

Tea school extols merit

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Guwahati: Apeejay Tea's Hokonguri Lower Primary School brought together its students with two of the estate's academic and sports performers — Pollovi Das Panika, an ex-student of the school, and Riju Raj Patra — to learn how to pursue excellence in academics and sports.

Riju Raj, 11, returned victorious with a gold medal at the Sultana Kamal KWFA Second Asia Kung-Fu-Wushu Championship last month.

The 21-year-old Pollovi was back at home after spending her first year at the Asian University for Women in Chittagong where she bagged a fully paid scholarship along with two other students from Dikom tea estate last year.

The programme was held on Thursday.

Head teachers from all three Apeejay Tea schools in the garden, health assistant, assistant manager, welfare officer led by the Hokonguri Tea Estate manager spent hours making these achievers talk to the young students to orient them towards developing passion for sports or education. Hokonguri Lower Primary School has received A+ Gunotsav rating for the last two years.

Introducing the motivation session, estate manager Sudesh K. Singh said, "Gold medalist 11-year-old Riju and scholarship winner 21-year-old Pollovi's effort

and journey is something all children can be inspired by. It is quite admirable that they, despite being so young, know the value of inspiring others; doing what they can to help others succeed and agreed to lead this session with us. We have celebrated their achievements and now we are even more prouder that they have come together to speak to our young ones. We need more youngsters like them in our society."

Sharing his experiences, the recently crowned Kung-Fu-Wushu champion Riju Raj said, "I have been practicing from class V. A group of six members, including me went to Bangladesh. I got to play against countries like Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal. I could have never done it if not for the encouragement and support from the people of the tea estate."

Pollovi, who was home for the first time since she bagged the scholarship, urged the children to study hard to get good marks which she said would take them ahead to jobs they want to pursue.

Sharing her experiences, she said, "Being a daughter of a tea worker it was a great opportunity for me to have got the chance to study overseas. Not everybody gets such an opportunity. We faced several problems while applying for the scholarship but the tea estate helped us out and I'm very thankful for that."