

Elections for Gold members' representatives on the ECF Council

Dear ECF Gold Members and Gold Junior Members,

My name is Abu Hasan and I am a Gold Member. My membership number is ME000139. I am a candidate for Gold Members' representative on the ECF Council.

Throughout my life initially in Bangladesh and for the last 20 years, in Britain, I have been a keen and passionate chess player. When I moved to West London I joined Uxbridge Chess Club and very shortly afterwards joined the ECF and played in Local Chess Leagues. Currently I am a below 100 graded chess player.

My professional life in Bangladesh was as a Journalist. After a number of years in journalism I accepted an appointment as the Press Minister at the Bangladesh High Commission in London, followed by journalist roles in the flourishing Bengali media in Britain. A career change then led me to become an Immigration Adviser and a conference organiser. My wife is also a journalist. We have a daughter and a son, both married who lives with their families in Austria and London.

Since retiring a few years ago my passion for chess has grown further, both as a player and as a founding member of a new Club. I collaborated with leading members of Bengali Community to set up in East London, the British Bangla Chess Association (BBCA). Through this Club we have created new opportunities for enthusiastic chess players originating from Bangladesh and many other countries, many of whom were not involved with chess clubs in their locality, to play an active role in a new club and participate in tournaments. My role is 'Chief Adviser'. I lead on the promotion of the Club, produce publicity and, with colleagues, develop the programme of weekly meetings and monthly tournaments. Within a very short time the BBCA, largely through my role, has become a thriving inclusive multi-cultural chess club. Chess players from many cultural backgrounds, nationalities and faiths have become active members of the club.

For example, in November 2015, we held an ungraded tournament with handsome prize money which attracted strong chess players from across London and beyond. In my role I mobilised generous support from the London Bengali Community. Over 120 players participated in Open, Major and Junior sections. Former British Chess Champion GM Mathew Sadler, Hungarian GM Tamas Fodor and WIM Natasha Regan's participation in this ungraded tournament encouraged BBCA members and supporters to move forward and organise such events every year. Since 2015, BBCA has organised annual chess tournaments, providing hospitality to all participants. Since 2017, FIDE rated annual tournaments are being organised by BBCA. We have also launched a monthly ECF graded tournament since January 2019, which is now suspended due to the ongoing pandemic. But BBCA has quickly switched to online chess and I have played a major role to make the BBCA online platform as hub of quality chess players. Currently we are organising three events per week- Sunday 5+2 Blitz Arena, Thursday 3+3 Blitz Arena, and Monday 5+0 Swiss Tournament.

As a captain I have been leading a BBCA U 125 graded team in the London Chess League and as well as leading another team in Division 3 of the newly set up Summer Chess League, jointly organised by Battersea and Hammersmith Chess Club. I also take part in the SUCCU Championship, an inter-county league, on behalf of Middlesex CCA. I play for both U120 and U140 teams as and when required.

I fully support the ECF's strategy to expand its membership base. The example of the British Bangla Chess Association demonstrates the huge potential of helping to achieving this through expanding its involvement in black and ethnic minority communities, many of whom originate from countries with a chess heritage as strong as and sometimes stronger than in Britain and Europe.

Chair of Council Michael Farthing has encouraged members to put themselves forward for election commenting that "It is very healthy for the democracy of the ECF that we have plenty of candidates". I fully endorse the Chair; to participate in this democratic process is really important to me.

Now let me take the opportunity to urge you to cast your valuable vote in favour of me to elect me as your representative to the ECF Council. If elected, I will do my best to serve the ECF as a Council Representative.

Abu Hasan
Gold Member
ME000139