

# 'IT'S MY VERDICT

'Another great edition of The Times of India's NIE Fundamental Quiz' is what I tell myself as thoughts begin race through my mind. Almost like a shadow to the first thought is the second. 'What was

great about it', I ask as I enter the lounge at the airport. Just then a gentleman asks me 'You are Pickbrain right?'. I say 'Yes'. He continues, 'So, who won today?'. I ask him how he knew about the

quiz and he says, 'My son was there'. We talk for a few minutes about what I liked about the quiz and that in many ways helped me gather my thoughts. Let me now share those with all of you.

**1** The montessori of Hyderabad Quizzing: The first thing that touched me was the large number of teams (especially at the Junior Quiz) that raised their hands when I asked 'How many of you are taking part in a quiz for the first time in your life'. This quiz by NIE is in many ways the montessori of Hyderabad Quizzing - it is the starting block for many youngsters who will go on to become not just good quizzers but begin to appreciate information beyond their academics, which is so important in the modern world we live in.

**2** The Growing Base: A few years ago in this very column, I recall observing that the same schools tend to qualify repeatedly at Hyderabad. I am glad this has changed. Several new schools have started emerging on the quizzing scene of this city, which is healthy. This fosters an environment of competitiveness and makes the good strive to be better.

**3** Teacher Involvement: The third thing I must appreciate is the involvement and enthusiasm shown by the teachers who came with the kids. They were so involved that I was worried if they would blurt out the answer at times. Knowledge transformation to kids can be very effective happen when teachers facilitate the learning process and this is where I see an opportunity for Hyderabad schools. I urge the Principals to use these teachers to make the kids more inquisitive and informed.

**4** Quality of Answers: This is something that stumped me in both quizzes. What perhaps went unnoticed in all the excitement was that hardly any question remained unanswered. If the teams on stage did not know it, there was certainly someone in the audience ready with the answer.

**5** Girl Power: The final take away for me this year, is the emergence of so many girls in the finals for the first time (I think) outnumbering the boys. Journalists have often questioned me across the country on why girls do so well in the exams and boys do better at sports.



While all the above sounds good was there anything that we should be concerned about. Two things come to my mind and is something that schools should address.

It would be wonderful if the schools can have more quiz shows at their own schools. A good intra-school quiz culture is something Hyderabad lacks in comparison to cities like Kolkata, Bangalore, Pune etc.

The second concern for me is the knowledge levels of our children about our own country seem shallow. This was evident at the quiz both in the prelim and at times during the finals. It is our duty to increase the India Quotient in every child.

At the end of the day, everyone had fun and in the process learnt a lot of new things as well. Congratulations to all the finalists and all the winners. Until we meet again....Keep Quizzing.

Pickbrain