

When a BITS Goa student became the Apple of Tim Cook's eye

Akshat Srivastava's wonder app, MindBud, got him to Apple's Worldwide Developers Conference and a meeting with CEO Tim Cook

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MARGAO: In a remarkable achievement that has brought pride to Goa, 22-year-old Akshat Srivastava, a student at BITS Pilani K K Birla College, Goa has caught the attention of Apple CEO Tim Cook himself, who he met in California, on Monday.

Srivastava's innovative app, MindBud, has earned him recognition as one of the 50 Distinguished Winners of the Swift Student Challenge, securing

him an invitation to Apple's prestigious five-day Worldwide Developers Conference (WWDC) in Cupertino, California that began on Monday.

As Cook interacted with Srivastava before the event kicked off, he couldn't help but express his admiration for the young Indian developer on X (formerly known as Twitter).

"I met so many extraordinary developers when I visited India last year, and I saw so much excitement for the many ways that technology can enrich



Akshat Srivastava seen with Tim Cook in a screengrab from the post shared by the Apple CEO on X

people's lives. And it was equally wonderful to meet Akshat this week and see how he's created a whole

new way to share his love of classic games with the next generation," said Cook on the social media

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—Tim Cook, Apple CEO on X

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—Akshat Srivastava, Student, BITS Pilani, Goa

platform that immediately went viral in India.

MindBud, the app that captured Cook's attention,

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—Dr Snehanshu Saha, Professor, Dept of Computer Science and Information Systems & Head - AI Research Centre, BITS Pilani K K Birla Goa Campus

is a captivating blend of nostalgia and innovation. Inspired by playful moments with his nephew,

Srivastava aimed to introduce children to classic games and activities from his own childhood. The app consists of four mini-games designed to promote analytical and creative thinking, offering a delightful experience for families and friends to enjoy together.

Reflecting on his journey in a comment given to the media, Srivastava shared, "The highlight of my trip was presenting my project to Tim Cook, which felt like a dream come true."

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He expressed gratitude for Cook's "genuine interest and insightful feedback," which he found highly motivating and inspiring. The experience, he noted, "confirmed my passion for technology and motivated me to keep pushing boundaries and making an impact".

Cook lauded Srivastava's achievements, acknowledging him as "part of a growing generation of developers from all across India who are bringing their best ideas to life through coding, and making an important impact in their communities and around the world."

Developed using cutting-edge technologies like SwiftUI, AVKit, PencilKit, and File Manager; MindBud aims to merge classic educational games with modern technology for an immersive and seamless user experience in order to "make classic fun learning meet the new age technology".

Elsewhere, Srivastava's peers and mentors at BITS Pilani K K Birla Goa Campus have showered him with praise for his exceptional coding skills and design thinking abilities.

"BITS Goa CSIS has been making steady strides in research and education. Our students are creating an impact in the technological space and are able to secure admission in top-tier universities abroad. Akshat has been a bright student and has shown immense potential in efficient coding and design. His involvement in class interactions and design thinking have been phenomenal," said Dr Snehanshu Saha, Professor, Department of Computer Science and Information Systems (CSIS), and Head - APPCAIR, the AI Research

Center, BITS Pilani K K Birla Goa Campus.

Others highlighted that as BITS Pilani Goa continues to nurture its talent in the field of technology, Akshat Srivastava's success serves as a shining example of the State's potential to contribute to the global tech landscape.