

Sport

Dibyendu
atop alone

UBEDA, Jan 24: Grand Master Dibyendu Barua of India continued his winning spree with three points to share the lead with six others after the third round of the Ubeda international chess tournament here Friday, reports PTI.

Indian national champion Abhijit Kunte, who defeated Armenian FIDE Master Gabriel Sargissian in a Sicilian Paulsen game, is on second spot with 2.5 points.

GM Barua faced Sicilian classical variation from American IM Boris Kreiman and simplified the position to win the game in a rook and pawn end game.

National women champion and IWM Anupama Gokhale chose the French defence and met Tarrasch Varian against Mexican candidate GM Julian Estrada, seeded 27th in this event.

Anupama punished her rival for pawn hunting to conclude the game on the 36th move with a pretty queen sacrifice. The Indian, having drawn with a GM and a candidate GM earlier, has set her eyes on WGM norm.

FM Sajandas Joshi of India had equalised with his Slav defence against defending champion GM Filippov but played over-ambitiously and lost the game.

IMs DV Prasad, K Murugan and Lanka Ravi of India, were back with fine victories in the third round, while IM D Kongavel and IM Sekhar Sahu suffered setbacks.

While IWM Mrinalini Kunte opened her account with a win over MR Nur, RV Gokhale blew away a simple win in a king and pawn end game against IM V Gallego of Spain.

New body of BSWA

Sports Reporter

Ataul Haque Mullick and Rezaur Rahman Sohag have been elected president and general secretary of Bangladesh Sports Writers' Association (BSWA) respectively in its annual general meeting held at the NSC conference room on Friday.

The other office-bearers on the 21-member executive committee for 1998-99 are: Salma Ralique (senior vice-president), Mahmud Hossain Khan (vice-president), Mahmudul Hasan Shamim (joint secretary-1), Shahidul Azam (joint secretary-2), Khandaker Ariful Islam (organising secretary), Abdus Shakur (treasurer), Hamidul Islam Sarkar (office secretary) and Sheikh Mohammad Arif (library secretary).



Pakistan has selective Islam

Imran Khan

gains by various individuals or groups.

Hence, it was a miracle I did not become an atheist. The only reason why I did not was the powerful religious influence wielded by my mother on me since my childhood. It was not so much out of conviction but love for her that I stayed a Muslim. However, my Islam was selective, i.e. I accepted only parts of the religion that suited me. Prayers were restricted to

Mecca and I was considered amongst the elite of the country because I could speak English and wore western clothes. Despite periodically shouting Pakistan abad at school functions, I considered my own culture backward and Islam an outdated religion. Amongst our group if anyone talked about religion, prayed or kept a beard he was immediately branded a Mullah. Because of the power of the Western Media, all our heroes were western movie or pop stars. When I went to Oxford already burdened with this hang up from my school days, things didn't get any easier. In University not just Islam but all religions were considered anachronism. Science had replaced religion and if something couldn't be logically proved it did not exist. All supernatural stuff was confined to the movies. Philosophers like Darwin who with his half baked theory of evolution was supposed to have disproved the creation of men and hence religion. Moreover, the European history had an awful experience with religion. The horrors committed by the Christian clergy in the name of God during the Inquisition had left a powerful impact on the western mind. To understand why the West is so keen on secularism, one should go to places like Cordoba in Spain and see torture apparatus used during Spanish Inquisition. Also the persecution of scientists as heretics by the clergy and convinced the Europeans that all religions are regressive.

However, the biggest factor that drove people like me away from religion was the selective Islam practised by most of its preachers. In other words, there was a huge difference between what they practised and what they preached... Also, rather than explaining the philosophy behind the religion, there was an over emphasis on rituals. I feel that humans are different to animals whereas the latter can be drilled, humans need to be intellectually convinced. That is why the Quran constantly appeals to reason. The worst of course, was the exploitation of Islam for political

(To be continued)

AUSSIE OPEN NOTEBOOK

MELBOURNE, Jan 24 (AP):

Pat Rafter served up free beers to several of his compatriots traveling through America when he won the US Open title.

To repay him the same fans have returned home to cheer on Rafter and other Aussies at the same Open.

They were in the stands for Todd Woodbridge's win over No 5 seed Greg Rusedski on Saturday.

"I know a couple of them by name," Woodbridge said. "All in all they're just good tennis fans and young guys — they have been traveling the world picking up a job here and there and they cottoned onto a bit of tennis."

Height wasn't a major factor. Sanchez-Vicario stands 165 centimetres (5 feet, 6 1/2 inches).

BIG HIT: France's Mary Pierce is proving a hit in Melbourne — and it's not just at the Australian Open.

The No 7-ranked Pierce has been spotted around town with her latest beau, American baseball star Roberto Alomar.

The Baltimore Orioles baseballer is in town to watch Pierce at the year's first Grand Slam tennis tournament, and they attended a local ball game on Friday night.

Pierce and Alomar watched the Melbourne Reds-Perth Heat play and stayed on for a half-hour after the game signing autographs and chatting to the Reds officials.

OUT OF THE SPOTLIGHT: With the Williams sisters, Venus and Serena, squaring up on court and hammering it off it, and Anna Kournikova and Martina Hingis also on show, there's little room for the others in the spotlight at the Australian Open.

It was kind of like playing volleyball. They stand very close to the net and return everything. I tried to lob, but it was hard because of the wind, and they are very tall," said Hiraiki, who shared in the mixed doubles title at last year's French Open.

In a second-round match, Hiraiki and Argentina's Mercedes Paz lost 2-6, 6-2, 6-2 to the sisters who are fast rising up the singles rankings.

Not that too many of them are complaining. American Lindsay Davenport, No 2 seed and Olympic singles champion, is 178 centimetres (5-foot-10).

Sheikh and Abdulla Sayeed, Kazi Shahidul Alami and Utpal Chandra Shuvro were elected as members.

UAE can import foreign booters

ABU DHABI, Jan 24: The Emirates Football Association has agreed to let foreigners join local soccer teams, the Gulf Today reported Saturday, says AP.

The 17-year ban on signing foreign players was lifted to improve the quality of local soccer, the English-language daily said.

The decision was announced Friday by the head of the Emirates Football Federation, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

Sunday 25th January
(All programmes are in local time but subject to last minute change.)

BTV

3:00 Opening announcement, Al-Quran, Programme summary

3:10 Recitation from the Bible

3:15 Patriotic Songs 3:20 Cartoon 3:50 Marami 4:00 News

4:30 Open University 5:05 Mahe

Ramadan 6:00 National TV Debate

6:30 News 6:40 Health

Programme 7:25 Mati O Manus

8:00 News in Bangla 8:30

Probaho 9:00 Film Show 10:00

The News 10:30 Today's News

11:15 The News 11:25 Tomorrow's programme summary

11:40 Close down

BBC

6:00 BBC World Headlines

6:05 Weekend World: Crusades

7:00 BBC World Headlines 7:05

Weekend World: Rough Guide to the Americas 8:00 BBC World News

8:30 World Focus: Correspondent 9:00 BBC World News

9:30 Hard Talk 10:00 BBC World News

10:30 This Week 11:00 BBC World News

11:10 India Business Report, 24 Hours

CHANNEL V

6:30 V News 6:45 Freestyle 7:00 Turn On TV 7:30 Rewind VJ Sophie 8:30 Turn On T [V] 9:00 BPL Oye! 12:00:00

Winner Mangta Hai 12:30 Liberty First Day First Show 1:00 Videocon Flashback 2:00 Uday Singh 2:30 Turn On T [V] 4:00 [V] Hour Special 5:30 Turn On T [V] 6:30pm Simply South 7:00 Rexona Deo Out There 7:30 The Indian Top 10 8:30 Malibu Jammin VJ Sophie 9:00 Speak Easy 9:30 70's Rewind VJ Sophie 10:00 Kwalli Walls Live Legendary, Eric Clapton & Friends 11:00 Turn On T [V] 2:30 V News 3:00 By Demand VJ Trey 3:30 Turn On T [V] 4:00 Pepsi Chinese Top 20 4:30 V News 5:00 Pepsi Chinese Top 20 Continued

STAR PLUS

6:30am Nainad 7:30 Good Morning India 8:30 So Let's Yahoo 9:30 Chandrakanta 10:30 Janata Ki Adalat 11:00 Maal Hai To Tai 11:30 Amul India Show 12:00noon Master Card Family Fortunes 12:30 India Business Week 1:00 Post Cards From Pakistan 1:30 Good Food Guide 2:00 The Road Show 2:30 Festival Film Hindi Film "Arvind Desai Ki Ajeeb Dastan" 5:00 Chandrakanta 6:00 Plus Preview 6:30 Maneka's Ark 7:00 Amul India Show 7:30 Priya Tendulkar

STAR SPORTS

6:30 V News 6:45 Freestyle 7:00 Turn On TV 7:30 Rewind VJ Sophie 8:30 Turn On T [V] 9:00 BPL Oye! 12:00:00

Show 8:30 Bakeman's Ooh La La 9:35 Kohra 10:00 Kabhi Kabhi 10:30 Star News Sunday 11:30 Janata Ki Adalat 12:00 Special Session 12:30 Star News Sunday 1:30 India Business Week 2:00 BBC Documentary: All Our Children 3:00 Sports Movie Classics: The Man Who Knew Too Much 5:00 Burke's Law

(Series 1) 8:00 Asia Sport Show 8:30 WWF: Live Wire 9:30 Inside Cricket 10:00 Golf: Omega Tour 11:00 All Pro Sports Series American Football 12:30 Soccer Spanish League Highlights 12:00 Watersports World 1:00 Sports India 1:30 Motorsports Max Power 2:30 Volvo World Cup Showjumping Wodonga Australia 3:30 The Road To Nagano 4:00 Korea Open Badminton: Korea Open '98 8:00 NBA Basketball Los Angeles Lakers vs. Seattle SuperSonics 11:00 Asian Football Show 12:00 Volo World Cup Showjumping Wodonga Australia 1:00 Korea Open Badminton: Korea Open '98

20 Continued

20 Continued

STAR MOVIES

7:30pm Family: Bach And Broccoli PG (Hindi Subtitles) 9:30 Family: Bachelor of Hearts 11:00 The Baskerville Ghost Story 11:30 Comedy: Young Frankenstein 15 (Hindi Subtitles) 1:30 Action: Winners And Sinners 15 (Hindi Subtitles) 3:30 Family: The Secret of Roan Inish 12:50 Horror: The Shout 15:30 Classic: Adam And Evelyn 12:00 Family: Bye Bye Love 15:20 Film Club: The Raggedy Rainway 18:20 Action: The Himalayan 18 (Arabic Subtitles) 4:00 Action: The Boys in Company C 18 6:00 Comedy: Girl In The CLINIC 10:05 Ptv Gold 10:30 ENGLISH FILM: DARKWING DUCK 10:55 MAST MAST SAIYNA 11:00 KHABRAN 11:10 SPORTS CLINIC 10:05 Ptv Gold 10:30 ENGLISH FILM: DARKWING DUCK 10:55 MAST MAST SAIYNA 11:00 KHABRAN 11:10 SPORTS HOUR 12:05 BisQasmi 12:05

9:30 Qasmi Hahani 12:55

9:30 Qasmi Hahani 12:55

Aussie-Indian 2nd Test venue may be shifted

CALCUTTA, Jan 24: The second Test between India and Australia in the coming series in March is likely to be shifted to Calcutta from Cuttack, reports PTI.

The venue change for the match scheduled from March 18 to 22 is being decided after the Barabati Stadium was found not up to the mark by the board-appointed pitch committee.

The board, wiser after the Indo-pitch fiasco on December 25 which forced abandonment of the second India-Sri Lanka one-dayer, has decided to implement the recommendation and has chosen the Eden Gardens, one of the venues when the itinerary was initially drawn up.

The Australian board is also unhappy with Cuttack. Two of its officials are coming to inspect the arrangements ahead of the tour involving three Tests and a triangular series.

ACB expressed reservations as there was no quality hotel in Cuttack. Hitherto international teams stay in Bhubaneswar and travel for an hour to reach the match venue everyday and spend as much time to return in the evening.

The last international match at Cuttack was between Sri Lanka and the Board President's XI in November last. Sri Lanks were lodged in Cuttack, but shifted to a Bhubaneswar hotel finding facilities inadequate.

The India-Australia tie in the Titan Cup in 1996 was washed out while the last Test in Cuttack was the final match against New Zealand in the 1995-96 series.

Basuki being pragmatic

MELBOURNE, Jan 24: Indonesian tennis star Yayuk Basuki fears the Southeast Asian currency crisis might halt advances made by players from the region, reports AP.

Basuki joined Thailand's Tamarine Tanasugarn in the fourth round of the Australian Open on Saturday with a 6-4, 6-4 win over No 14 seed Dominique van Roost of Belgium.

Currencies in both nations have received a battering and Indonesia's rupiah had stumbled 30 per cent fall against the United States dollar last week.

Tennis can bring players enormous riches — Basuki has made more than 1.3 million dollars in prize money — but it also drains the resources of those starting out. Newcomers need sponsors to pay for the constant travel.

Basuki, who has a ranking of 24, feels she is cushioned against the economic woes of her homeland, but believes it will affect others coming through.

"Right now, it doesn't bother me because I'm travelling around and my ranking is already up there," Basuki, 27, said. "But I know it's going to affect things a lot for somebody who is still ranked at 300 or 400 because for them it's a case of still trying to get more sponsors to pay their loans."

There are 10 Indonesian women on the rankings with Liza Andriyani the next highest at 380.

Basuki, who will make her first fourth round Grand Slam appearance outside Wimbledon, where she achieved the stage from 1992 to 1995, said she loved watching Asian players succeed in top class tennis.

But she believes it is tougher for Asians, except Japanese, to overcome the limitations of their birthplace.

The former world No 1 had slumped to 122 on the end of 1997 rankings but believes he is getting back to his best.

He was, inevitably, asked about Shields' input.

"According to the media she's the reason I got to No 1 and she's the reason why I fell and now she is the reason why I came back — so God bless Brooke," Agassi said.

"She is the consummate professional. She is very dedicated to what she does, she will never accomplish something based on effort.

"So it inspires me to a lot of levels — I think that's why I married her."

Kipketer hospitalised

LISBON, Jan 24: World 800 metres record-holder Wilson Kipketer is in hospital in southern Portugal suffering from malaria, his coach Slavomir Novak said on Friday.

The Kenyan-born Dane, who had a sensational year on the track in 1997, caught the disease during a recent visit to his native country, Novak told Reuters.

Kipketer has been in the Sanata Maria Health Centre in the Algarve resort town of Faro for the past five days, and Novak said.

"She is the consummate professional. She is very dedicated to what she does, she will never accomplish something based on effort.