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Project GEIT (Goans Empowered with IT) by GITP to promote IT Education in Goan Village Schools reaches Dayanand Bandodkar High School, Gokuldem, Paddi, Quepem

Organizers: Jonathan Pereira (Co-Founder, Espressotive), Sudhir Shetty (Co-Founder, Espressotive), Govt. Engineering College Farmagudi Computer stream final year students (Nihal Prabhu Gaonkar, Seeya Prabhmoni, Pooja Pai), Pradeep Gaonkar (Goa Dept. of IT), Jervis A Pereira (Director, GITIC), Sangeeta Naik (Digital Goa), Vincent Paul Toscano (Industry Principal, Infosys)

Date: 12-Sep-2015

Time: 10.30am-1:30pm

Location: Dayanand Bandodkar High School, Gokulde, Padi, Quepem

Event photos:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Goaitp/>

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=pcb.878629172186290&type=1>

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=pcb.878630365519504&type=1>

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=pcb.878632242185983&type=1>

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=pcb.878632408852633&type=1>

Details:

Goa IT Professionals (GITP) group's initiative, titled "Goans Empowered with IT" (GEIT), to promote IT Education in Goan schools for better employment in collaboration with the wider Goan IT and academic community inducted the third and final rural school, Dayanand Bandodkar High School (Gokuldem, Paddi, Quepem) into the program on 12th September.

The project actively supported by the StartupGoa, GITIC and other well-wishers aims to expose every child in Goan schools, especially in the villages, to the career opportunities galore in Computers and related technologies positively affecting all spheres of human life today. Through a series of sessions and courses on Computer Programming, App Development, Robotics, Animation etc. the students will be introduced to this fascinating world in fun and exciting ways to spark their interest for further exploration through self-learning. Additionally, this initiative also aims to help school teachers use IT to make regular subjects more interesting, engaging and experiential to the students. In the first phase this year GITP is working with 3 schools in Goa:

1. St. Bartholomew's High School (Chorao, Tiswadi)
2. Azmane High School (Neura, Mandur, Tiswadi)
3. Dayanand Bandodkar High School (Gokulde, Padi, Quepem)

In subsequent phases of this initiative, GITP aims to reach out to these charged school children, fuel their creativity and turn it into passion to bring innovation and employment generation to the village level in Goa.

At the Gokulde school, situated at the foothills of the Western Ghats, many students still walk 1-2 hours daily to reach their school and yet know quite a lot about computers and IT in general. Their evident appetite to grasp and learn new technologies was heartening to our GEIT team and holds a clear promise to a people-driven economic upliftment of our Goan villages while also preserving and documenting their local heritage and ancestral knowledge for posterity.

Our GEIT Introductory session at this school began with a warm welcome by the Headmaster, Mr. Velip followed by the President of their School Alumni association, Mr. Pradeep Gaonkar, who is also part of our GEIT team, our anchor for this school and is one of the most educated villagers from Padi despite many hardships. From our team, Vincent ignited the minds of the 200 odd kids by talking to them about how IT can transform their lives. Then Jonathan of Espressotive, supported by Sudhir, took the students on an exciting ride with their presentation on IT, interesting videos and Google Cardboard Virtual Reality

3D headset demos for 10 students and 2 teachers. Subsequently Jervis spoke to the students about the way IT can help them solve local problems around them.

Finally Nihal, Seeya and Pooja from GEC explained the students in simple language how computers work similar to the human body and received a very good response. We are grateful to their GEC Lecturer, Mr. Teslin Jacob, for encouraging them to support Project GEIT. Even by themselves they now feel that if they had been through an initiative like Project GEIT in their school days then it would have made a big difference to their lives today. And hence they want to give these village school kids what they missed. Such conviction coming from today's Goan youth fuels us all at Project GEIT.

Post this school student session, our team met with the school management and staff. The Headmaster was very enthusiastic about the program and so were the teachers. They were happy that despite being a remote school they were chosen for Project GEIT. Sadly, the IT infrastructure at this school was as grim as other schools in Goa. Just 2 of the 10 government-provided computers are working. Internet connectivity was mostly unavailable. When asked about how the tablets given to the students by the government were used the answers were most disheartening. As in most of the schools in Goa, the tablets have never been used for education – various reasons were cited from non-working tablets to missing content to lack of training of teachers for effective use of the tablets in school education. GITP is now pursuing this matter with the Goa government bodies.

Presently underway at all the 3 schools is a detailed audit of their Basic, Science and IT infrastructure besides an Enrolment form to be filled by parents to consent their wards to participate in Project GEIT. Age-appropriate Aptitude Testing began this week to identify students to be specially coached in Computers and Robotics under Project GEIT starting immediately after the Ganesh Chathurti festival. Our next press note tomorrow (18Sep) will provide details about this Aptitude Test process.

GITP thanks the Goan press and media community for its sustained support in spreading awareness about our Project GEIT.