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Quest leads engg students to smart solutions

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BENGALURU: From a solution to Bengaluru's traffic woes to sand made of old plastic bottles, ideas flew thick and fast. The innovators were final-year engineering students from tier-two and three colleges.

They were participating in the sixth edition of QuEST Ingenium, an innovation competition which received over 8,000 applications from 900 colleges across the country. On Monday, 10 shortlisted teams presented their projects before a jury comprising senior engineering managers from [General Electric](#), Honeywell, Rolls Royce and QuEST itself.

"Our initiative is based on the premise that intelligence exists everywhere. However, it takes more than just intelligence to excel and not everybody has the opportunity to get into an IIT. Students from top colleges get a lot of exposure and experience, but who gives opportunities to all these other talented kids," asked [Ajay Prabhu](#), chief operating officer, QuEST.

The projects had to fall under one of eight primary domains - mechanical, aerospace, industrial, healthcare and automobile to name a few. The shortlisted models featured an advanced agro-robot, a beach cleaner bot and a waste segregation model using actuators.

Students of [Rashtreeya Vidyalaya College of Engineering](#) (RVCE), one of the winning teams, came up with a dynamic traffic management system. It is based on an algorithm that allots green lights in signals, based on the vehicle density in each lane, an upgrade of the manually operated traffic system currently in use. They get the vehicular data through an onboard diagnostics (OBD) plug, which is then relayed via Bluetooth to the processor.

"We met assistant commissioner of police for traffic planning, Kasim Raja, who told us he is open to such ideas. He even said it can be implemented on a trial basis," said team member [Vivek](#), a student of electronics and communication engineering.

The other winning team comprised civil engineering students from Sahradaya College of Engineering and Technology, Thrissur, who decided to put plastic bottles strewn around their campus to better use. After burning, cooling and grinding the plastic, the all-girls' team came up with a sand-like substance, which can also be used for construction. The team that has never ventured outside Kerala also won TechTop 2016 in August.

"Our solution not only reuses waste plastic, but we also found it to have greater compressive strength compared to regular sand. Not only is it more economical but it's environment friendly too," said team member Reeba.

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