

THE TIMES OF INDIA

INCLUSIVE OF DELHI TIMES (CIRCULATED ONLY IN DELHI NCR) | *APPLICABLE ONLY ON MONTHLY PURCHASE (IN DELHI NCR)

INDIA'S LARGEST ENGLISH NEWSPAPER | To subscribe call 1800 1200 004 or visit subscribe.timesofindia.com

VARIETY

SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 2025
CALCUTTA TIMES, THE TIMES OF INDIA

9



Sonal Agarwal, the director, Saina Nehwal and Satadhi Bhattacharjee, principal with Class X toppers and (right) Class XII toppers

A DAY OF HONOURS, HOPE AND HARD WORK

Saina Nehwal attends prize distribution ceremony and seminar at a Kolkata school

Eshna Bhattacharya

On a morning that began with song and ended with a standing ovation, The Newtown School turned its campus into a stage of celebration, where toppers of Classes X and XII and high scorers were felicitated for their excellence. The prize distribution ceremony held recently was more than just a roll call of names and scores — it was a statement of the school's values, a tribute to resilience, and a moment of inspiration that reached its high point with the presence of Olympic medalist and badminton legend Saina Nehwal.

It is no small feat to host someone of Saina's stature seamlessly but The Newtown School — known for its blend of academic rigour and value-based education — ensured that every minute of the event carried purpose, polish and pride.

You don't need to be the most talented. You just need to love working hard. I trained harder because I knew I didn't have their wrists—but I had my willpower. That's what makes a champion

— Saina Nehwal



Saina Nehwal with moderators Jeon Gwangmin and Satarishi Sen Gupta

When Saina spoke, every student listened

The audience knew they were in for something special when Saina Nehwal walked onto the stage. But it wasn't just her achievements that won hearts—it was her humility, her honesty and the way she connected with every student in the room. In a candid and motivational session, she shared the story of how her mother's belief shaped her Olympic journey, how Hyderabad became her training ground, and how hard work — not just talent — carried her to the top. Students sat transfixed as she spoke of 4:30 AM wake-up calls, 25 km bus rides, training through injuries, and the value of discipline. "I'm not like Roger Federer. I didn't have talent like that. But I believed in my work ethic. I told myself, if they train for 6 hours, I'll do it for 10. You can be the best if you love the grind," she said, to thunderous applause. Her session was peppered with anecdotes, laughter, and the kind of raw, real wisdom that stays long after the lights dim.

The Newtown School spirit: rooted in values, soaring in vision

Established in 2015, The Newtown School is the first IGCSE Gold Certified Green School in India under the new school category. Situated in one of Eastern India's most vibrant regions, it blends cutting-edge learning with values and tradition. Its personalised, research-based curriculum encourages individuality, critical thinking, and a deep sense of community — evident in how every student was celebrated and every parent included. More than a mere academic institution, it has become a launchpad for young achievers, artists, athletes and leaders, thanks to the support of its dedicated faculty and a future-focused vision. The recent prize distribution was a reaffirmation of that belief: that achievement wears many faces, and every child — when nurtured right — has the power to shine.

A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE AND GRACE

The ceremony began with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp, a tradition that the school holds sacred. As the flames rose, so did the collective emotion in the hall — an ode to knowledge triumphing over ignorance, and the brightness that education brings to young minds. In the words of the school, lighting the lamp is not just ritual, it's the way we invoke energy and clarity to guide our way.

What followed was a touching musical performance by the students, a melodic dedication to parents, mentors and teachers whose support shapes every scholar's path. The notes rang clear with emotion, making it a fitting prelude to a day of honour and gratitude.

REWARDING THE DREAMERS AND DOERS

From perfect scorers to students who topped in individual subjects, the prize distribution was a celebration of variety in achievement. It wasn't just about marks, but celebrated the effort, perseverance and the quiet hours that students spent chasing dreams.

Members of the management, teachers, par-

Every achievement deserves a spotlight. This ceremony was our tribute to that journey. The way Saina inspired the students — they're going to carry that message with them for years to come

— Satadhi Bhattacharjee, the principal

ents and guests filled the auditorium, their applause echoing the pride of a school that nurtures more than just toppers — it nurtures thinkers, creators, conscientious citizens, empathetic leaders, resilient learners, and passionate individuals ready to shape the future. As Satadhi Bhattacharjee, the principal said, "There cannot be a grade of achievements — they range from the tiniest to the greatest. Every little milestone creates a sense of accomplishment. We owe it to our students to recognise them, and this ceremony was our way of doing just that. This is our duty — to celebrate and inspire."



The director and principal of the school felicitate Saina Nehwal at the event



Students perform at the event



Saina Nehwal with the principal and prize winners at the event



The school's badminton students with Saina Nehwal