



NEWSLETTER

JULY - DECEMBER 2020



Dear Friends,

I present to you the second issue of our Newsletter that carries news and events from July 2020 to December 2020.

DA-IICT believes in constant evolution. The Institute has begun the process of **Curriculum Review** by seeking inputs from the experts in the industry and the academia on the syllabus of various programs consistent with the National Education Policy 2020. The Institute opened its doors to the first year BTech students in November 2020. This includes the first batch of students pursuing

BTech in Maths and Computing (MnC). The students were inducted into the programs through a series of online orientation sessions.

While I am proud of the achievements of our alumni, faculty, students and staff, it is with sadness that I report that we have lost one of our distinguished senior faculty members, Professor Asim Banerjee.

Despite the challenges that have come our way, we continue to forge ahead towards imparting better education and conducting quality research.

Sincerely,

Prof K. S. Dasgupta

Director, DA-IICT





Obituary- Prof Asim Banerjee

DA-IICT community condole the sad demise of Professor Asim Banerjee, who passed away on July 11, 2020 after a brief illness. Professor Banerjee has been with the Institute almost since its inception. He was one of the most dedicated teachers who worked relentlessly for the holistic development of the students. His advice to students has always been to stay grounded, attain knowledge and try their best to achieve what they seek in life. He shall always be remembered for his outstanding contributions to the Institute.

NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

DA-IICT organised a virtual orientation for its new batches of PG and UG students on August 11, 2020, and on November 10, 2020, respectively. The students were briefed on campus life, curriculum, grading policy, and so on. The Student Body Government conducted special sessions on various Student Committees and Clubs. The sessions on Gender Sensitization, Counselling, and Cyber Sensitization were also held.

COVID RESPONSE

The Institute continued to steer the current semester given Covid-19 pandemic and associated restrictions without compromising academic rigour. The PG students, who are required to use advanced computing for their thesis work, were granted permission to stay on campus after the adequate quarantine period. The Resource Centre is kept operational following all the Covid guidelines and the electronic resources were made remotely available to the users.

NEW RECRUITMENTS



Dr Avik Hati joined the Institute as Assistant Professor in September, 2020. He holds a Doctorate in Electrical Engineering from IIT Bombay, Mumbai. During 2018-19, he worked with IIT Mumbai as Research Associate and Project Research Scientist. He spent a year with Instituto Italino DI Tecnologia, Italy from March 2019 to February 2020 on a post-doctoral fellowship where he researched on Pattern Analysis and Computer Vision.



Dr Shefali Jha joined the Institute as Assistant Professor in October, 2020. She did her Doctorate in Anthropology from the University of Chicago, USA. She worked with the College, Social Science Division, and the University of Chicago as Lecturer and as Guest Faculty/Assistant Professor with the University of Hyderabad before joining DA-IICT.



Dr Madhu Kaant Sharma joined the Institute as Assistant Professor in June, 2020. He holds a Doctorate in Mathematics from the Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Chennai. Prior to joining the Institute, he worked as Assistant Professor with Mahindra Ecole Centrale College of Engineering, Hyderabad and Indian Institute of Information Technology, Dharwad, Karnataka.



PLACEMENT

The placement of students graduating in 2021 is in progress. The Institute has secured **300 + offers** including **45+ Pre-Placement offers** from **10+ companies** so far. The highest package offered until now is **Rs.51.75 lakh** per annum by **Atlassian**. The other key corporates that figure in 300+ offers include **Microsoft** which offered Rs.43 lakh to 11 students, **Amazon** a package of

Rs.30 lakh, **Flipkart** Rs.26.57 lakh, **Goldman Sachs** Rs.23 lakh and **Morgan Stanley** Rs.25.91 lakh annually. The profiles offered include Software Development Engineer, App Developer, Full Stack Developer, ASIC Verification, Finance Data Analytics Engineer, Visual/Graphics Designer and Artificial Intelligence Engineer. The average salary offered stood at Rs.14.93 lakh per annum by the end of December 2020.

ACADEMIC INITIATIVES

AILP Lectures

To accelerate research on Artificial Intelligence and Language Processing (AILP), Professors Suman Mitra, Prasenjit Majumder, Bakul Gohel, Manish Khare, Srimanta Mandal, Ahlad Kumar and Shruti Bhilare have founded the AILP research group. This group will provide a platform for collaborative research in the areas of Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Image Processing, Pattern Recognition, Computer Vision, Information Retrieval and Natural Language Processing. AILP would also be offering short term courses and engage scholars and students from all across the globe. The following online talks were organized.



As part of this initiative, **Mr Ajit Balakrishnan, the CEO of Rediff.com** delivered a Public Lecture on December 2, 2020 in collaboration with **IEEE Signal Processing Society, Gujarat Chapter and ACM Gandhinagar**. In his talk, Mr Balakrishnan spoke about **Machine Learning & Data Science** that will play a major role in the future job market.

| Topic | Speaker | Date |
|--|---|------------|
| Modular Facial Expression Recognition Using Deep Neural Networks | Ms. Sujata PhD Scholar, DA-IICT | 09/09/2020 |
| Weakly Supervised Geodesic Segmentation of Egyptian Mummy CT scans | Dr Avik Hati DA-IICT | 07/10/2020 |
| Introduction to Named Entity Recognition | Ms. Shweta Bhatt Data Scientist, Jupiter | 04/11/2020 |



SPONSORED PROJECTS

A research team consisting of (Late) Prof Girja Sharan, Prof Anil Roy, and their French Collaborator had successfully demonstrated in Kothara in Kutch, Gujarat, that dew water harvesting could be a potential alternative for potable water. This sparked discussion on how much dew water can be produced in Gujarat State. To explore this opportunity, **Prof Anil Roy** proposed the government to draw a dew map of the State to estimate the amount of water potentially produced from dew. The project is sponsored by the Climate Change Department of the Government of Gujarat for two years, starting July 2020. Once completed, the project will inform about the quantity of the annual water production from dew.

Professors Kalyan Sasidhar (P.I.) and Bhaskar Chaudhury (Co-PI) received a grant for their project titled '**Development of GeoMagnetism based Indoor Navigation system**' from the Department of Science and Technology under the Spatial Data Infrastructure framework of National Resource Data Management System (NRDMS). By measuring the geomagnetism using a smartphone's embedded magnetic field sensor, this work proposes a system for identifying landmarks, developing a building information model and implementing an indoor localization and navigation system as a complete end-end solution without the need for any additional infrastructure.

Prof Nabin Kumar Sahu received a grant for his project, '**Dynamical Sampling and Representation of Frames via Iterated Operator Systems**' from the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), Government of India. The grant is the Core Research Grant of DST. The project is based on dynamical sampling problems. The outcome of this project can be largely used in communications systems when the data are time-dependent and dynamical.



FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

Prof Hemant Patil delivered **ISCA** (International Speech Communication Association) Distinguished Lecture 2020-21 on 'Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs)' on September 22, 2020. He was invited in recognition of his joint research work in the field of Speech and Speaker Recognition, Anti-Spoofing Methods for Automatic Speaker Recognition, etc., primarily with the researchers of Speech Research Lab at DA-IICT. He is the first Indian Scientist working in an Indian University getting this international recognition.

Prof Manish Khare has been invited to serve as Guest Editor for two Special Issues of the Journal 'Multimedia Tools and Applications' on 'Machine Vision Theory and Applications for Cyber-Physical Systems' and 'Machine Vision Theory and Application for Cyber-Physical Systems.'

SUPERCOMPUTER FACILITY



The Gujarat Council on Science and Technology, Government of Gujarat, has established the Supercomputer facility '**PARAM Shavak**' developed by C-DAC, Government of India, at DA-IICT. The facility aims to provide faculty, researchers and students with advanced technologies to perform high-end computations for scientific and engineering research and to address and catalyze the research using modeling, simulation and data analysis. It will also create a pool of skilled professionals for pursuing research and development in the area of High-Performance Computing (HPC) and Deep Learning (DL) and promote the use of HPC systems and parallel programming in several application domain areas. DA-IICT will use the facility for joint research in HPC and DL with national and international Institutions and Researchers.

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS



Jainam Mehta, MSc (IT) 2015 batch, who owns *UrbanNaps* - India's first smart napping pods, was recently awarded the **Young Innovator 2020 Award** at the National Student Startup Meet 2020 by the Government of Gujarat. The sleep pods are meant for people to rest, relax and repose at urban spaces and corporate offices.



Vaibhav Jain, B.Tech (ICT) 2013 batch, who owns *Hubilo*, an event management software company, recently raised **\$4.5 million** in the seed-funding round. Hubilo has received funding from Lightspeed Venture Partners, which is a venture capital firm based out of Menlo Park, California, USA. Founded in 2015 in Ahmedabad, Hubilo offers technology tools to help organize events with swiftness.



Vishnu Kanduri Sreenivas, B.Tech (ICT) 2019, secured the third position as Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence Intern at Digital Tesseract and was presented with a token of appreciation. He received a 25% tuition scholarship for pursuing his Masters at Rochester Institute of Technology, USA and received Merit Provost's Master's Scholarship at Stevens Institute of Technology. He also received a scholarship from Illinois Institute of Technology, USA.



Pankaj Srivastava, Rahul Gupta, & Mridul Singh, B.Tech Graduates have cleared the UPSC Civil Services examination 2020 and obtained 206, 557 and 401 ranks respectively. Pankaj Srivastava cleared the Civil Services earlier and has been working as Assistant Director (UT), Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

A group of students and alumni of DA-IICT started **Milaap Campaign** to help the cafeteria workers who are affected by the shutting down of campus due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It was a crowd-funded initiative depending on the contributions from students, alumni, friends, faculty, and well-wishers of the student community of DA-IICT.

STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS



Rajendra Shah, Laboratory Superintendent as part of his professional development, completed the courses like Linux Essential, Introduction to Cyber Security and Introduction to Packet Tracer courses from CISCO Networking Academy and Dante Certification Level-1.



Jitendra Parmar, Senior Hostel Supervisor, completed the two-year Master of Business Administration degree with specialization in Human Resource Management from the Gujarat Technical University, Ahmedabad. He received his MBA in September 2020.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS



Nishant Shah, BTech (ICT) (CS) third year student achieved a **Global Rank 5 and National Rank 1** in the Google Kickstart Round G 2020 among 8000+ participants.



Prapti Trivedi, BTech (ICT) 2020 Graduate was selected for **AI Summer School** hosted by Google Research, India. She was one of the 50 students selected for the NLU track. She is currently with Voicezen as a Data Scientist.

Priyank Satasiya, Aditya Kanaujia, Kushal Shah, Nirmitt Shah, Smit Patel, Himadri Patel, Avi Gupta, Anurag Fichadiya, Rutvik Modi and Niharika Dalsania, BTech fourth year students were awarded for their **BTech Summer Internship** projects for 2019-20. They carried out research and application-based projects in leading-edge technologies like Data Analytics, Web Services, Algorithms, Natural Language Processing, Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence, Software Development / Engineering, Astrophysics, Wireless Sensor Networks, VLSI and Nanoelectronics.

Kathan Sanghavi, Ronak Jethava & Yash Trivedi, BTech (ICT) 2019 batch students secured third position in National Level Hackathon Tic Tech Toe'20 which was organized by team i.Fest and the IEEE WIE Affinity Group.

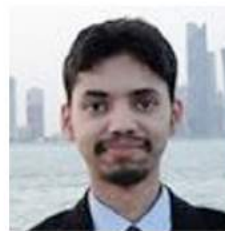
For their final year BTech Projects 2020, **Het Thakkar, Purva Mhasakar, Kritika Gupta, Rutvik Shah, Dhruvesh Asnani**, were given 'Awards' of Rs.5000 each plus Certificates and **Sarangji Patel** and **Vishrut Jetley**, Certificates of Appreciation.

MDes (CD) final year students, displayed their creative work on campus which culminated out of their final design project.



The Student Body Government (SBG) of DA-IICT has initiated the **Student Emergency Fund (SEF)**. This fund is to support students who find it challenging to afford necessary e-infrastructure facilities for the online semester. This is a crowd-funded initiative and depends on contributions from students, alumni, friends, faculty, and well-wishers of the student community of DA-IICT.

ALUMNI LECTURE SERIES



Mayank Mishra, BTech (ICT) 2019 Graduate, delivered the first Alumni Lecture on September 13, 2020. He currently works in an investment team of **Fermat Capital Management**. He earlier worked at **Berkshire Hathaway's** reinsurance subsidiary. In his talk, he spoke about the importance of the multidisciplinary job role and the skills required.



Aniruddha Das, BTech (ICT) 2019 Graduate, spoke on 'What skills are Hiring Managers looking for in new Graduates' on November 8, 2020. He worked in IBM and Microsoft and is now with Roku-A as a Senior Software Developer.

SCIENTIST TALKS



Dr Sumitesh Sarkar from **SAC ISRO**, Ahmedabad delivered a talk on **“Next-generation High Throughput SATCOM Systems”** on Nov. 9, 2020.



Dr Saket Buch from **SAC ISRO**, Ahmedabad delivered a talk on **“Physical Layer Network Coding”** on December 9, 2020.

WORKSHOPS / WEBINARS



Augmented Reality (A.R.), Virtual Reality (V.R.) and Spatial Cloud Computing online webinar was organised by **i.Fest** DA-IICT on November 8, 2020. The workshop was conducted by **Mr Alon Grinshpoon, founder of echoAR**, based in New York. echoAR is a cloud platform for augmented and virtual reality apps which allows developers to build better 3D apps.



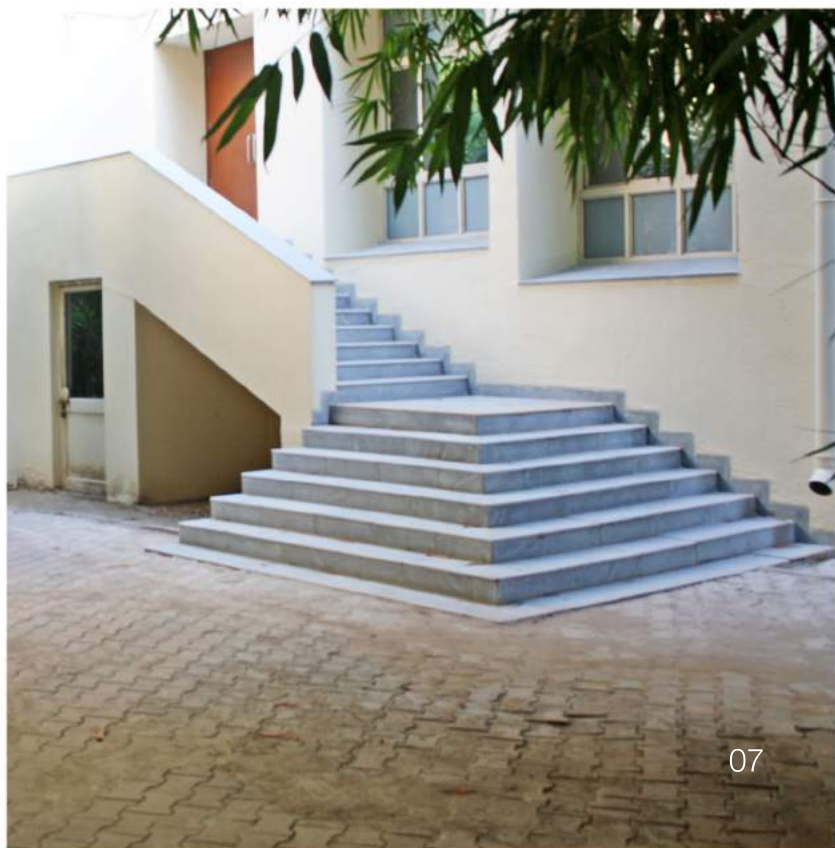
A virtual session on Critical Thinking was conducted on November 24, 2020 by **Mr RK Chopra, International Soft Skill Trainer and Motivational Speaker**.



Gender Cell of DA-IICT organised an interactive session on **Gender, Power and Intersectionalities** on November 7, 2020. The speaker was **Dr Purna Kumar**, from the **International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW)**. The session made the students aware of the nuances between gender equality and equity by making them realize about their privileges.



Webinar on **"Cyber Hygiene, how to do online learning and cope up with exams during the pandemic"** was conducted by the Counselling Services of DA-IICT for all students, faculty and staff on October 20, 2020. The speaker was **Mr Abhisekh Singh, President and CEO, National e-Governance Division, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology**.



CAMPUS EVENTS

Seventy Fourth Independence Day was celebrated with patriotic fervour following social distancing and COVID-19 protocols. Prof K S Dasgupta, Director hoisted the national flag and addressed the community.



i.Fest, the Annual Technical Festival of DA-IICT, was organized by the IEEE Student Branch of DA-IICT during November 20-22, 2020. i.Fest strives to explore technology and how it can solve the problems that the world is facing. It was organised on a virtual platform with 20+ events.

i.Fest and IEEE Women in Engineering Affinity Group, organized their flagship coding hackathon Tic Tech Toe '20 during November 7-8 2020. Prizes worth Rs.2 lakh were awarded to the winners who brought revolutionary ideas to the table and performed coding.

Hacktober'20 held on October 4, 2020 was an initiative of Microsoft Student Club supported by Digital Ocean, in partnership with GitHub and Twilio. Mr Peeyush Gupta, a Senior Developer Advocate at Digital Ocean shared insights about Open-Source Projects.

Teacher's Day was celebrated virtually on September 5, 2020, by the Cultural Committee.

Semester Long Projects (SLoP) is an initiative by the **Developer Student Club (DSC)** focused on **Open Source Software Development** program inspired by GSoC and it was held from August 28, 2020 to November 23, 2020. SLoP currently has 50+ Open Source Projects on board and is currently mentoring 200+ student developers in various development domains like Web Development, Machine Learning, Android Development and more. DSC has projects from **Linux Kernel** by **Linux Foundation** and **Oppia Foundation**. The club has put in the best possible efforts to give first-hand software development exposure to students.



As a part of i-Fest an interactive session on **“Indian Space Program - Gaganyaan”** was organised on November 21, 2020. The guest speakers were **Mr Nilesh M. Desai**, Associate Director, Space Applications Centre, ISRO and **Dr Anurag Verma**, Head, Gaganyaan Crew Communications and Cabin Systems, ISRO.

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