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1. Indian 3-year-old now youngest rated chess player in the world: How FIDE ratings work**Introduction**

Young chess players have made the headlines in recent years, with the likes of Indian grandmasters Gukesh and Praggnanandhaa R becoming major players in their teens. Now, an Indian prodigy, Anish Sarkar, has become the world's youngest chess player to be ranked by the International

Chess Federation — all at the age of three.

Kolkata-based Sarkar was enrolled at the Dhanuka Dhunseri Dibyendu Barua Chess Academy in March. Subsequently, he competed in the Under-9 tournament and finished 24th, defeating two rated opponents. In an Under-13 state event, he faced five rated players to get into the official rankings, released by the Fédération Internationale des Échecs (FIDE) or the International Chess Federation.

He currently has a rating of 1555 and his world rank (of active players) is 1,46,736. What exactly are ratings and rankings and what do chess players need to do to get recognised by FIDE?

Playing in FIDE tournaments for ratings

According to the FIDE Qualification Commission, players get official ratings by participating in FIDE-rated tournaments. It says that FIDE organises very few tournaments itself; mostly only global events such as the World Championship, its qualifiers and other World Championships. Most FIDE-rated tournaments will be tournaments within a country's federation. Either the federation organises them, or independent organisations do so with its permission. Usually, federation websites have tournament calendars clearly indicating which tournaments are FIDE-rated and which are not.

To become a FIDE-recognised tournament, certain regulations on time limits for a game, a minimum rating for players and other criteria must be met.

Also, to be included in the rating list, a player must be registered through a national chess federation which is a member of FIDE, unless otherwise approved by FIDE Council. The federation must not be temporarily or permanently excluded from membership at the time.

Types of ratings

The commission's website adds, "There are three possible types of rating you might achieve: Standard, Rapid and Blitz, which reflect different game lengths. In order to get a Standard rating, you will need to play at least 5 games against players who are already rated, and score at least ½ point (a draw) in those games."

FIDE regulations, updated earlier this year, also stated, "A rating for a player new to the list shall be published when it is based on at least 5 games against rated opponents. This need not be met in one tournament. Results from other tournaments played within consecutive rating periods of not more than 26 months are pooled to obtain the initial rating. The rating must be at least 1400."

How is this rating arrived at? The FIDE website says, "The FIDE Rating system is a numerical system in which fractional scores are converted to rating differences and vice versa. Its function is to produce measurement information of the best statistical quality."

Currently, FIDE awards chess's highest honour to a player who is able to achieve a FIDE Classical or Standard rating of 2,500, plus three Grandmaster norms. These norms are defined by a set of complex and rigorous rules regarding tournaments, games, and players, set out in the FIDE Title Regulations.

Relevance: GS Prelims

Source: Indian Express

2. SC issues guidelines to curb illegal demolitions: what it said, what do state laws say?

Introduction

SC Pan India Guidelines for demolition of Properties: The Supreme Court recently laid down guidelines to curb demolition of people's homes and private properties by the government "only on the ground that they are accused of a crime".



A Bench of Justices B R Gavai and K V Viswanathan held that such actions violated the rights of the accused, including the presumption of innocence, unfairly punished the other tenants who have not been accused of anything, and violated the right to shelter under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. What are the SC's guidelines on demolitions? The guidelines include a mandatory 15-day notice period for the tenants to either challenge the order or see to their affairs before being evicted, with the notice

indicating the reasons for demolition and the date of hearing to challenge the action. The court also held that violation of these guidelines could lead to contempt proceedings and along with compensation, the officials ordering the demolition could be asked to pay for the restitution of the property themselves.

The court was hearing applications challenging house demolitions carried out by the state governments in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. In both cases, demolitions took place after Muslim tenants allegedly committed crimes that triggered communal tensions.

The applications were tagged with a petition filed by the Jamiat-Ulama-i-Hind challenging demolitions carried out in Jahangirpuri in Delhi in 2022. Since then, demolition drives in other states have been challenged as well.

This is what local laws in these states say about demolitions.

RAJASTHAN

On August 17, the Udaipur Municipal Corporation demolished a tenant's house that had allegedly "encroached" on forest land.

The demolition took place after the tenant's 16-year-old son was arrested for allegedly stabbing his classmate who belonged to another community, which led to communal tensions in the city.

Notices were issued by the Udaipur Municipal Corporation and the Regional Forest Officer, Udaipur West, on the previous night, stating that the house had illegally encroached on forest land.

Section 245 of the Rajasthan Municipalities Act, 2009 ("Encroachment or obstruction upon public land") says anyone who encroaches upon public land can be punished with up to three years in prison and a fine of up to Rs 50,000.

The civic body can also seize and confiscate such property. However, under Section 245(10), the alleged offender must be first served notice in writing with the grounds on which the property is being confiscated. Also, the offender must be given an opportunity to make a written representation "within such reasonable time" that is specified in the notice, as well as an opportunity to be heard.

Also, under Section 91 of the Rajasthan Forest Act, 1953, only a Tehsildar can pass an order to evict a "trespasser" and order that the land in question be seized if it is being illegally occupied.

MADHYA PRADESH

In June, the ancestral home of a labourer was demolished by the district administration after his son was accused of placing the severed head of a "bovine" in the premises of a local temple. The police registered an FIR against the applicant's son on June 14, and demolished a part of his house on the same day, allegedly without serving notice.

Under Section 187 of the Madhya Pradesh Municipalities Act, 1961, the Municipal Council can "remove, alter, or pull down" a building if it has been constructed or altered without permission from the council.

However, the Act states that notice must be served to the owner first to show sufficient cause. The building can be demolished only if the owner “fails to show sufficient cause” in response to the notice.

UTTAR PRADESH

In June 2022, the Jamiat-Ulama-i-Hind had approached the Supreme Court to challenge demolitions carried out in Uttar Pradesh in the aftermath of the violent protests that had followed certain remarks made by then BJP leader Nupur Sharma about the Prophet during a television debate.

Demolitions in Uttar Pradesh are governed under the Uttar Pradesh Urban Planning and Development Act, 1973. Section 27 of the Act (“Order of demolition of building”) deals with cases where land has been developed without permission from the Vice-Chairman of the UP Development Authority (established by the state government). In such instances, an order of removal will be sent to the owner and the development shall be removed by demolition “within such period not being less than fifteen days and more than forty days” from the date the order is issued.

The owner can appeal against the order to the chairman of the development authority, who can either allow or dismiss the appeal. According to Section 27(4), this decision “shall be final and shall not be questioned in any Court”.

DELHI

The original proceedings at the Supreme Court began following communal violence in Delhi’s Jahangirpuri in April 2022. A procession for Hanuman Jayanti that took place on April 16 sparked communal tensions in the area, leading to stone pelting and violence.

On April 20, the North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) launched a demolition drive to remove “illegal encroachments” in the area. On the same day, the Jamiat-Ulama-i-Hind filed a plea seeking a stay on the demolition drive, which was granted by the Supreme Court.

During the hearings, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta referred to the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957 (DMC Act). Under Sections 321 and 322 of the Act, the commissioner of the municipal corporation can remove without notice, if placed without permission, “any stall, chair, bench, box, ladder, bale or other thing whatsoever”, or “any article whatsoever hawked or exposed for sale on any public street or...any vehicle, package, box, or any other thing in or on which such article is placed”.

Under Section 343, the commissioner can order demolition if a building has been erected without permission, or work has commenced which violates provisions of the DMC Act. The commissioner can direct that the “work” in question be demolished within 5-15 days.

However, the commissioner must give the individual “reasonable opportunity” to show why a demolition order should not be issued. A demolition order can also be appealed before the Appellate Tribunal established under the DMC Act.

HARYANA

Days after communal violence flared up in the Muslim-majority Nuh district of Haryana during the Brajmandal Jalabhishek Yatra in August 2023, state authorities demolished 443 structures. In an affidavit submitted to the Punjab & Haryana High Court, the district administration said 354 people were affected by the demolitions, 283 of whom were Muslims, and the rest were Hindus.

Demolitions in the state are governed by Section 261 of the Haryana Municipal Corporation Act, 1994. The provision shares many similarities with Section 343 of the DMC Act. But the individual has less time to begin demolishing the building or “work” — it is only three days (compared to five under the DMC Act) — and it is not specified when the window will shut (compared to the maximum 15 days available in Delhi).

Like in the DMC Act, however, the owner of the building/ “work” must be provided with “reasonable opportunity” to argue why a demolition order should not be issued, and they may appeal a demolition order before a district judge in that jurisdiction.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: Indian Express

3. COP29 begins in Azerbaijan: Everything you need to know

Introduction



The 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) kicked off on November 11 in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan. Delegates from about 200 countries, business leaders, climate scientists, Indigenous Peoples, journalists, and various other experts and stakeholders are expected to attend the summit, which will last until November 22.

The primary goal of COP29 is to bring together countries to develop a shared plan for curbing further global warming. It will also focus on scaling up climate finance to help developing nations tackle the adverse effects of climate change.

What is COP?

Conference of Parties, or COP, is the supreme governing body of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) — an international treaty, signed in 1992, that has provided a basis for climate negotiations. The UNFCCC commits parties (countries which have joined the treaty) to act together to stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations “at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human-induced) interference with the climate system”. Currently, there are 198 parties (197 countries plus European Union) to the UNFCCC, constituting near universal membership.

One of the significant tasks for the COP is to “review the national communications and emission inventories” submitted by member states, according to the UNFCCC’s website.

"Based on this information, the COP assesses the effects of the measures taken by Parties and the progress made in achieving the ultimate objective of the Convention," the website said.

Every year since 1995 — except in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic — the parties come together to discuss and agree on international climate policy. The summit is known as the United Nations Climate Change Conference.

What are some of the milestones of COP?

The first major breakthrough came at COP3 in Kyoto in 1997 when the parties adopted the Kyoto Protocol. The international treaty placed obligations on the set of rich and industrialised countries to cut their greenhouse gas emissions by assigned amounts. "Targets varied by country but averaged at a 4.2% reduction by 2012 below 1990 levels," according to a report in the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).

With the Kyoto Protocol set to expire in 2012, at COP15 in Copenhagen in 2009, parties tried to establish a successor to the treaty. However, the attempt failed. Instead, the summit ended with the Copenhagen Accord, which included the 2 degree Celsius warming limit and reference to the 1.5 degree Celsius goal. It also comprised the idea of developed countries providing funding for mitigation and adaptation.

Three years later, at COP21 in Paris, 196 parties adopted the landmark Paris Agreement — a legally binding international treaty to limit global temperatures to below 2 degree Celsius, and preferably below 1.5 degree Celsius. The parties also agreed to submit their climate action plans, known as nationally determined contributions (NDCs), by 2020.

The next milestone came during COP26 in Glasgow 2021 in the form of the Glasgow Pact. The parties made a commitment to "phase down" the use of coal (this language was weakened from "phase out" late in the negotiations) and to phase out "inefficient fossil fuel subsidies". This was the first time that a UN climate agreement explicitly mentioned coal.

At last year's COP28 in Dubai, a Loss and Damage fund was officially launched. The fund is meant to provide financial help to countries struck by climate disasters.

What are some of the criticisms of COP?

Over the years, the biggest criticism has been the COP's failure to provide climate finance to developing nations. For instance, in 2009, the wealthiest countries — which are disproportionately responsible for the climate crisis — promised to raise every year from 2020 for developing nations to help them reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of the climate crisis. They failed to deliver on their promise.

To make matters worse, a 2021 report by UN Climate Change, the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), showed that developing countries would require a total of about \$6 trillion annually between then and 2030 just to implement their climate action plans. This amount is far more than what developed nations had promised in 2009.

Experts have also pointed out that parties have not been doing enough to limit global warming to 1.5 degree Celsius. During COP28, an analysis by the International Energy Agency (IEA) said the world is on track to breach the threshold, despite pollution-slashing pledges made by dozens of countries at the summit.

What should be expected from COP29?

Climate finance is at the top of the agenda of COP29. The parties are negotiating the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG), a new amount that must be mobilised by developed countries every year from 2025 onward to finance climate action in developing countries. It has to be more than the \$100 billion that developed countries, collectively, had promised to raise every year from 2020.

However, talks over the NCQG in recent months have been deeply divided. Parties disagree on almost every element of the fund, including "the amount of money that needs to be raised, who should contribute, what types of finance should feed into it, what it should fund and what period of time it should cover", according to a report by Carbon Brief. It remains to be seen how member states finalise the NCQG.

On Monday, COP29 adopted standards for the creation of carbon credits under Article 6.4 of the Paris Agreement, breaking a years-long deadlock and allowing countries to emit greenhouse gases if they offset emissions elsewhere.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper III; Environment

Source: Indian Express