

Sunday, Sep 02, 2007

Karnataka - **Bangalore**

When corporate teams had to fight it hard

Staff Reporter

Bangalore: A record 300 teams participated in this year's TATA Crucible Corporate Quiz 2007 held at the NIMHANS auditorium on Saturday.

The competition was bifurcated into 'TATA Track', which is reserved for participants from the TATA group of companies, and 'Non-TATA Track' for those from other companies. The quizmaster, Giri Balasubramaniam, explained that this bifurcation was to ensure fair play and avoid the competition from being swamped by contestants from the TATA group of companies.

The competition started off with a written preliminary round, which had some extremely thought-provoking questions. Arun Narain (35), a participant representing Titan, said, "The questions were the type that can be cracked with a little bit of thinking and left very little room for flukes." Older people, especially from the banking and manufacturing sectors, complained that the questions were too much in favour of the young IT employees.

But the praise far outweighed the grumbling, as most participants conceded that the competition was truly world class and certainly not for the rookie.

In the words of the quizmaster, who is also known as "Pickbrain," "The Bangalore qualifiers have been by far the best and most competitive. What makes this city so good is also the fact that, in the three years that the quiz has been around, there has not been a single team that has made it to the national finals twice from here...the competition here is really close."

In keeping with the city's tradition, the Bangalore finals saw an eight-question tie-breaker between team Ernst and Young and Yahoo.

The question that finally broke the tie: "Which region in Mexico, whose name translates to Wet Earth, lends its name to a famous brand?"

Initially both teams scribbled 'Tequila' in their answer sheets. But Yahoo scratched off the initial answer and replaced it at the very last minute with 'Tabasco' instead, before handing the answer over to Mr. Balasubramaniam.

And in doing so, they squeezed through to the national finals to be held in Mumbai.