

US students offer solutions for waste mgmt, rural issues

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Solutions for problems related to waste management and village ecosystem were among some of the innovations by students from US, at the two-week long 'Design for a Billion' workshop at the Indian Institute of Gandhinagar.

Twenty-eight students and two faculty members of The New School, New York, participated in the workshop from January 8-19.

Besides lectures, they also undertook field trips to Palaj village and Ahmedabad, where they identified social problems and came up with solutions.

"The teams found solutions for various problems related to waste management, village ecosystem, education system, water management and bus transportation. The solutions were conceptualised on the basis of field trips, surveys and feedback of end-users," IITGN said.

The institute said that five interesting innovations, viz. Saaf Mahavari (Clean Menstruation), TransPotatoes, Village Wash, The Marble Jar and Sachet Cachet, came to the



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fore during the workshop.

Elaborating on the innovations, IITGN said that Saaf Mahavari aims at empowering and educating rural women via a menstrual hygiene kit, comprising low-cost sanitary napkins.

TransPotatoes is a smart card, which enables bus

commuters to pay fare electronically.

Similarly, Village Wash is a washing machine which needs less water and uses manual power to rotate the drum.

The fourth innovation The Marble Jar, focuses on transforming education in public schools by introducing task-based activities that encourage community-building, self-discipline and curiosity in students.

Sachet Cachet, the fifth innovation is focused on microfinance and aims to address ecological and health effects of plastic waste, as well as economic issues.

Prof Amit Prashant of IITGN said that they will now look at implementing these solutions and widening the impact nationally.

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