Students bag 6th prize at India-Singapore hackathon

RV College students (from right), Askar Prasad, Prajwal Y R and Sahana S, who won the sixth prize at the India-Singapore Hackathon held at IIT Madras. Courtesy Askhar Prasad

In the second edition of India-Singapore Hackathon, an initiative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a city-based team of engineering students secured a sixth place for developing an app that addresses mental health.

The hackathon, held over for three days from September 28 to Monday at IIT Madras, aimed at motivating young developers and engineers to create innovative digital apps and software.

Out of 20 teams that took part in the event, a team from R V College of Engineering in Bengaluru won the sixth prize for their app 'Mood Assist', which uses computer vision, artificial intelligence and natural language to assess the psychological and emotional state of students, by analysing their social media activities.

"Any sign of stress, depression and academic or peer pressure on students are identified in real-time by this system and triggers are sent to the schools, parents and local helplines to take preventive measures at the earliest. There is also a chatbot that empathises with the students and allows them to confide in it," said Askhar Prasad, one of the students behind the app.

While the app attracted the attention of the judges, Modi, who presided over the valedictory function, praised a software system designed by another team that uses cameras to assess the level of attentiveness in classrooms.

"My young friends here have solved various problems today. I especially liked the solution where cameras detect those who are paying attention. I am sure it will be very useful in Parliament," the prime minister said, triggering raucous laughter and clapping.

According to Prasad, 'Mood Assist' also gathers historic data of students and predicts their performance. If there is a negative deviation, it analysis possible reasons and triggers a notification to the parents and schools along with the reasons for the deviation.

The hackathon was held in association with Singapore's Nanyang Technological University. Each team had three students from India and three students from Singapore to enable an exchange of ideas.

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