Chess Championship match being hosted in Chennai. It is an occasion which will set the tone and herald a new course in the Nation's interest in this sport - which has been celebrated as the 'Gymnasium of the Mind'. Chess is very close to my heart and I regard this game very highly, both as a player and as an enthusiast.

When the World Chess Federation President, Mr.Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, met me in 2011, he requested me to hold the World Chess Championship match in Chennai. I immediately agreed to do so at a cost of 20 crore rupees. However, it failed to materialise as Russia made the highest bid for the championship. As a goodwill gesture towards the interest expressed by the Government of Tamil Nadu in holding the event, the World Chess Federation agreed to hold the World Chess Championship match, 2013, in Chennai, without any bid. I have sanctioned an amount of 29 crore rupees for this landmark event.

The history of chess spans over 1500 years. The earliest predecessor of the game originated in India, before the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD. We can proudly claim that India is the homeland of this amazing game, which has permeated into all continents down the centuries.

The dynamics of the game can be understood from the ancient Indian concept of warfare, wherein two armies encountered each other in a face-to face combat. Such a picture is furnished in the description of a war between two armies in the epic, Raghuvamsa, penned by Kalidasa:

"It was a battle between two forces of equal strength: the footman encountering the footman; the charioteer against the charioteer; the horse rider facing the horse rider; the elephant warrior engaging the elephant warrior".

The popularity of chess in the Western courtly Society peaked between the 12th and the 15th centuries. Between 1200 and 1400, the game became a fixture in European Society.

In the Seventeenth Century, Chess flourished mostly in Italy, which consequently produced the strongest players.

Towards the beginning of the Eighteenth Century the game flourished in France, England and Germany. The most famous master of the time was the Frenchman, Andre Philidor, who, for more than forty years, maintained his supremacy over the sport. During the 1800's, chess became a competitive endeavour and the first 'modern chess tournament' took place in London in the year 1851. The German player,

Adolf Anderssen won the tournament and soon became known as the world's leading Chess Master. He reigned as the champion till the American player, Paul Morphy emerged on the chess scene in 1857. Wilhelm Steinitz was crowned the first official World Champion in 1886. Emanuel Lasker was one of the strongest players ever to play the game, having spent 27 years as the undisputed World Champion – still the longest reign of any World chess champion in history! Jose Raul Capablanca, Alexander Alekhine, Tigran Petrosian, Boris Spassky, Bobby Fischer, Anatoly Karpov, Garry Kasparov, Vladimir Kramnik and our very own Viswanathan Anand adorn the 'Hall of Fame' in the sport of chess. In stark contrast to other parts of the country, chess has a strong following particularly in Chennai, primarily because of the presence of Viswanathan Anand.

Chess has indeed made deep inroads into the psyche of people all over the globe in the last millennium, more so in India, evidenced by the fact that the number of Grand Masters in India has tripled to 27 today. The number of International Chess Masters in the country has also tripled to 76 and India is in the world top 10 in rankings.

All through my three tenures as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, I have aimed at achieving excellence in sports. The budgetary allocation for the Youth Welfare and Sports Development Department has been doubled to 111.53 crore rupees in the current year. I believe that good infrastructure plays a pivotal role in creating an ambience conducive to sports. With this in mind, I have ensured the utmost impetus to developing world class sports infrastructure in Tamil Nadu. The Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, The Nehru Indoor Stadium, Hockey Stadium, Tennis Stadium and Aquatic Complex in the heart of the City of Chennai have all drawn the appreciation of the entire sports fraternity of the State. The Seventh South Asian Federation Games, 1995, were hosted by the Government of Tamil Nadu in these world class sports facilities, making Chennai a "Sports Hub" capable of hosting national and international competitions in various disciplines. A sum of 33.60 crore rupees has been sanctioned to create playfield facilities and improve the existing facilities to global standards at the Nehru Indoor Stadium complex and the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium and 4.50 crore rupees has been sanctioned to renovate and create new facilities at the Tennis Stadium at Nungambakkam. A state-of-the-art Centre of Excellence for Sports has been established in Chennai in which 50 talented young children in the age group of 10 to 14 years will be identified and given residential training in various disciplines to groom them into future medalists who will win laurels for the State and the Nation at National and International Sports Meets.

The Tamil Nadu Physical Education and Sports University was established in 2004 during my second tenure over an area spanning 125 acres in Melakottaiyur village in Kancheepuram District. A Sports Science Centre was established in the University at a cost of 2.2 crore rupees. A sum of 9.98 crore rupees has been sanctioned as a one-time-catch-up grant for improving the infrastructure in the University. The University will foster technical excellence in physical education and sports.

In a move to popularize chess and harness the benefits of this game, I have introduced the 'Chess in Schools' program to improve the cognitive skills of students. It is aimed at exposing students, especially those from rural areas, to the rudiments of the game. I have also ordered the establishment of Chess Clubs in all Government and Government aided schools and sanctioned an amount of 39.47 lakh rupees for the same. Chess makes children smarter. It does so by teaching skills like focusing, visualizing, thinking ahead, weighing options, analyzing, thinking in abstract terms, planning and juggling multiple considerations simultaneously. It enhances concentration, patience and perseverance, and also develops creativity, intuition and memory. Precision of thought, intuitive understanding, quick reflexes and tenacity are some of the powerful attributes of this spectacular sport. I envision that, our children in the State of Tamil Nadu - the treasures of the future - will shine forth with maturity and brilliance, learning to accept victory with humility and defeat with grace.

A Hall of Chess has been established at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, Chennai, to impart regular training to aspirants in chess. Cash prizes to the extent of 74 lakh rupees were awarded to 12 chess players of the State who have brought laurels to Tamil Nadu. My Government has extended financial assistance to host the National Chess Championship and sponsored air fare for talented chess players to participate in International Competitions. The quantum of grant to State Sports Associations to host National Championships in Chennai has been enhanced from 65 lakh rupees to 1.30 crore rupees.

To celebrate sports and sportsmanship and to promote the culture of sports in the State, my Government has instituted a first-of-its-kind State-level Chief Minister's Trophy competition in 10 disciplines for which a sum of 8.09 crore rupees has been sanctioned. The prize money of 1 lakh rupees to Gold medal winners, 75,000 rupees to silver medal winners and 50,000 rupees to bronze medal winners in addition to the trophy were handed over by me at a recent function. To establish Sports Hostels in all the Districts in a phased manner, a sum of 6.33 crore rupees has been sanctioned. A total sum of 3.52 crore rupees has been allotted to construct swimming pools in Namakkal, Theni, Thiruvallur and Virudhunagar. In a bid to motivate sports activities in villages, I have sanctioned a sum of 6.26 crore rupees for the year 2013-2014 for the conduct of sports competitions in 3119 village panchayats.

In an effort to incentivize upcoming sports stars of the State, a sum of 1.25 crore rupees has been sanctioned per year to provide need based assistance to 5 elite sports persons at the rate of 25 lakh rupees each per year. The Cash Incentive for achievers in the Olympics, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, South Asian Federation Games, National Games, etc. has been doubled to motivate sports persons. An Olympic Gold medal winner from Tamil Nadu will be awarded 2 crore rupees instead of the earlier 1 crore rupees. These initiatives have to a large extent paved a trail for players from Tamil Nadu to move ahead in the national and international sports arena.

Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand is, quite simply, the greatest sportsman India has ever produced. He has been the epitome of chess in India. Born on 11th December, 1969, in Chennai, Viswanathan Anand has emerged as a role model for aspiring chess players of India. This astoundingly modest personality from Chennai has made us all proud with his resplendent ability to deftly navigate expertly around this complex maze of 64 squares. His love and hunger for mastering this craft is evident in his ceaseless quest for victory. He gained national recognition at an early age, when he won the National Sub-Junior Chess Championship in 1983, at the age of fourteen. In the following year, he became the youngest Indian to be entitled to the International Master Title. He became the National Chess Champion at the age of sixteen, and went on to receive the title twice thereafter. In 1987, Anand won the World Junior Chess Championship, which made him the first Indian to reach that dizzying height. In 1988, Viswanathan Anand became the first Grandmaster of India, winning the International Chess tournament held in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. This achievement won him one of India's most prestigious civilian awards - the Padma Shri. He entered the World Chess Championship competitions in 1993.

He has been feted by the Government – the Rajiv Khel Ratna, Padma Bhushan, Sportstar Millennium Award, Chess Oscar and the Padma Vibhushan sit proudly in his cabinet of honours. Anand is the only Chess player to have won the World Chess Championships in all three formats – knock-out in 2000, tournament in 2007 and classical in 2008. Consistency, versatility and single-minded focus have always been his forte.

I now take this opportunity to welcome the “Mozart of Chess” from Norway, Magnus Carlsen. Armed with youthful vigour, his precocious talents have captured the imagination of chess lovers across the world. He was totally fascinated by chess and became deeply engrossed and involved in chess to the point of obsession from early childhood and by the age of 13, he was an International Grand Master. At the age of 20, he became the youngest number one of the FIDE (Fédération Internationale des Echecs) rating list in history. On February 1, 2013, on the FIDE rating list, he achieved a rating performance of 2872 points, the highest score in world chess history so far. Carlsen has experienced one of the fastest ascents to the elite stratosphere of chess, the pinnacle of which we are all assembled to witness, as he challenges World champion Viswanathan Anand for the world title.

The entire atmosphere here is charged with intellectual voltage as both prepare vigorously for the epochal battle. This event is iconic and historic and Chennai is proud to host it. We, in Chennai, wait with nail biting anticipation. I invoke God's blessings on both the players to realise their ambition and wish them both a long and glorious career for many more years to come.

Thank you.

I declare the FIDE World Championship Match, 2013, open.

-----  
Issued By: - DIPR, Secretariat, Chennai - 9.