

Bytes for All...

June 2005@BytesforAll Discussion Group was yet another exciting and happening month with very interesting and insightful discussions. Thank you everyone for their contributions! The following is the summary of various discussion threads.

Open Source

Open source open type font for writing Urdu

Center for Research in Urdu Language Processing (CRULP) at the National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences, Lahore, Pakistan has announced the release of updated version of Open Source character-based Nafees Web Naskh Open Type Font for writing Urdu in Naskh script based on Unicode standards.
<http://www.crulp.org/>

Hindi Software CD launched

At Vigyan Bhavan New Delhi, a Hindi Software Tools CD was launched by Mrs. Sonia Gandhi in the presence of IT Minister and IT Secretary. The CD contains Open Source Software, which runs both on Windows and Linux. It includes Open Office, Firefox, Gaim, Columba Email and Limewire.
<http://www.ncb.ernet.in/bharateeyao>

Free CDs – Tamil language software

TDIL (Technology Development for Indian Languages) programme of Department of Information Technology (DIT) aims at development of information processing tools and techniques for facilitating human-machine interaction without language barrier. Efforts are being made to provide these language tools to common masses through Indian Language Data Centre
<http://www.ildc.in/index.aspx>

Free CDs spread open source in India

The Indian government is trying to encourage the use of computers across the country by distributing free CDs that contain localised versions of popular open-source applications. The government has started distributing CDs containing Tamil-language versions of various open-source applications.
http://news.com.com/Free+CDs+spread+open+source+in+India/2100-7344_3-5720008.html?tag=cd.top

e-Governance

e-Subidha

This web based module of e-Subidha (Service Facilitation Centre or SFC) facilitates enquiring about the status of a Citizen Service Request for any particular service. The new version that makes the application suitable for implementation in government organisations, having Citizen-Centric-Interface and hard copy printed deliverables, with end to end workflow automation.
<http://tsu.trp.nic.in/subidhal>

National Frequency Allocation Plan (NFAP) for Bangladesh

A draft of national frequency allocation plan (NFAP) and spectrum policy has been prepared by Bangladesh Government, aiming at ensuring proper allocation and use of country's network frequency.

Internet Governance

China orders bloggers to register with government

The Chinese authorities have ordered all weblogs and websites in the country to register with the government or face closure in Beijing's latest attempt to control online dissent.
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/china/story/0,7369,1501184,00.html>

Internet Governance Priorities

APDIP presented Internet Governance Priorities and Recommendations from Asia-Pacific at the Fourth WGIG Meeting in Geneva, Switzerland during 14-17 June 2005.
<http://www.apdip.net/news/wgig>

ICTs for Development

Information Society in the Asia Pacific

Partha of Bytesforall joined the Asia Pacific Conference on WSIS in Tehran during May 31 to June 2, 2005. The goal of this conference was to formulate a Regional Action Plan (RAP) and a declaration at the end of this conference.
<http://www.aprcwsis05.ir/>

Connect the world - ITU initiative to bridge the digital divide

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has launched a major new development drive designed to bring access to ICTs to the estimated one billion people worldwide for whom making a simple telephone call remains out of reach.
www.itu.int

Connect rural India to the Internet

An international consortium, including Indian and American companies as well as the World Bank, is planning to establish thousands of rural Internet centres in India to bring government, banking and education services to isolated villages.
<http://www.nytimes.com/redirect/marketwatch/redirect.ctx?MW=http://custom.marketwatch.com/custom/nyt-com/html-companyprofile.asp&symbol=IBN>

Lumbini CMC

The Lumbini Community Multimedia Centre (CMC) was established with the support of UNESCO in April 2004. Lumbini CMC is part of Lumbini Community Radio and focuses on making the CMC work for traditionally marginalised and underrepresented groups.
<http://www.radiolumbini.org>

Women in Bangladesh acquire computer skills

Adhunika is a volunteer-based organisation that provides free IT training to underprivileged women of all ages and all economic backgrounds in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

www.adhunika.org/IT

ICTs serving people with disabilities

This pilot training programme carried out in cooperation with the Ability Foundation of India seeks to promote equal opportunities for persons with hearing and physical impairments enter the employment sector.

http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=16473&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

Events and announcements

Call for nominations - World Summit Award in Pakistan

Pakistan's National Committee for the World Summit Awards announces the launch of nation wide WSA Pakistan competition to recognise and award the best e-Content practices in Pakistan.

www.usapakistan.net.pk

Conference on e-Content and sustainability

This conference is being organised by Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF), World Summit Award (WSA) along with PlaNet Finance India (PFI) and American India Foundation (AIF) will be held on July 23rd 2005 at India International Center, New Delhi.

Telecom reforms in Asia

The first LIRNE.NET course to be held in Asia will take place in Singapore during September 25-30, 2005. It is designed to enhance the strategic thinking of a select group of senior decision makers in the telecom and related sectors in Asia and elsewhere.

<http://lirne.net/live/content/view/90/27/>

Call for papers – International Conference on ICT4D – 2006

The goal of the ICTD conference is to provide a forum for academic researchers working with ICT applied to development. The conference will be scientifically rigorous and multi-disciplinary.

<http://sims.berkeley.edu/ictd2006>

Knowledge networking for peace: rhetoric or reality?

Above mentioned workshop is being organised by BellaSap in Katmandu, Nepal during 27-29, July 2005. The goal of the workshop is to build community of practice for peace.

www.bellanet.org

Publications

egov

egov bi-monthly magazine is a media initiative of CSDMS (Centre for Science, Development and Media Studies), an NGO, based in

Noida (Uttar Pradesh, India). It caters to the information needs of government agencies, the industry, and citizens in general in the area of e-Governance. The theme of May-June 2005 issue is Public Private Partnerships.

<http://www.egov.csdmis.in/>

APCNews

APCNews, the monthly newsletter of the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) is published and was shared electronically. The newsletter covers issues from ICT Policy and Internet Governance to Women & ICTs, Online Tools and Building Capacities and Strategic Use of ICTs.

<http://www.apc.org/english/news/apcnews/>

Miscellaneous

Devnagri input dev-ice

HP Labs in Bangalore is engaged in developing a Devnagri input device. The device works on the basis of partial handwriting recognition. During preliminary studies it was revealed that inspite of a large demand for Hindi keyboard the ones available in the market (QWERTY keyboards with Hindi labels) have not been accepted.

<http://www.hpl.hp.com/india/>

Electronic thesis online

India starts consultation on making thesis online. The University Grants Commission (UGC) of India is inviting public comments to its draft consultation paper "Electronic Thesis Online (India) UGC (Submission of Metadata and Full-text of Doctoral Theses in Electronic Format) Regulations, 2005".

<http://www.digitalopportunity.org/article/view/112326/1/>

Empower women to help stop land degradation

United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, has called on member-states on the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, to pledge the empowerment of women and engage them as full partners in global efforts to address the vital challenge of desertification.

Big Brother Awards International

Every year Privacy International and a growing number of affiliate human rights groups present the Big Brother Awards to government agencies, private companies and individuals who have excelled in the violation of our privacy. The juries worldwide consist of lawyers, academics, consultants, journalists and civil right activists.

<http://www.bigbrotherawards.org/> ■

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