

## Indian high school students shine at I-SWEEEP 2012



Team India at I-SWEEEP (from left) - Karthik Bhat, Khyati Sood, Vidya Venkatetsh and Ramnath Rao

Mumbai and Puttur may have an urban and rural divide but not when it comes to representing India in science fair and winning accolades for the country. The high school students from Mumbai & Puttur (Karnataka) have won Gold and Bronze medal respectively at the recently concluded International I-SWEEEP Science Fair 2012, USA.

The students from Modern English School, Mumbai – Vidya Venkatesh and Khyati Sood have won gold medal for their project titled “A novel eco-friendly biodegradable foam sheet prepared from waste jackfruit seed starch” in the Environment project category. The students said that support from their guide Mrs Sital Lakshmi and parents were a key factor to their success. “We did a lot of work with the support of our guide Sita Lakshmi madam”. “Everyday we used to wait for the school to get over so that we could spend time with our guide for the project direction. Our parents were also very supportive.” says Vidya & Khyati jointly. The students made a eco-friendly foam sheet from Jack Fruit seeds that can be used in packaging industry and others.

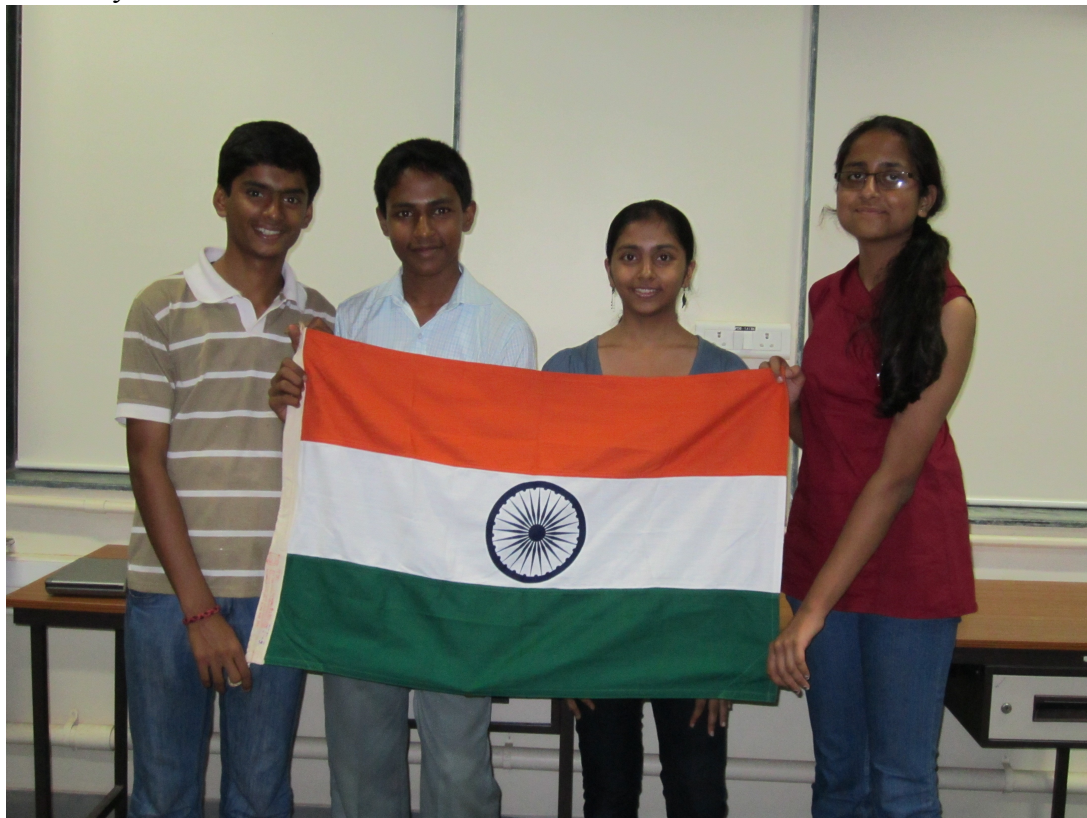
The students from Sri Ramakrishna High School, Puttur submitted their project titled “A Novel Anti Termite treatment & control using *Schleichera oleosa*” and won Bronze medal for the environment

category. Karthik and Ramnath also shared a similar view point. “We had multiple teachers supporting us, Shoba madam, Vasanthi madam and Sreedhara sir our school headmaster. They provided the direction for us to complete the project work.” “Our parents were also very supportive.” they add. The students analyzed the leaves of “Kusum tree” (*Schleichera oleosa*) and prepared a natural anti-termite control.

Incidentally, the headmaster of the school and teacher Vasanthi also visited the fair and provided encouragement. They say that the visit has given them an adequate global exposure to see what all the other international students do in their project.

These projects qualified through participating in INSEF (Indian Science and Engineering Fair) an online fair that accepts project entries from students in India. Science Society of India a NGO runs INSEF and provides student a platform to represent India for I-SWEEEP, USA. Narayan Iyer, President of Science Society of India (SSI) says “I am very delighted and happy to see Indian team win awards at I-SWEEEP”. Narayan who was there at I-SWEEEP says that “Visiting this fair has given me a motivation and the push to do more volunteering work to encourage innovation in our country”. “In United States a lot of money is being pumped into STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) programs to encourage innovation in science and technology and in some years it is going to see a massive impact. I think in India, we need to realize this spend our efforts and money to encourage project based learning at the school level with the existing curriculum.”

To participate in I-SWEEEP from India any student can goto <http://sciencesociety.in> and submit their project. The submission deadline is generally end of December. “By having an open online submission, we have removed all the barriers for anyone having worked on their project ideas to submit it online” adds Narayan.



Team India Pre-departure (from left) : Ramnath Rao, Karthik Bhat, Vidya Venkatesh and Khyati Sood



Team India at Texas Science Museum Fieldtrip (from left) – Ramnath Rao, Vidya Venkatesh, Karthik Bhat and Khyati Sood