PRESSADISE LOST

ISSUE 1

Getting Started

Name

Character

avatar

clothing

Additional customization on the way!

Next

create your character, give it a name, and customise the look of your avatar

You are muted
You camera is off

Edit Character

HD Webcam

Microphone

Default - Speakers

Having trouble with your audio/video?

Join the Gathering

By joining this room, you agree to our Terms of Use and Privacy Policy, and confirm that you're over 13 years of age.
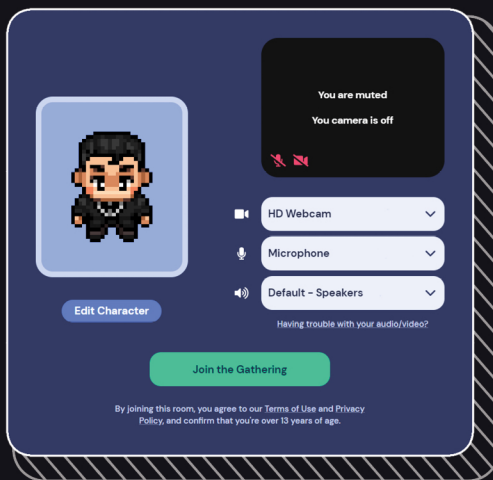
check your camera, microphone, and audio settings

You
Online

edit your name and avatar by clicking on this card at the bottom of the screen

Keyboard Controls

use the arrow keys for movement

interactive objects glow yellow when you are close to them

posters appear as pop-ups when you are close to them

whiteboards can be used by multiple people at the same time
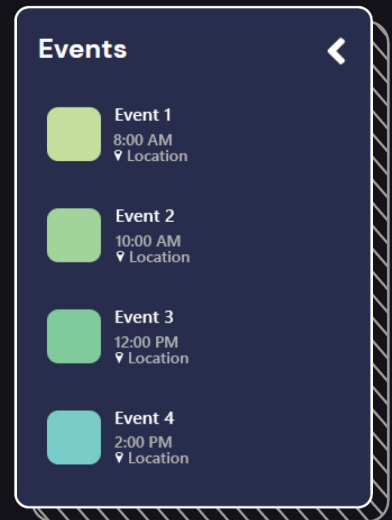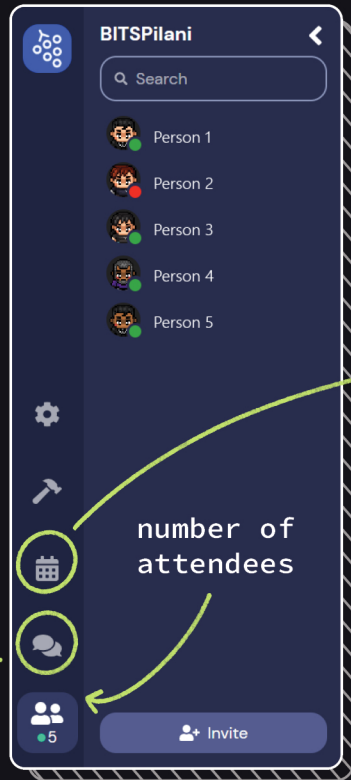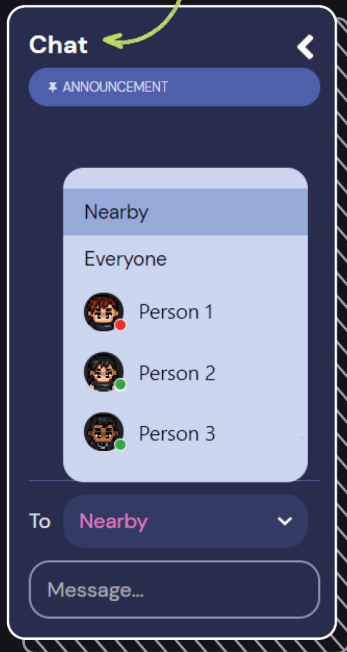
press X to interact with objects

X

press and hold Z to make your character dance

Z

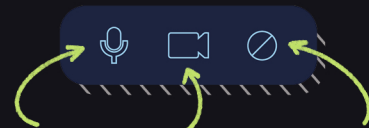press and hold G to activate "ghost" mode (allows you to move through the crowd)

G

Key Features

talk to other
people using the
chat option

Chat

📌 ANNOUNCEMENT

Nearby

Everyone

Person 1

Person 2

Person 3

To Nearby

Message...

BITSPilani

🔍 Search

Person 1
Person 2
Person 3
Person 4
Person 5

⚙️

🔨

📅

💬

👥 ●5

👤+ Invite

number of
attendees

Events

Event 1
8:00 AM
📍 Location

Event 2
10:00 AM
📍 Location

Event 3
12:00 PM
📍 Location

Event 4
2:00 PM
📍 Location

calendar shows a
list of upcoming
events

🎤 📹 ⊘

microphone videocam block

the video and audio of a
"spotlighted" individual is
broadcasted to the entire room

🌐

you will automatically
be connected to everyone
in a private room

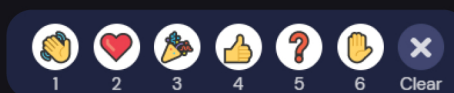in an open area, a video call
automatically starts between
everyone within a five-tile radius

share your
screen with
other people

👤 You
Online 🗺️ 🖥️ 🙂

react with
emojis

mini-map of the
area you are in

👏 ❤️ 🎉 👍 ❓ ✋ ✖️
1   2   3   4   5   6 Clear
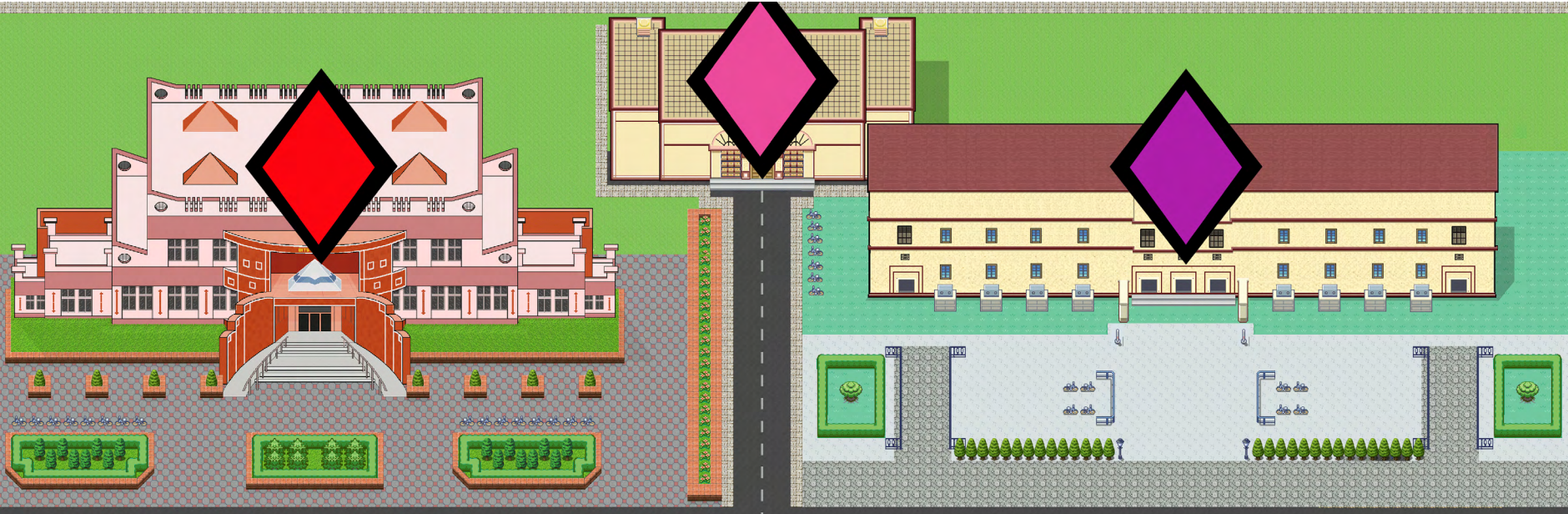
LIBRARY
LTC
AUDI

FD1
FD2
FD3

NAB
SAC
ROTUNDA

KERNEL EVENTS

INTERNATIONAL CODING LEAGUE - *FD1*

AI ROBO SOCCER - *6103*

AEROSTABLE LYNYRD SKYNYRD - *1230*

GAMBLING MATHEMATICS - *1226*

ANALOG DESIGN CHALLENGE - *FD3*

HACKATRONIX - *G-MEET*

Editorial

Day one has been a unique experience, to say the least. I spent the whole day alternating between wheeling a mini-me around, and running around my actual house as it underwent renovation.

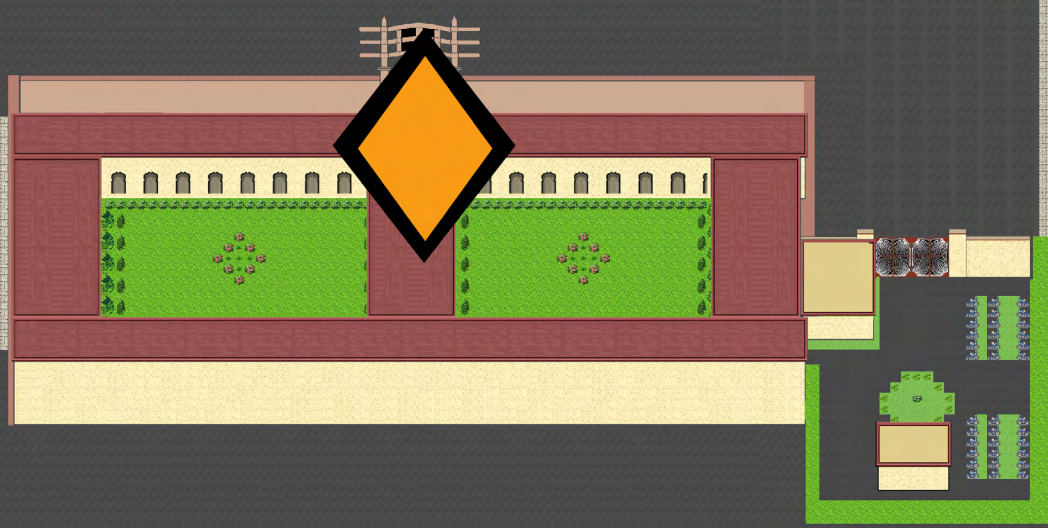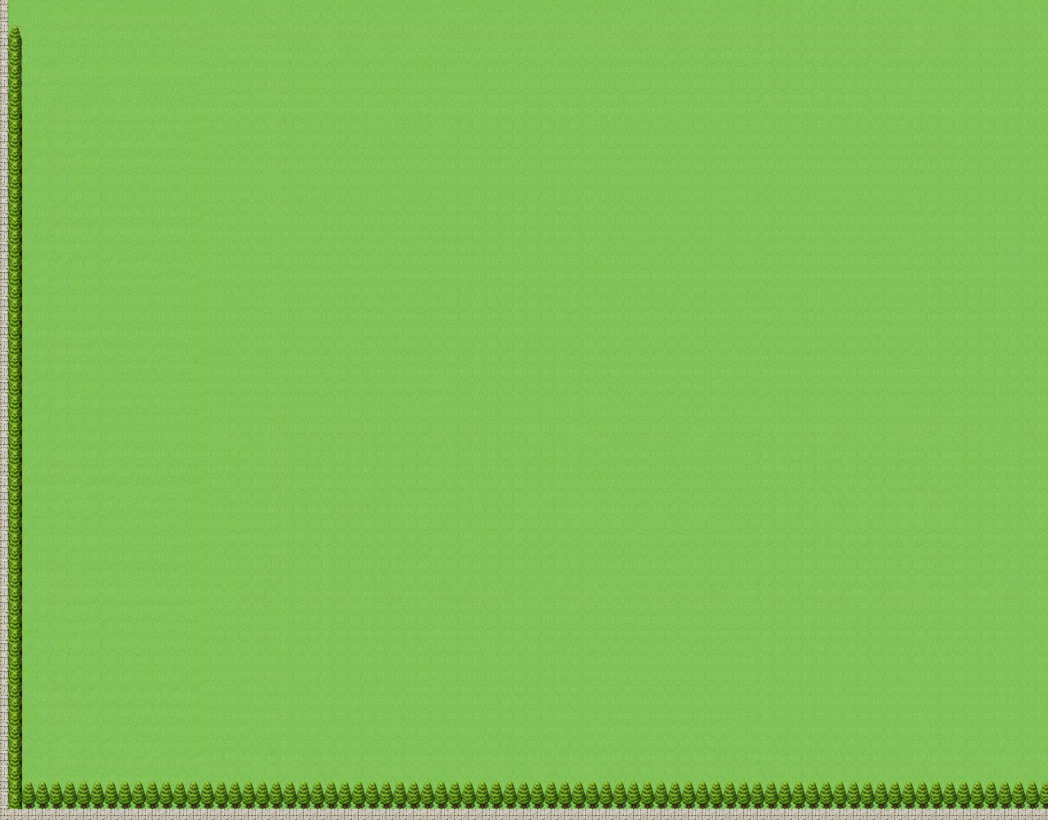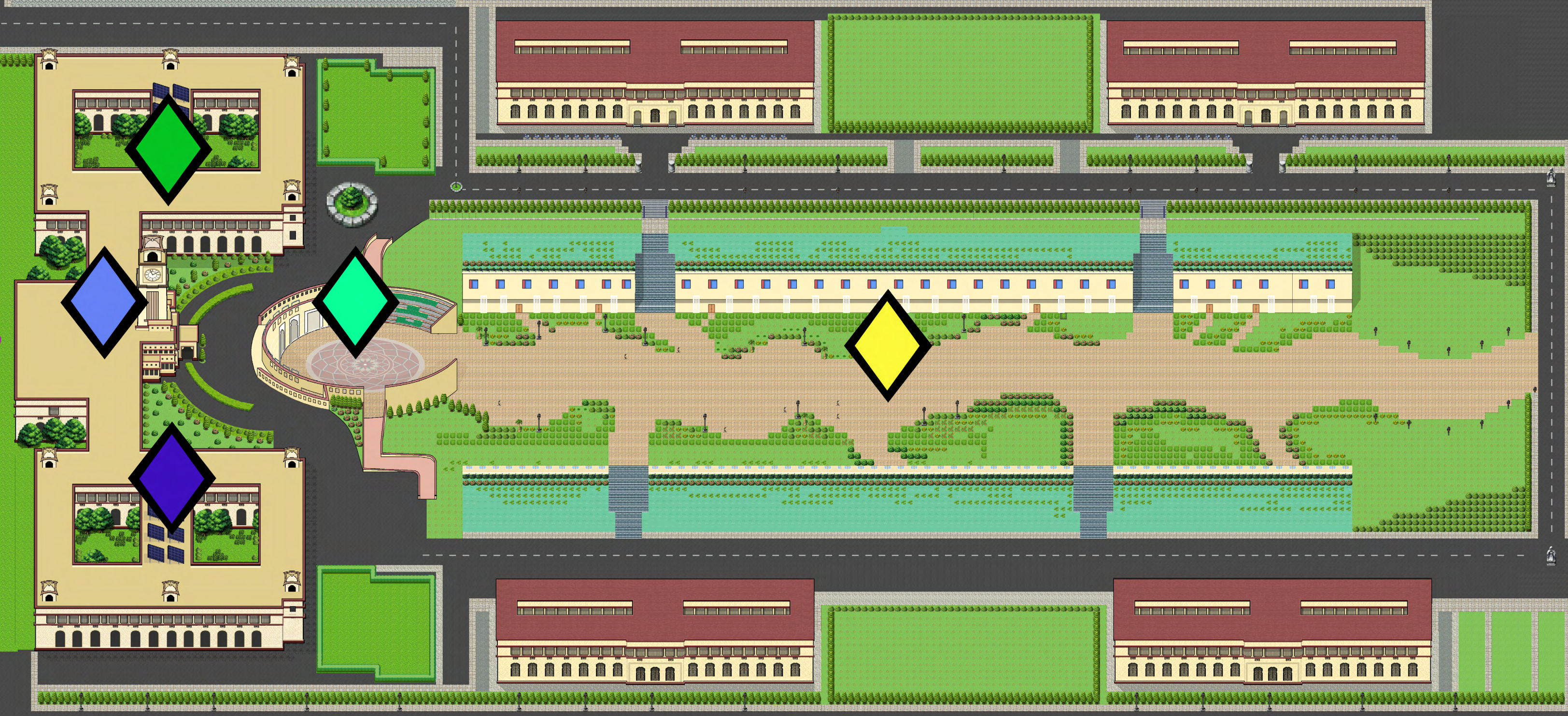The beginning was rough—events were scheduled at places that did not exist, hordes of confused juniors ambled around Rotunda while trying to figure out what FDs were, and people were unceremoniously dumped on the roof.

Things did seem to settle down as the day went on, as people went around exploring an incredibly detailed digital replica of our campus.

We were allotted our own booth and though empty for the better part of the day, it did have its moments. But the energy that accompanies a fest seems to be hiding behind tiny virtual avatars and tired screens. After the initial hit of nostalgia wore off, Enthusiasm fell flat on his pixelated face.

As I write this, I can't help but imagine how the fest would have played out on campus. We might have missed deadlines there too, and handling additional logistics might have caused additional stress (The campus also lacks a good source for coffee, so there's that too). A senior told me that I would have had it so much worse on campus. I probably would have. But I would happily pick the latter any day, knowing that I would have had a fest where I could see the looks on people's faces as they read our articles or used it to wipe dirty tables at ANC.

Don't mind me, I whine too much.

The Team

Mustansir

Abhinav, Aditya, Anirudh, Archith, Debarpan, Jai, Saksham, Vinay

Adit, Chiraag, Effy, Gandhar, George, Hamza, Pranav, Sabhya, Sarthak, Shreyasi, Utkarsh

Abhigya, Advait, Ananya, Anirudh, Anuneet, Ashutosh, Ayushmaan, Digvijay, Kumaraditya, Rishabh, Saksham, Siddharth, **Tejas**, Ved

Aarjav, Adaa, Antash, Anumegha, Anurupa, Jinay, Mizaan, Nandinee, Priyansh, Riya, Shaz, Shreya, Varun, Vishnu, Zehaan
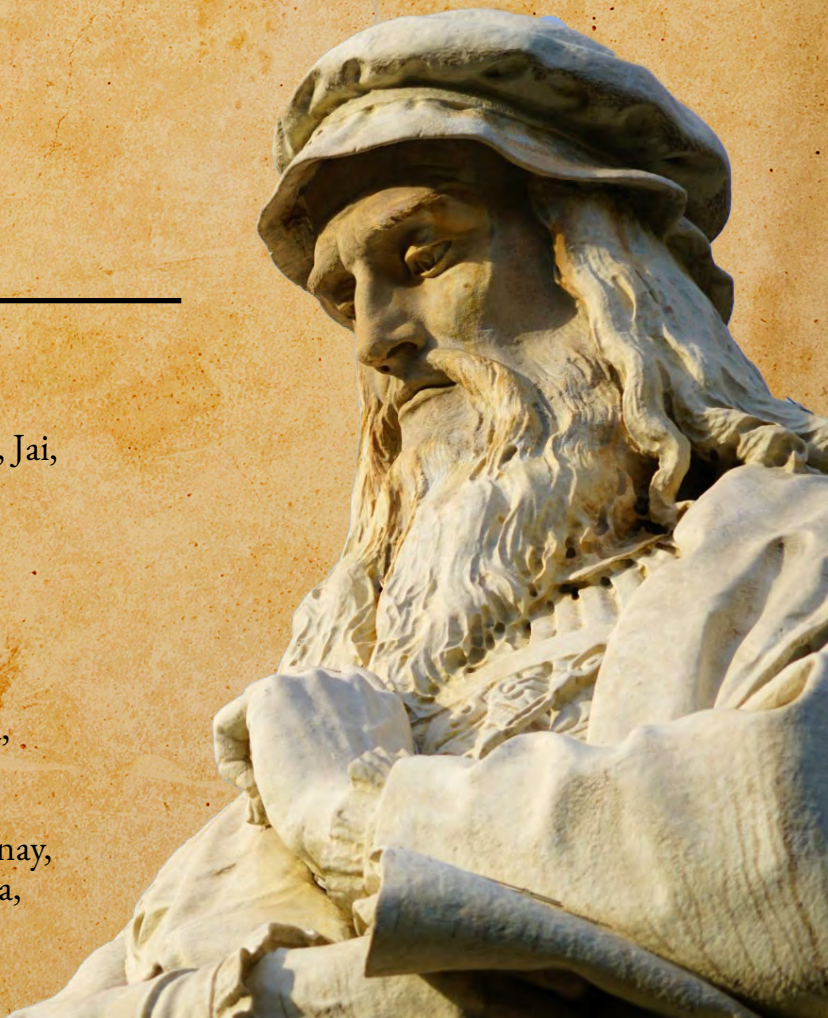
TREASURE HUNT

Treasure Hunt, one of the most anticipated events of the year, is set to be conducted online this APOGEE. The event will start at 6 pm on 20th March and will be conducted by the Department of Informalz on gather.town. The Treasure Hunt aims to challenge participants with mind-boggling problems that have bizarre solutions and are bound to leave them bewildered.

About 600 people have already registered for this event and Informalz plans to keep the registrations open until the event begins. The Participants can partake in this hunt in teams of up to fifteen members. The participants will spawn at the library area in gather.town, where they will receive their first clue. The standard format, where four to five tasks are given during the treasure hunt, will be followed for this year's event too, and each problem will have contrasting elements to it.

Informalz plans to keep the participants on their toes throughout the event by using hidden links and images embedded in objects. If required, the participants will be permitted to use Google or any other online resource. Every minute decision made by the participants should be backed by solid reasoning. If the participants provide an incorrect answer or erroneous reasoning, they will not be allowed to proceed.

Informalz has informed participants to be prepared for a rollercoaster of an event as multiple Rickrolls and strenuous problems are expected. The winners of this event will be awarded a cash prize worth ₹2000 and a participation certificate.
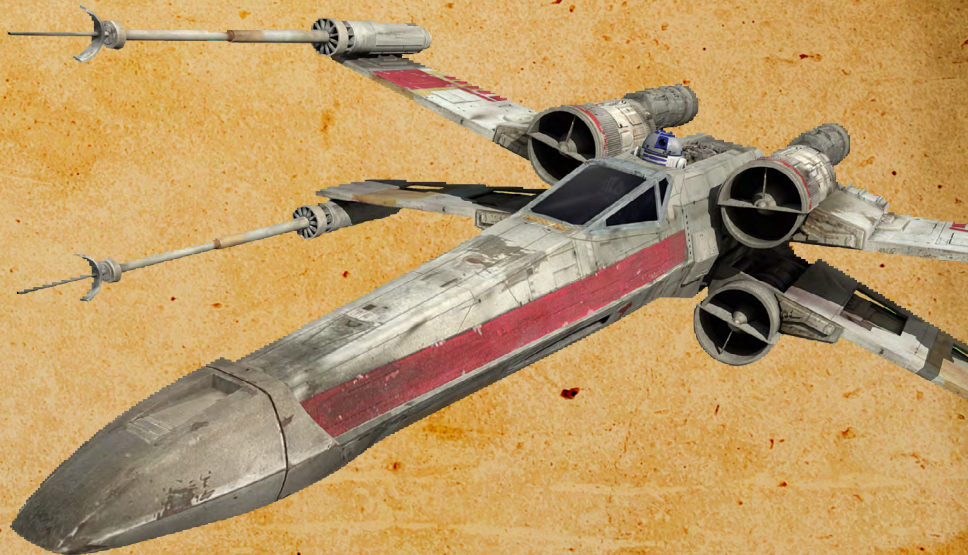
Mechanix

Mechanix is one of the twelve kernel events of APOGEE 2021. It is scheduled on Sunday, March 21, from 2:00 to 5:00 PM. The English Press Club talked to Srijen Gupta from the Manufacturing Engineering Association about how they have been planning the event.

In previous editions of APOGEE, participants would be given a problem statement and would use the machines available in the workshop to create a solution. In this edition of APOGEE, the problem statements will involve household objects one would find in their surroundings. Srijen hopes that this will encourage participants to spot the interesting mechanisms that exist everywhere around them.

The participants will first join a Google Meet, where they will be given the problem statement. They will then have three hours to design a CAD model of their solution using Autodesk Fusion 360. Their solution will be evaluated based on parameters such as the assembly of the model, its accuracy, and realism.

Outreach and publicity has been difficult in the online medium, but Srijen mentioned that the Department of Publicity and Correspondence (PCr) and the CoStAAns have been very helpful with it. Thanks to this, the event has received over 120 registrations.

Mechanix is sponsored by Alphation Auto. The top two winners will get a cash prize and an opportunity for an internship with a core mechanical automotive company.
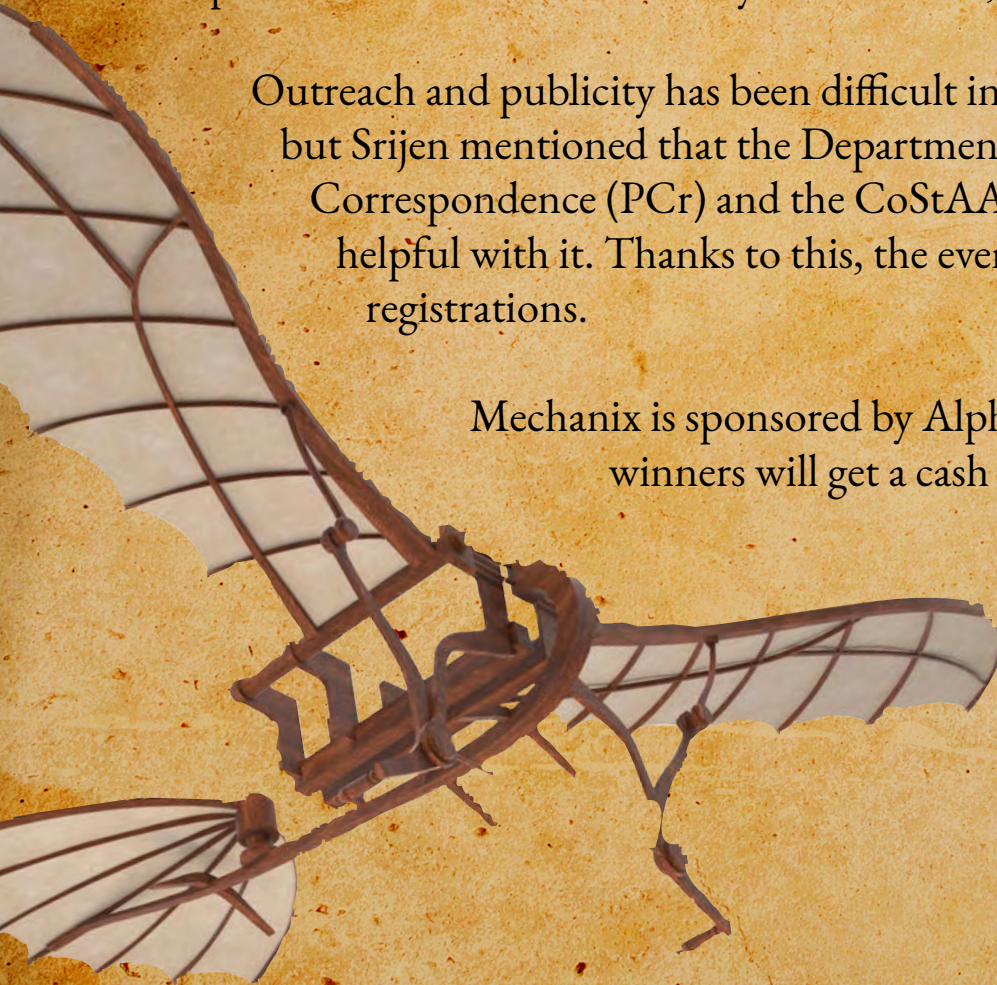
Chem-E-Hunt

This APOGEE, the Indian Institute of Chemical Engineers (IIChE) is organising a Chem-E-Hunt. The premise of this event is that unknown forces have endangered humanity at an unspecified point in time. Applying various concepts of science, one has to solve brain-wracking puzzles and manoeuvre labyrinths spread across the virtual campus to save humanity.

This virtual adventure will begin at 5:00 PM on March 21, 2021. Students can participate individually or in teams of upto five members.
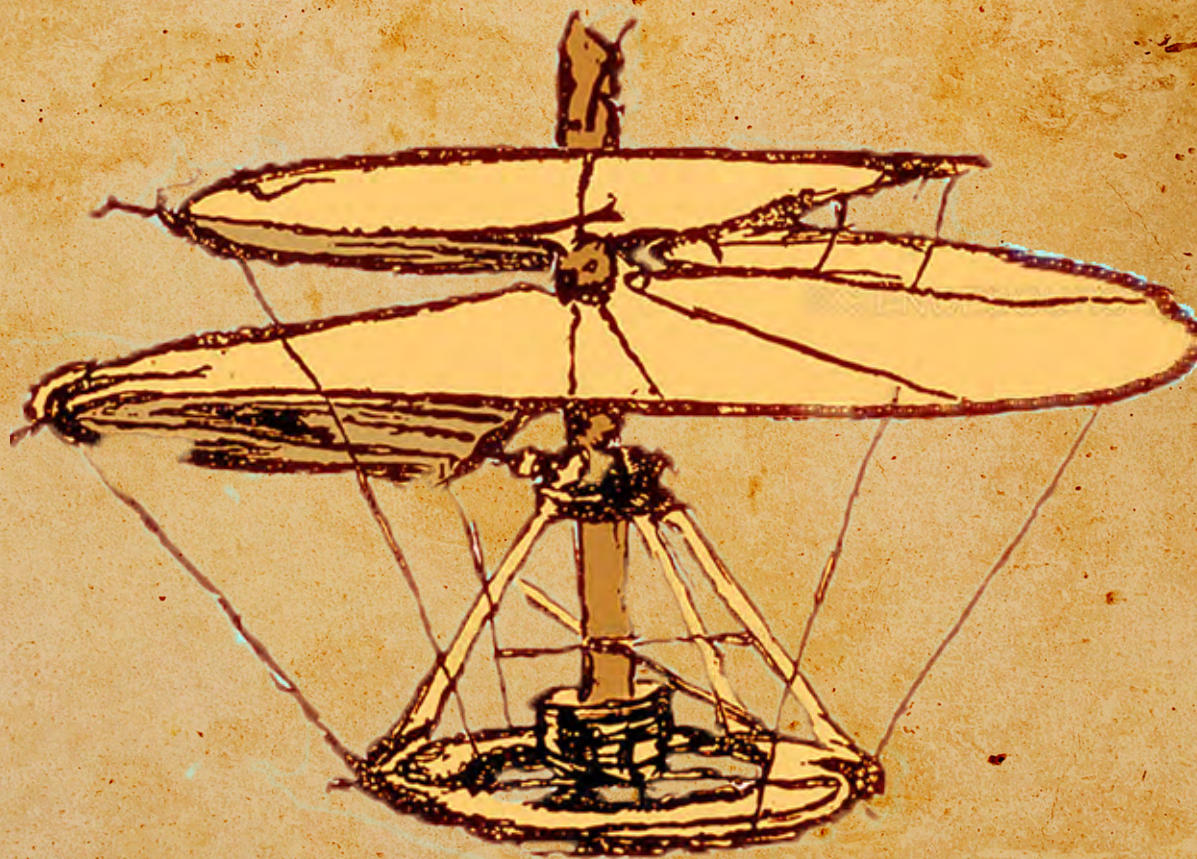
KARASONIC

On the third day of pre-fest activities, SoundideaZ Academy organised the finals of Karasonic, an online competition of digital music production. Out of the 25 entries that were received, fifteen were selected for the finale. The event was streamed live on Airmeet.

After a fifteen-minute delay due to technical issues, the competition began by introducing the judge, Sultan Nation. When asked about how he made his foray into hip-hop, Sultan shared that he was introduced to hip-hop and rap in 2009, just after graduating. Since there was very little awareness about the genre in India, he taught himself the technical details and the culture of hip-hop. He dropped his first mixtape in the same year, and it sold out within a few days. In 2012, Sony Music hired him for music production and marketing. In the past year, Sultan has developed his eponymous YouTube channel. He has made numerous videos about the technicalities and history of hip-hop to spread awareness about the genre and help aspiring artists understand its roots.

After this, selected entries were played. The first two were accompanied by animated videos. However, this reduced the quality of the stream and caused it to lag. To prevent this, subsequent entries were played without any accompanying video. Each entry featured a variety of unique sounds using different instruments and vocal notes—one entry even sampled the sound of an elephant's trumpet.

Sultan Nation commended all participants on their production skills. He found it hard to believe that their entries were amateur projects.

The event ended with Sultan encouraging everyone to keep their imagination unrestricted and pursue their passion. He added that academics were equally important and played an essential part in one's life.

Chetan Bodra from Birsa Institute of Technology, Sindri placed first and received a 100% scholarship in Sound Engineering from SoundideaZ Academy. Suryansh Agnivanshi of Shri Shankaracharya Institute of Professional Management & Technology placed second, with Sahil (aka ARSH) securing the third place. Both received coupons worth $50 for Audionamix.

Virtual Cloning

The Biological Society conducted an event called Virtual Cloning on March 19, 2021. It was co-hosted by Ventakeswaran S. and Kirat Chawla, both of whom are executive committee members of the society. The event primarily focused on the concept of Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)—a technique that is used to amplify a single copy of a desired piece of DNA—cloning, and how these processes can be demonstrated on virtual platforms. Serial Cloner, a molecular biology software, was used throughout the event and participants were required to install it beforehand.

The event began with Kirat giving a brief overview of DNA, its component, and its complementary base pairing in DNA. This was followed by a discussion on the PCR technique and the steps involved in it—denaturation, annealing, and extension. Importance of the PCR technique in reading the COVID-19 genome was further highlighted.

In the latter part of the event, Venkateswaran took over and provided a brief description of gene cloning by the application of the PCR process on a plasmid. The importance of restriction enzymes and primers in cloning was emphasised and a detailed explanation of their functioning was provided. After talking about the requirements and processes involved in gene cloning, the event moved towards a demonstration on Serial Cloner. Basic functions such as litigation and running a PCR were demonstrated, and participants were encouraged to perform these functions on their own to get comfortable with the software.

The session concluded with a 30-minute long competition. Participants were provided with a question and were required to arrive at a solution using the functions taught in the session. Their answer file, along with a PDF or Notepad file containing a brief description of their thought process, was collected through a   Google Form.

N2O

The comedian Nishant Suri is set to be the closing act for APOGEE, as a part of the N2O night organised by the Hindi Activities Society (HAS). He became a popular name in the comedy circuit after winning Amazon Prime Video's reality show, Comicstaan. His tour with fellow contestant Rahul Dua, the live comedy show "The Dua-Suri Show", and his hour-long solo "Why So-Surious", have given him a well-deserved fan base

that finds his material extremely relatable. His journey from an engineer, to a banker, to a wedding photographer, and finally to a comedian has given him ample comedic material.

Having studied at BITS, he can be expected to connect with the audience and understand the ethos of APOGEE well. HAS managed to rope him in for the event after much deliberation over budgeting issues. Initially, there was a dearth of funding which made contacting artists for events a near impossibility. When the funds came in, agencies were contacted and luckily, Nishant Suri fit the bill. Interaction with the audience is an important part of a comedy routine. To make that happen, the event is being held on Zoom, which has a capacity of 500 participants. The event will also be streamed on Airmeet, since registrations have crossed the participation limit.

Catch Nishant Suri live on March 21 at 10:30 PM!

APOGEE INAUGURATION

The 39th edition of APOGEE began on March 20, 2021, with the inauguration ceremony, which started at 11:35 PM after a delay of twenty minutes. This is the first time that the inauguration was held virtually on Airmeet.

Due to technical issues surrounding the curtain-raiser, the event began with a speech by Maneesh Sharma, Country Manager at GitHub, the title sponsor for this edition of APOGEE. He gave insights on how technology is changing our lives and how the students of BITS Pilani will pave the way to a future where technology will make our lives much easier.
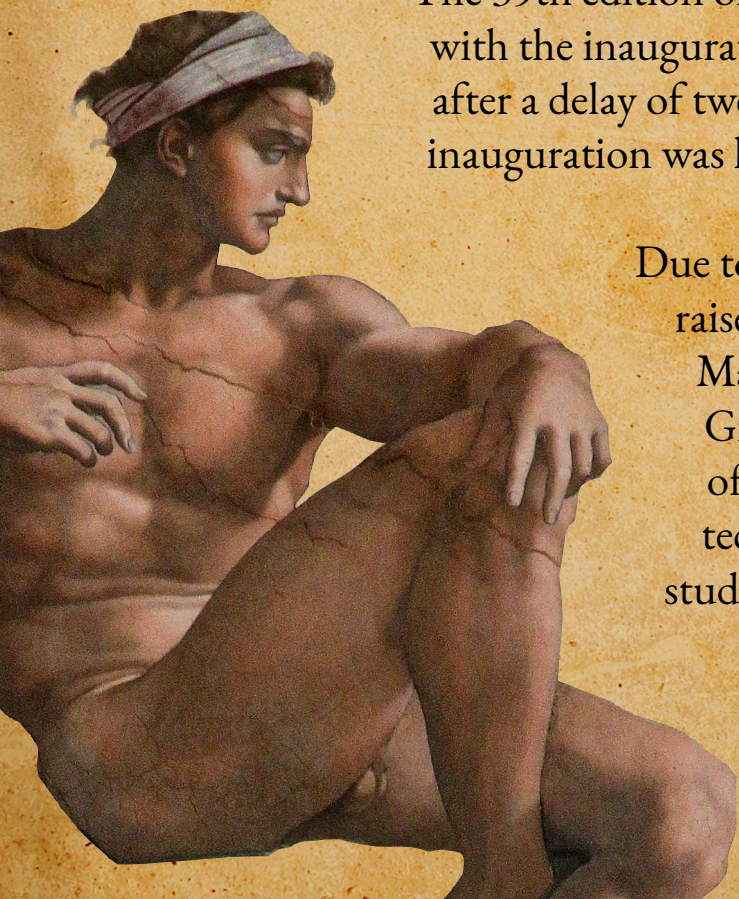
The next programme on the itinerary was a performance by the Dance Club (DC). There were two separate pre-recorded acts. The club chose songs from different genres for their act. The energetic performances were well-received by the audience and members could be seen cheering enthusiastically in the chat window.

The DC performance was followed by a speech by Rohit Kaila, Vice-President Engineering at Walmart Global Tech, the Associate Title Sponsor for this APOGEE. He gave a speech about how the students of BITS Pilani will be the next innovators and thinkers who will revolutionise the world. He showed how India was a great place to come up with wonderful ideas and invent extraordinary things.

Next was a performance by the Music Club. This, too, was pre-recorded. They performed "Safe and Sound" by Capital Cities. The members of the club had only found out that they had to perform a week ago. The audience was enthralled by the performance and displayed their emotions in the chat window.

The issue with the curtain-raiser had been resolved and it was played next. Next up was a speech by the Vice-Chancellor, Souvik Bhattacharyya. He spoke about all that the institute had achieved during these challenging times. He encouraged the students to keep striving and not give up.

The final programme was a speech by the Chief Guest Maninderjeet Bitta, the Chairman of All-India Anti Terrorist Front (AIATF) and former President of the Indian Youth Congress. He urged the students to be disciplined, study well, and make India proud at the international level. The ceremony ended at 1:15 PM. The display of talent and the speeches left the students in a good mood, hopeful for the events to come.

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CALMADO — TRAVEL AND TREKKING

BOUNCE INC — FREE SPIRITS UNLEASHED

The Belgian Waffle Co — Because Batter Matters

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