

hit on her right eye.

Kinoshita (Jpn) bt Beyza Saracoglu (Tur) 3-2.

Karakoyun (Tur) 5-0, Georgia O'Connor (Eng) bt Niharika Gonella (Ind) 5-0.

Praggnanandhaa stuns Awonder, gains maiden GM norm

JUNIOR WORLD CHESS

SPORTS BUREAU
TARVISIO (ITALY)

Twelve-year-old R. Praggnanandhaa weaved a checkmating net around higher-rated USA's Awonder Liang in 79 moves and achieved his maiden Grandmaster norm with a round to spare after the eighth round of the World junior (under-20) chess here on Tuesday.

The world's youngest International Master now needs two more norms before March 10, 2018 to replace Russia's Sergey Karjakin as the youngest-ever Grandmaster. In the event of Praggnanandhaa emerging a clear champion (without being tied) in the 11-round contest here, he would claim the Grandmaster's title that comes with the crown.

As things stand, the 27th seeded Praggnanandhaa is sharing the second spot with 11th seeded Russian Kirill Alekseenko at 6.5 points, half a point behind Norwegian Aryan Tari, seeded five. Praggnanandhaa plays black



R. Praggnanandhaa.

• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

against Tari in the ninth round. Two-time National champion M. Karthikeyan raced past compatriot GM Shardul Gagare to reach six points, like seven others.

Aravindh Chithambaram (5.5) drew with Russia's Alexander Trapishko to share the 12th spot.

Eighth round results (Indians unless stated): Open: R. Praggnanandhaa (6.5) bt Awonder Liang (USA, 5.5); M. Karthikeyan (6) bt Shardul Gagare (5); Alexander Trapishko (Rus, 5.5) drew with Aravindh Chithambaram

(5.5); Vaibhav Suri (5.5) bt Johan-Sebasitan Christiansen (Nor, 4.5); S.L. Narayanan (5) bt Alisher Begmuratov (Uzb, 4.5); Alexey Sarana (Rus, 5) bt Krishna Teja (4); Alan Pichot (Arg, 3.5) lost to Sidhant Mohapatra (4.5); Nie Xingyang (Chn, 3.5) lost to Harsha Bharathakoti (4.5); Nikola Nikolovski (Mkd, 4) drew with Raunak Sadhwani (4); Felix Toumainen (Swe, 3) lost to Mohammad Nubairshah Shaikh (4); Mihail Nikitenko (Blr, 4) bt Kumar Gaurav (3); Tarini Goyal (2.5) lost to Dincer Tasdogen (Tur, 3.5).

Girls: R. Vaishali (5.5) drew with Yu Jennifer (USA, 6); Zhu Jiner (Chn, 5.5) drew with Aakanksha Hagawane (5.5); Sarasadat Khademalsharieh (Iri, 4.5) drew with K. Priyanka (5); Uurtsaikh Uuriintuya (Mgl, 5) bt Parnali Dharia (4); Natalie Kanakova (Cze, 5) bt Arpita Mukherjee (4); M. Mahalakhmi (4.5) bt Denise Trippold (Aut, 3.5); Pratyusha Bodda (4.5) bt Evaggelia Petraki (Gre, 3.5); G. Lasya (4.5) bt Benedetto Desiree (Ita, 3); Barbosa Lariaa Ichimura (Bra, 3) lost to Saina Salonika (4); Rutumbara Bidhar (4) bt Jovana Srdanovic (Srb, 3).