

Battle of the bots

Twenty-two schools fought it out for a place in the national round of World Robot Olympiad



The participants queue up to get past the first stage of the competition. The robots were measure with a glass cube and it had to be 25x25cm.

The fifth-floor room of The Newtown School was unusually abuzz on a Sunday afternoon. Armed with a laptop and a wheeled robot with lego blocks of grey, red, yellow and green as the centre of all attention, robotics enthusiasts prepared for the battle to qualify for the national round of the World Robot Olympiad.

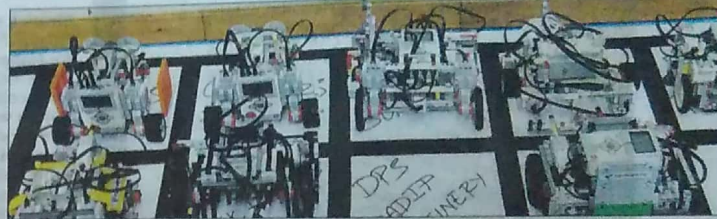
The regional round saw 22 schools participating in the competition that was divided into two categories — elementary and junior high. In the elementary category, meant for nine- to 12-year olds, the robot had to work on reducing food wastage by picking up different coloured blocks from the grocery stores, in the Junior high category, the task was precision farming.

City schools such as DPS Ruby Park, South City International School, and Birla High

School, those from Guwahati such as Maharishi Vidya Mandir, Shrimanta Shankar Academy, and DAV Model School, IIT Kharagpur, participated in the event playing under groups such as Code Busters, NTS Agrobots, Futurite Avengers and others.

With the theme food matters, the robots were programmed to follow a track and pick up different coloured blocks representing fruits and trees in the designated areas with their sensors. Three rounds, punctuated with repair and practice and inspection and quarantine, saw participants use their mental acumen to programme their robots to score the highest points.

In the end, three schools qualified from the Junior High category. The Elementary category saw no winners because of very low points scored by the participants.



After inspection and quarantine, the robots were kept in the station for the participants to use these directly on the game tables.



After intense sessions of repair and practice and inspection and quarantine sandwiched between three rounds, Futurite Dark Knights were declared third, Technotronics (centre) came second, and NTS Agrobots (extreme right) took away the first prize. **Tanish Majumdar**, a student of Class VIII of The Newtown School, said, "We are very happy to have qualified for the nationals. In the first rounds, we had lost all hope, as we did not get any points, but in the second round, we bounced back and scored points."



The two action areas — the workshops and the main competition area — saw varied emotions. While at their desks, the team programmed their bots and brainstormed to feed these with commands to channelise their sensors according to the colours, the teams at the two tables watched with anticipation the final output of their work.

It's a great learning experience for our children. Though we have our own robotics lab, the kids learn more about their potential through the competition. We are very proud to host a competition like this. Last year, too, we had hosted it. The parents are also very encouraging.



— **Satabdi G. Bhattacharjee**
Principal

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