ALL INDIA COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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Headline: AICTE's efforts becoming fruitful, UN acclaims Indian engineering students

Subhead line1 : Anil Sahasrabudhe said that a recognition from the United Nations is a matter of pride for AICTE

Subhead line 2: The students were trained by Pupilfirst.org, a member of the National Educational Alliance for Technology (NEAT) programme of Ministry of Education

New Delhi, Sept 14: In a huge international acclaim, CoronaSafe Network (https://coronasafe.network/), an open-source pandemic management software solution co-developed by software industry volunteers and a clutch of bright engineering students from India, has been recognised by the United Nations as a Global Digital Public Good.

Digital Public Good is the highest recognition accorded by the UN to open-source software that can help in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially in low- and middle-income countries.

Created initially as a voluntary response by over 300 software professionals in India and adopted first by the Kerala government for COVID management, the software network, which is now also used by the National Health Mission (NHM), enables the digital transformation of pandemic management of an entire district or state.

Soon after the first wave of the global pandemic was over, The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and its educational technology partner Pupilfirst.org jointly issued a National call for a fellowship programme to select and train the brightest engineering students in modern software engineering skills and continue the software development for meeting future Covid19 waves.

A total of 50,482 students from 2,734 institutions across 35 states and Union Territories applied for the fellowship programme out of which 24 students were selected for a 10-week industry-guided training programme under full scholarships supported by Micheal and Susan Dell Foundation, Wadhwani Foundation and ACT grants.

Fourteen students, who finished the intensive training led by industry professionals, entered into six-month-long internships where they constantly upgraded the open-source software that now runs the war-room at Kerala's Ernakulam district and in selected districts in Maharashtra and Haryana.

"The fact that an open-source software that is actively maintained by Indian engineering students has met all global technical standards such as open data, open AI models, open standards and adhere to privacy and other applicable best practices in the eyes of United Nations is a matter of pride for AICTE" said its Chairman Prof. Anil D Sahasrabudhe.

Prof MP Poonia, Vice Chairman AICTE said, "The Council is very much glad to know that an open-source software from Indian engineering students has fulfilled all International standards. And moreover, getting a recognition from the United Nations is something that the whole Nation should be proud about. I strongly believe that young Indian brains will create revolutionary changes in the technical sector in the future, and AICTE will implement various programs to fine tune the skills of these students".

The students were trained by Pupilfirst.org, a member of the National Educational Alliance for Technology (NEAT) programme of Ministry of Education and involved modern teaching-learning processes and advanced industry curriculums created along with India's SaaS industry leaders Freshworks.

The engineering students are now working with eGovernance foundation to build TeleICU features that would connect junior doctors at ICU's in remote and rural districts of India with specialist doctors in major cities, thereby providing critical care in areas where it is not easily available.

"By recognising CoronaSafe as a digital public good, the UN is endorsing the solution for National and Global adoption. Generally, it takes a team of full-time software professionals to build these solutions and it may be a first time globally that a solution maintained by 14 trained students engineers has achieved this rare milestone," said Mr Srikanth Nadhamuni, founding CTO of Aadhaar and trustee of eGovernance foundation.

Endorsed by the UN Secretary General, the Digital Public Goods Alliance is a multi-stakeholder initiative with a mandate to accelerate the attainment of the SDGs in low- and middle-income countries by facilitating the discovery, development, use of, and investment in digital public goods.

The Secretariat of the Digital Public Goods Alliance is co-hosted by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) and UNICEF.

View of https://coronasafe.network/

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