

Test of mind and body

More than a self-defence technique, karate as a sport is gaining popularity among students. With a huge participation of 90 schools, the second ALSOC Inter-School Karate Cup stood witness to that...

PRASHUN MAZUMDAR

With 990 participants, 90 schools and 14 districts in the fray, the second ALSOC Inter-School Karate Cup in association with TTIS couldn't have got any bigger. Held at the St. Xavier's Collegiate School, the tournament saw winners emerge in both kata and kumite categories across all age groups.

At the prize distribution ceremony, Sri Sri Academy ruled the roost by claiming the champion of champions trophy. Host school St. Xavier's and Delhi Public School, Newtown, followed close behind, winning the second and third positions respectively.

Ranvir Kumar, assistant director general of police (Armed Police), who graced the tournament as chief guest, had encouraging words to say. Highlighting the importance of hosting such a championship, he said, "In today's times, self-defence should be a part of the school curriculum and I'm delighted so many students are participating in this tournament." The two categories, kata and kumite, required the utmost use of skill and presence of mind from the participants. While kata refers to a form of karate where the player performs detailed choreographed patterns of movements practiced either solo or in pairs, kumite deals with freestyle fighting and actual bouts. The end of the event was marked by a knockout-style tournament.

The championship saw the participation of karatekas from all age groups between six and 16. For Tanisha Mukherjee, a Class VI student of The BSS School, it has been seven years



Debpriya Mondal (right), Class XII, Sinthi Kasturba Kanya Vidyapith, and **Anushka Modak**, Class VIII, Gokhale Memorial Girls' School, engage in a bout. The contestant wearing the red belt during a fight is known as *aka* while the opponent is called *ao*

since she took to the martial art. "I had secured a gold medal in a national tournament and claimed the fifth position in my category at the junior Commonwealth Games," she said. Kirtika Sharma, Class IX, was interested in the art of self-defence and that's how she ended up choosing karate as her primary hobby. "Six years ago, I started practising the sport and I

want to continue doing so till I master it," said the student of St. Francis Academy.

Shihan Premjit Sen, the primary instructor of the students, was heartened by the increasing participation of female karatekas. "The involvement of the girls makes me proud and I feel each one of us should know a few self-defence tactics."

It has been four years since I took up karate. At the International Karate Championship held in Japan in 2014, I won the silver in kumite and during the first edition of the Karate Cup, I won a bronze in kata.



— **Ellora Singh**,
Class IX, Sri Sri Academy

I've participated in international championships. The Asian Federation Championship, Japan, and the World Karate Federation, Italy, were learning experiences for me.



— **Sukanya Sen**
Class V, Modern High School

I won a gold in kata and a bronze one in kumite. Karate started off as a hobby but now it has developed into much more. Tournaments such as this boost my confidence.



— **Abhay Mudgil**
Class VIII, Sri Sri Academy

Winner



Jubilant karatekas of Sri Sri Academy receive the trophy from Shihan Premjit Sen. Winning across all age groups, the students of the school stole the show with stellar performances in both kata and kumite

Second runner-up



Students of Delhi Public School, New Town, pose with their trophy after finishing third overall

It feels wonderful to see so many take up karate as it's a sport for both physical and mental well-being. ALSOC is one of the best in the country and the display of talent seen today is proof of that.



— **Pankaj Poddar**
Tournament director

Everyone should follow the 3 Ds — discipline, devotion and determination. Only then would people learn to never give up. It makes me happy to see the superb response.



— **Shihan Premjit Sen**
Instructor

Pictures by Ankit Datta

COLOURS OF CELEBRATION



Youngsters rock the stage at the annual programme of Baguiati Nrityangayan at Rabindra Bhavan, Dum Dum



SCHOOLnotes

The Bolivian ambassador, along with delegates from Costa Rica, visited Panchasayar Sishu Niketan. They went around and interacted with students from different classes and took interest in the teaching process of the school. They assured the school that they would definitely look out for further collaboration.

SPECIAL VISITORS



Text and pictures sent by school