A Report on

Smart IGNOU Hackathon-2020
to prepare students for the Smart India Hackathon (SIH 2020)
organised by NCIDE, IGNOU on 17-20 January, 2020

In order to promote the culture of innovation and out-of-the-box thinking among young minds, The NCIDE at IGNOU organized the Smart IGNOU Hackathon-2020 as an internal Hackathon for its students, from January 17-20, 2020.

The MHRD's Innovation Cell (MIC) and AICTE have launched the Smart India Hackathon (SIH) 2020, which is a nation-wide product development competition, where problem statements are posed to students for innovative solutions. The student teams selected in the Internal

Hackathon will be participating in Smart India Hackathon 2020 to be organised by the MHRD and AICTE.

Welcoming the students and experts to the Hackathon, Dr. Sujata Santosh presented the background of the event. She said that the Hackathon was so designed to familiarise and orient the students and to facilitate them so that they are able to compete at the national level. Dr. O. P. Sharma, Director NCIDE addressed the students and said that the Hackathon was meant to guide the students towards development of innovative solutions for the selected problem statements and advised them to take it in a positive spirit.

A total of 15 teams registered for IGNOU Hackathon out of which nine teams participated in the Smart IGNOU Hackathon. There were two individual entries also. The teams were working on various socially relevant problems including Healthcare and Biomedical Devices, Automated Transaction System, Farming and Agriculture, Safety App for Women, Web Enabled Solution for Nutritional Problems among Women and Children, Drones, Robotics, Security and Surveillance, etc. Each team gave a presentation of their solution for the identified problem statement. They received feedback and inputs from the experts. They were asked to work on their solutions at their own end and give a detailed presentation along with the prototype developed on 20th January, 2020.

Prof. Nageshwar Rao, Vice Chancellor, IGNOU visited the Hackathon and interacted with the participants of the Hackathon. The team leaders of all the teams gave a presentation about the selected problem statements and their innovative solutions. All the participants were highly excited and motivated meeting the Vice Chancellor. The Hon'ble Vice Chancellor appreciated the initiatives taken up by the students and wished them success in their endeavour.

Prof. R.R. Kanhere, Pro Vice Chancellor, IGNOU also visited the Hackathon and interacted with the participants and listened to their ideas and proposed solutions for various problems selected by them. He appreciated the efforts of IGNOU students and wished them for successful completion of their projects.

The students then worked for two days to find out solutions for the selected problems at their end. The students then developed prototypes/ running code and gave a detailed presentation on 20th January, 2020. Based on their work and performance, six teams were selected and therefore, nominated to participate at the National level in the Smart India Hackathon-2020 to be organized by the MHRD and AICTE. There was one outside expert from the IT industry, Mr. Sandeep Ohri, Ex-Senior Director, CTS. The other experts were Mr. Akshay Kumar, Associate Professor, SOCIS; Dr. P. V. Suresh, Associate Professor, SOCIS; Dr. M. P. Mishra, Assistant Professor, SOCIS; Dr. O. P. Sharma, Director, NCIDE; Dr. Jyotsna Dikshit, Deputy Director, NCIDE; Dr. Moumita Das, Assistant Director, NCIDE; and Dr. Sujata Santosh, Assistant Director, NCIDE.

The first of its kind event organised in the university was designed to provide an opportunity to the distance learners of IGNOU to get familiarised with participation in a Hackathon and also to receive guidance from the experts on their proposed solutions for the problems.

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