

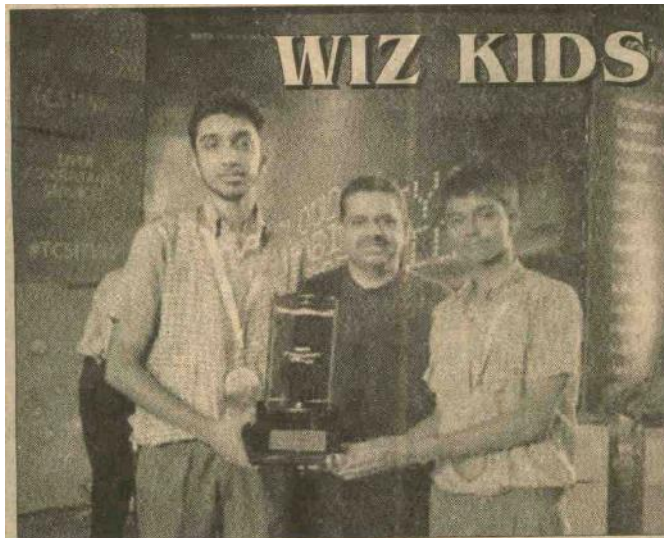
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Headline: Wiz Kids



THE TCS IT Wiz was held recently in August at the Kala Mandir auditorium. Over 1000 students from various schools in the eastern zone participated in the quiz this year. The event was organised by Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) an IT services, consulting and business solutions firm based in India.

The ambience at the venue was filled with the excitement of the lively school children. Their guardians cheered the participants while the quizmaster

'Pickbrain' kept the crowd entertained with witty comments and jokes. The six schools which participated in this year's contest and the teams included: Syed Haque and Shreyan Bakshi, DPS Ruby Park, Kolkata; Shuvam B and Anirudh Agarwal, Don Bosco, Park Circus, Kolkata; Ananda Majumdar and Sajjan Parinda, Sudhir Memorial School, Kolkata; Syed Abdullah and Shantanu Kumar, Motilal Nehru School, Jamshedpur; Shadan Kalam and Adnan

Azmat, Kerala Samajam Model School, Jamshedpur; and Anirban Paul and Md.Nafees, Loyola School, Jamshedpur

Shadan Kalam & Adnan Azmat from Kerala Samajam Model School, Jamshedpur school won the title after a grueling contest which saw schools from both Kolkata and Jamshedpur participating this time around. The prizes were distributed by Prof. Ajoy Kumar Ray, Director of Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology and Mr. Ajoyendra Mukherjee, Executive Vice President and Global Head, Human Resources, TCS.

The regional champions won an iPad Air each, while the runners-up Anirban Paul & Mohammad Nafees from Loyola School, Jamshedpur school won an iPad mini each and a specially designed trophy and medals. The six finalists also received some prizes from TCS ranging from space pack, sippers, earphones, USB pen drives, speakers, and more. A few class eight students won the prize for seventh place in the competition.

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Meet the quizmaster

GIRI Balasubramaniam popularly known as 'Pickbrain', has been hosting TCS IT Wiz since 1999. Known for his distinctive style of quizzing, Giri's sense of humour and approachable nature has earned him several accolades. Giri holds seven Limca records for quizzing achievements and has hosted more than 1500 shows across 58 destinations of India. He has also hosted quiz shows in USA, Sri Lanka, Singapore and the Middle East.

How interested are today's schoolchildren about quizzes?

Quizzing today is an integral part of our educational framework, especially with CCE based learning and assessments being the order of the day. Students view quizzing as a fun way of learning new things, so for them it is a very attractive event.

How much has the quizzing scene changed over the last 30 years in India?

Quizzing has changed and moved on perhaps similar to how we have moved on from writing letters to tweeting. Quizzing

today, much like the Twitter or Facebook generation is about current happenings, quick thinking and also great (read unbelievable) prizes compared to my school quizzing days. Quizzing, three decades ago was a platform to test one's knowledge, today is a forum for collaborative and collective learning.

Do you expect the quizzing scene to evolve in the near future?

The use and advent of technology will make quizzing evolve continuously. The TCS IT Wiz was the first ever in India to move away from simple powerpoint based quizzes to using gamification as a tool. This is done using animations to power the questions and make the quiz more gripping for everyone. The advent of apps will also see more quizzing on handheld devices that would enable 'learning on the move'.

How good is the prospect of quizzes in Kolkata?

Kolkata is one amazing city that has adapted to every change that quizzing



has brought in, simply because of their love for reading and passion for quizzing. I have often said it is a delight for any quizmaster to host a quiz in Kolkata and a feeling of guilt when you charge for it.

Are any steps being taken to promote the quiz culture in India?

Schools and colleges across India do take a lot of interest in quizzing. Infact, the

growing trend across India is to have quizzes as part of even corporate conferences as a 'fun learning session' which is excellent. It would be fantastic if the government of our country recognises quizzing as a sport, played with the mind. It can then gain the traction and popularity that a chess enjoys today. Maybe its time India gave the world another sport.

Any particularly memorable moments or experiences as a quizmaster?

About a month ago I was at the Mumbai airport, waiting to board my flight. Standing next to me was a very well

known Bollywood actress.

A young boy, in his teens was soon walking towards us. I assumed he would seek her autograph.

He walked past her, reached me and said "Pickbrain, can I have selfie with you?". I obliged, smiled and realised India has changed.

sourav majumdar