

## **TiE Pitchfest 2022: Four students to represent India at Stanford University**

Four students of CMR Institute of Technology have come up with a solution to help Indian farmers understand groundwater levels.

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The team is one of the top 30 in the world to reach this level of competition. (File image)

Four students of the CMR Institute of Technology (CMR IT) have won the national competition of TiE Pitchfest 2022 and are now gearing up to represent India on the global level at Stanford University in the US.

Final year students of the Computer Science and Engineering Department—Pratik Mukesh Bharuka, Vaishnavi Patil, and Yashwanth Jain—and Arpan Abhishek, who is in his third year, will be going to the US in September to take part in the global level of TiE Pitchfest 2022.

As part of Team Code Eco, the four students came up with a solution to determine the underground water levels and other details with data analytics to help farmers and boost the agricultural economy of the country.

### **What is TiE Pitchfest?**

TiE Global, a nonprofit organisation that aims at nurturing entrepreneurs in all industries, conducts a competition in which several teams from all over the world put forward their ideas to experts. The ideas are usually related to or are solutions to social issues around the globe.

This competition has many local chapters in India, and the CMR IT students applied through Mysuru. After clearing the first round, they appeared for a live pitching fest in front of industry

experts in the semi-final round. The selected teams then appeared for the final national round and the winner will now represent India at the global level.

### **What is ‘Lok Trusha-Water to your borestep’?**

The CMR IT students’ project ‘Lok Trusha’ aims to tackle the shrinking groundwater levels in the country. “According to the latest government statistics, groundwater has been depleted by over 75 per cent from the previous decades in most states of India. There is a need to entrust strategic solutions that bring about an enduring change,” Team Code Eco told [indianexpress.com](http://indianexpress.com). “We use remote sensing data by [ISRO](http://ISRO) to study the land structure and use this to analyse and find out the places that could become groundwater rich in the near future. We aim to work with different government agencies to help them plan recharge activities and nourish water bodies. We, as a team, believe that if humans can create problems, they can solve them too. It is our aim to tackle drought-hit regions in the country and the world.”

The idea for this project came after observing the decline in the groundwater level in Bengaluru. Once known as a city of 1000 lakes, Bengaluru is now listed among 11 cities in the world to run out of groundwater. While these students had seen discussions taking place on this topic, they observed that these ‘discussions’ were not bringing out any solid results. “We knew the situation was alarming and had to take action before it was too late. This is how we first started working on this idea and connected with scientists from the Central Groundwater Board (Ministry of Jal Shakti), understanding the groundwater scenario and the various technologies involved. We then took inspiration from a few other countries and came up with our very own ‘desi solution’,” the team said.

The students are hoping that their solution, if adopted and used properly, “could help create watershed management schemes that would help transform the lives of every single farmer who uses groundwater for his irrigational activities”.

### **Journey to Stanford**

The team is one of the top 30 in the world to reach the final level of competition and will be pitching their idea at Stanford University to win the world title. The team will be trained by professors from ISB, Hyderabad and a few IIMs.

“We have been engaging with various government organisations and officers to get their help. We are also trying to reach out to the defence forces to work with them in remote locations. In the next few months, before the finale, we plan to carry out recharge activities in a few locations and actually make an impact. We truly believe in our model and we are really excited about taking part in the global finale,” Team Code Eco told [indianexpress.com](http://indianexpress.com).

“We are truly excited to get this opportunity and take our idea to a global level. This gives us the motivation and confidence not only to work with the Indian government but also with the activists and leaders of the world.”