

Press Release

To
Editor,

Subject: "Localization Camp" for promoting software availability in Local Languages on GNU/Linux

Localization camp for promotion of software availability in local languages on GNU/Linux

Date and Time: 20th March 2010, 10 am to 5 pm; 21st March 10 am to 3 pm

Venue: Red Hat office, Tower 10, Cyber City, Magarpatta City, Hadapsar

Madam/Sir,

Use of IT services and software in our country has increased very rapidly during last decade. However availability of most of the software in local languages (Marathi, Hindi, Malayalam, etc.) remains a major hurdle in taking IT to the last person. At the same time most of the people today use "proprietary" software which does not give it's users the freedom to study, modify, copy and redistribute the software. Examples of proprietary software include Microsoft Windows, Adobe Pagemaker, CorelDraw, Oracle, etc.

The world of IT has been witnessing a paradigm shift in last 2 decades, in the way software is developed and distributed to its users. The philosophy of "Free Software" has led to the emergence of GNU/Linux operating system and a plethora of software applications, which are acknowledged to be the major threat to monopoly of software giant Microsoft. "Free" in "Free software" stands for Freedom and not for no-cost. Free software gives its users the freedom to copy, study, modify and redistribute the software. Many companies like Red Hat, Canonical, etc. have created sustained businesses by leveraging open source development model. Such software is always developed by a community of software professionals using open standards and always by making the "source code" (the technology) available to people. Free software promotes sharing and co-operation among people and hence it is essential for a democratic society.

Many volunteers from India have been working on making available GNU/Linux in local languages. Today it is available to a good extent in many local languages like Marathi, Malayalam, Hindi, etc. However improvements can always be made.

To promote the use of localized software and to promote development of software in local languages we are organizing a *free of cost "Localization camp"* that aims at introducing to software developers the state of the art and unresolved issues in this field. This camp is being organized by "*Swathanthra Malayalam Computing*", a group of developers working for Malayalam software support; "*Unicode*" which is the free software initiative of "*Lokayat*", an activist group in Pune and *CoFSUG (College of Engineering, Pune's Free Software Users Group)*. The venue for this event is being provided by "*Red Hat*", at their office campus in Magarpatta IT park. The camp will focus on introducing various localization tools, processes and communities and as a forum for developers to connect. This event is open for all to participate, learn and have fun.

This is one of its kind event happening in Pune. These kind of events are the distinguishing features of the "Free software community" which believes in co-operation and sharing. We request you to send your reporter and photographer to cover this event and help us promote local language computing.

Sincerely,

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