

Narayanan Srinath Keeps Asian Junior Title

International Master Narayanan Srinath retained his Asian Junior title while J Saranya, finished runner-up in the Asian Junior girls' championship that concluded at Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates on today.

Srinath had won the Asian Junior at Tashkent in June 2012 and made his maiden Grand Master norm. He is also a former World Under-12 champion having won it at Belfort in France in 2005. Winning this title again in back-to-back years gives Srinath another Grand Master norm. He is certain to become a Grand Master.

Srinath finished first and Sahaj Grover of Delhi took second, both remaining undefeated. Top seed Grand Master Salem Saleh of UAE finished third losing to Srinath and to a Vietnamese. Srinath dominated the contest winning seven games and drawing two.

The girls' event was dominated by the Vietnamese and was more exciting. All the players including the champion suffered at least one defeat. Vo Thi Kim Phung of Vietnam won this event ahead of top seed and country mate Nguyen Thi Mai Hung on seven points from nine games.

Woman FIDE Master J Saranya finished with the silver medal and had the satisfaction of being the only player to defeat the champion. Saranya gains over 10 Elo and had the highest tie-break on 6.5 points among three players. Defending champion Ivana Furtado of Goa slipped to sixth place.

Sharjah which had organised the world junior in 1985 staged the Asian Junior smoothly. In the Asian Junior blitz chess, Anurag Mhamal and Grover tied for first on 8/9 and the former became champion on better tie-break score. Vo Thi Kim Phung (Vie) won the Asian Junior girls blitz championship also.

Final placings:

Boys: 1 N Srinath (Ind) 8/9; 2 Sahaj Grover (Ind) 7; 3-6. Salem A.R. Saleh (UAE), Anurag Mhamal (Ind), Mehdi Hosseinpour (Iri), Tran Tuan Minh (Vie) 6 each; 7 Debashis Das (Ind) 5.5...34 players.

Girls: 1 Vo Thi Kim Phung (Vie) 7/9; 2-4. J Saranya (Ind), Nguyen Thi Mai Hung (Vie), Diana Assaubayeva (Kaz) 6.5 each; 5-6. Sarvinoz Kurbonboeva (Uzb), Ivana Furtado (Ind) 6 each; 7-10. Rucha Pujari, Riya Savant (both Ind), Dorsa Derakhshani (Iri), Farida Khursanova (Uzb) 5.5 each....36 players.