



(From extreme left) Niilesh Ghosh and Archisman Gupta (Class XII) of Birla High School, Shreyas Kundu (Class XII) and Ayush Krishnan (Class X) of MP Birla Foundation Higher Secondary School, and Avigayan Sur (Class XII) and Aanya Singh (Class XI) of National High School, Hazra Road, with their trophies. Picture by Arijit Ganguly

Prompt to perfection: AI chips in

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Calcutta: Artificial intelligence has rapidly become a part of students' everyday academic lives, including toppers. From explaining difficult concepts to organising study schedules, AI tools are reshaping how smart students learn. Yet, even among the highest achievers, the consensus was clear: AI works best as a support system, not a substitute for hard work.

This question became food for thought during the second half of The Telegraph Young Metro Axiom: The Excellence Quiz League 2026, which celebrated board toppers from across Bengal. The felicitation ceremony recognised the achievements of 153 students from Classes X and XII representing 36 schools. The event was also attended by actor Abir Chatterjee.

For many toppers, AI proved most useful as a learning aid rather than a shortcut. Namrata Debnath (X) of Ashok Hall Girls' Higher Sec-

ondary School uses AI when she is racing against the clock.

"If I am researching something and I am running short on time, I use AI to pull up resources and summarise the points," she said, adding that cross-verifying the information is essential.

Several toppers highlighted AI's ability to make difficult concepts easier.

Kushagra Hirawat (XII) from Asian International School turned to AI whenever he needed difficult theories broken down into simpler, step-by-step explanations.

"It was easier and much more accessible than searching through various websites," he said, especially when teachers were unavailable. Yet, he warned that students must be cautious because AI can sometimes generate misleading or inappropriate content.

For Aarav Tripathi (XII) of Delhi Public School (Joka) South Kolkata, AI became a revision partner. Instead of asking it for answers, he used it to frame practice questions and

explain difficult topics before solving them independently. "It has improved my efficiency," he said.

Beyond academics, students also found AI valuable for improving productivity and managing demanding schedules. Tanish Sureka (XII) of M.C. Kejriwal Vidyapeeth believes AI has made school projects and data compilation more streamlined. Although concerns over job displacement persist, he remains optimistic that automating routine tasks will free up time, allowing students to focus on more meaningful work.

Sharanya Dutta Pal (XII) from Mahadevi Birla Shishu Vihar has consciously limited her AI usage: "I have never used AI to write any notes for me as it takes away our capability to think as humans." She only uses it to simplify lengthy handwritten notes into concise bullet points and worries that AI is already shrinking opportunities in fields such as literature, creative media and content writing.

For Chetna Chhajjer (XII) of Sri Sri Academy, AI helped balance school academics with college entrance preparation. She often used it to generate quizzes for self-assessment but observed that growing dependence on digital tools shortens students' attention spans.

Meanwhile, Subhoshree Mandal (X) from Bidya Bharti Girls' High School found platforms such as ChatGPT, Perplexity and Gemini useful for brainstorming ideas and creating mind maps.

Alolika Chatterjee (XII) of G.D. Goenka Public School, Dakshineswar, however, still places textbooks above AI for serious learning: "I use AI only to organise study schedules and break tasks into manageable goals."

Abir Chatterjee observed: "AI tools bring new opportunities that the youth are exploring in their daily lives, but we also need to ensure that interpersonal relationships are not compromised in the race for technological advancement."