

Making Bots Come Alive – RoboManipal's Arduino Day

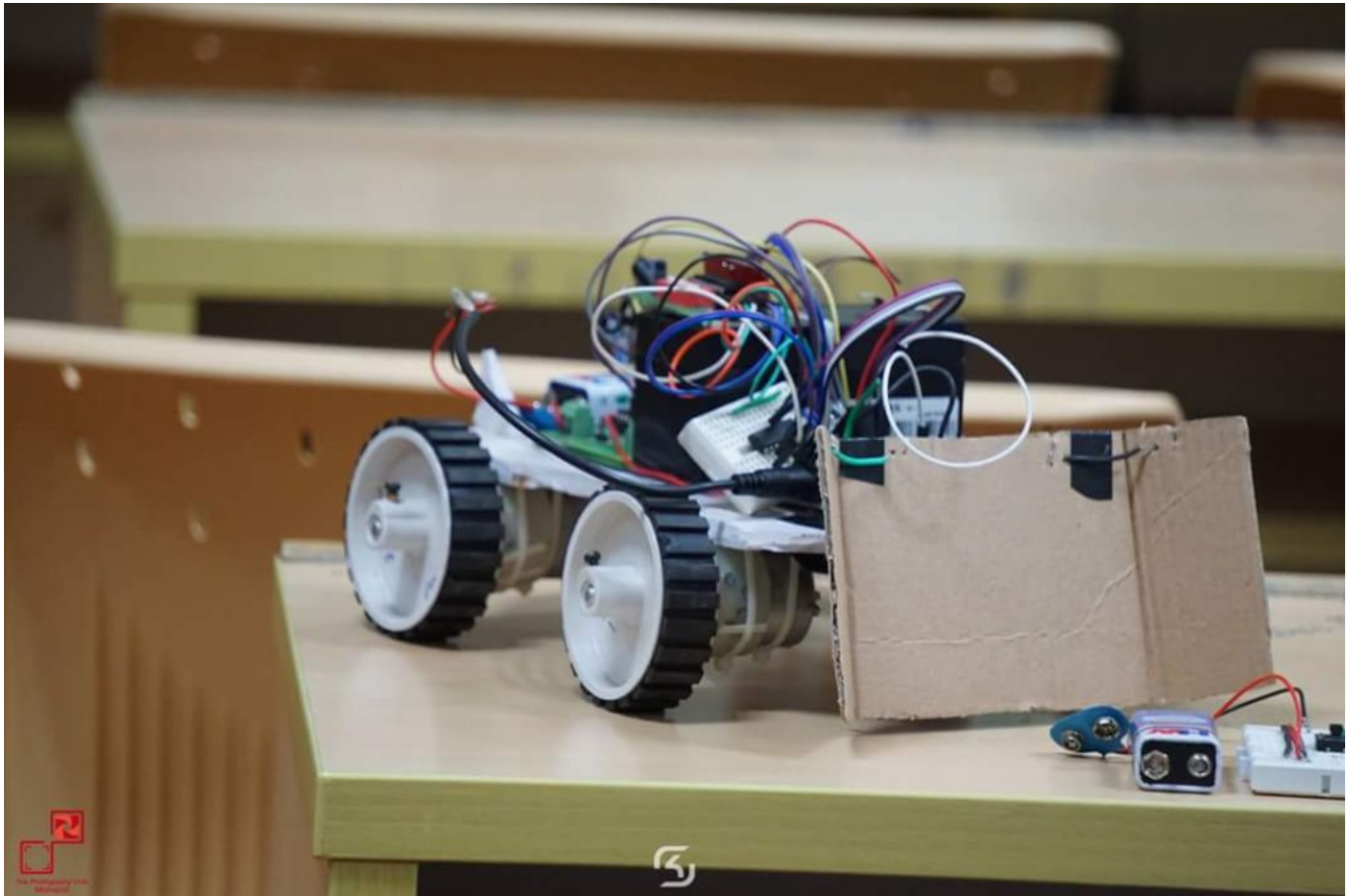
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Think of robotics and the symbol of Arduino is the first thing that pops into one's mind. Ranging from microprocessors to CNC machines, Arduino boards seem to be taking over an increasingly large number of fields. However, a lot of us do not have more than a very basic idea about Arduino. It was with the aim of educating budding engineers about this all-important circuit board that MIT's official robotics student project, RoboManipal, hosted Arduino Day on the 1st of April.



Arduino Day is a worldwide celebration of Arduino and its capabilities. It's a twenty-four hour long event, either organized directly by the community or by the Arduino founders. Anyone can participate to express their ideas, or showcase their research and designs on this platform. It was celebrated this year by more than 499 communities in over seventy-nine countries. This year, students at MIT also got a chance to be a part of this occasion thanks to the efforts of our very own student project, RoboManipal, who brought Arduino Day right to our backyard.

Efforts to organize the event go a long way back to February. The organizers registered themselves online at the Arduino Day website and sent in a detailed submission of their agenda for the event, following which they were given the green signal to go ahead with it.



The agenda for the event was a workshop on Arduino followed by a bot exhibition and a bot competition. However, the organizers' hopes fell flat as the event received an almost non-existent turnout with no one but RoboManipal team members themselves attending the workshop. Even for the bot competition, only one team showed up to participate.

The main theme for this year's competition was 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan'. The participating bots were supposed to collect garbage from one part of the arena and dump it in a designated pit. However, with only one participating bot, the competition lost much of its sheen though the one bot did put up a good display. Admittedly, the organizers tried to spice up the playing field a bit by bringing one of their own bots from the workshop. Unfortunately, as a result of some technical difficulties, their bot failed to run.

Though the event was quite well-organized, it fell flat due to a lack of participation. The organizers were left wringing

their hands and hoping for a better response next year.