

NUS teams dominate quiz final

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Winners of the Tata Crucible 2013 was the team of Rohan Naidu and Abhimanyu from National University of Singapore. Here in the picture they are with Citibank's Vikram Sud and the quiz master Giri Balasubramaniam.

Do you know what is 1283, of which only 1,283 copies exist in the world? Or what famous term Estee Lauder's chairman Leonard Lauder coined to describe increased cosmetic sales in the recession of early 2000?

Eight teams at the seventh edition of the Tata Crucible final in Singapore had to work out these and more such tricky questions, which made for a riveting quiz session on Nov 11. The final was held at the National University of Singapore's (NUS) University Cultural Centre.

At the end of the 45-minute final, NUS' Rohan Naidu and Abhimanyu Sarvagayam emerged champions.

They received prize money of \$7,000 and will now take on winners from the Tata Crucible's editions in the UK and India in the International Finals next year.

They will be joined in the finals by the Singapore competition's runners- up Shivam Bhardwaj and Karan Prasad, also from NUS, who walked away with \$3,000 in prize money.

This year's final in Singapore was dominated by teams from NUS, six of which made it to the eight-team finals. The other two teams to make it to the finals were from Nanyang Technological University (NTU) and Singapore Management University (SMU).

The quiz master for Tata Crucible was Mr Giri Balasubramaniam, better known as Pickbrain.



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Mr Naidu from the winning team is a first-year undergraduate student of liberal arts at Yale-NUS, while his partner, Mr Sarvagya, is doing his master of technology in knowledge engineering.

The duo are quiz enthusiasts and know each other from Hyderabad in India where they met in quiz circles.

Mr Naidu praised the quiz competition saying that it encouraged logical thinking. "It wasn't about regurgitating facts. Each question could be worked out if one thought it through."

Both are now geared for the finals in India where they expect the competition to be much tougher. "Preparation is ongoing. We just try to read as much as we can on various topics," Mr Sarvagya said.

The runner-up team of Mr Bhardwaj, a PhD student at NUS, and Mr Prasad say that they really have to "up their game" if they are to do well in the International Finals of Tata Crucible.

Mr Prasad, who is a chemical engineering student at NUS, said: "The competition in India is really stiff. There are many stages that participants go through. So those who are in the finals are really the best of the best."

The guest of honour at the event was Citibank's head of operations and technology in the Asia-Pacific region Vikram Sud.

Impressed with the level of quizzing on display, Mr Sud said: "I am completely in awe. It's great to see such talent here, and I am looking forward to seeing this talent show up in the workforce, minds that can think hard and come to logical conclusions."

Meanwhile, Tata Power International's director K.V. Rao said what the audiences witnessed at the Tata Crucible was the best of business quizzing.

Speaking about the motivation of holding a quiz like this, he said: "Tata's philosophy as a group has always been seeing beyond business."

How do we engage the communities in which we work, we live and so on.

We thought of having some programmes that would engage the young. That would give us an opportunity to talk to university students, for them to get to know about the Tata companies and also be open to work with us."



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He said, along with the quiz, the company started an international internship programme in 2007. "We have a lot of Singaporean students who work with various Tata companies for about eight weeks during the internship and some of them are hired."

Oh, and the answers to the two questions at the beginning of the article, if you haven't figured them out yet, are - 1283 is Pele's new autobiography and the term coined by Mr Lauder was Lipstick Index.

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