

E-Fest, College of Engineering, Pune's annual entrepreneurial festival, organised by the Entrepreneurship Development Cell, COEP saw an array of exhilarating and enriching events including Competitions, Workshops, Speaker Sessions and Networking Meets. The festival was inaugurated on the 27th of March by Mr. Sanjay Katkar (Co-Founder & CTO, Quick Heal), Dr. Parag Kulkarni (Founder & CEO, EKLaT Research) and Dr. A. D. Sahasrabudhe (Director, COEP) which then flourished for the next two days in the midst of numerous Start-ups, Entrepreneurs and Investors.

The emergence of Pune as the next Start-Up hub has been possible because of its evolving start-up ecosystem and the increasing number of successful start-ups and entrepreneurs. The E-Fest that is held every year at COEP brings together these like-minded innovative people to celebrate the joy of entrepreneurship. The festival saw a huge crowd of students belonging to both technical and non-technical backgrounds from diverse colleges across the State.

The first day of the festival kick-started with learning and interactive sessions meticulously designed for students having an inclination towards building their own start-up. Apart from sessions on Innovation, Art of Pitching, Budgeting for Start-ups and Cash flow Management, a Business Model Canvas Workshop was organised for students with business ideas to help them create a visual chart with elements to describe their firm's or product's value proposition, infrastructure, customers, and finances. This workshop was conducted by Vishwas Mahajan (President, TiE Pune Chapter), who also prompted these budding entrepreneurs to identify opportunities while becoming more efficient by illustrating potential trade-offs and aligning activities.

The latter included a range of distinct competitions intended to inculcate and test entrepreneurial skills amongst the participants while having fun. Under the E-Fest umbrella, 2 new events were launched this year namely Pep Talk and The NGO Challenge. Pep Talk was a one of its kind event where students put themselves in the shoes of a CEO facing a period of apocalypse and displayed their motivational speaking skills to fire up a pseudo-workforce. Whereas, the NGO Challenge was a test of the students' social entrepreneurial skills to solve the challenge presented by Ecosan Services Foundation. BidMaster proved to be a huge crowd puller as the participants experienced a spell of intensive planning, strategy and impulsive decision making. The other events included Bull Run, a game on virtual stock market which taught participants to make wiser investments and BizQuiz, an intense quiz competition where the participants faced questions on diverse aspects of business, coupled with tidbits of trivia.

The flagship event of this year's E-Fest, 'Business Baazigar', which has been the hallmark of the festival since its inception was the major attraction. This event set a stage for new and promising start-ups to showcase and even sell their products/services to E-Fest participants having virtual money given by the organisers to spend at their stalls. The virtual money earned by the start-ups was matched by the organizers in real. It also gave them amazing

exposure as Investors were present to scrutinize these start-ups. The winner of this event was Skyline Labs, a start-up from COEP which specialises in Web Designing, App Development and Games. The festival also provided a platform for entrepreneurs across the city to share their stories, discuss problems and create a vivid network for them during the Entrepreneurs Coffee Meet.

The two day festival concluded with the valedictory ceremony, where winners were felicitated by the Chief Guest, Mr. Prakash Dhoka (Chairman, DCCIA & MD, IMP India Pvt Ltd), followed by a stimulating performance by Taal Inc. With all the encouragement, enrichment and exuberance, E-Fest'15 certainly lived up to its credentials of fostering young entrepreneurial minds to pioneer a quintessential start-up culture.

