

Bytes for All Readers Forum offers condolences to those who lost their nearest ones, other lives and properties in the South-Asia earthquake. This month Bytes for All had intense debate on topics such as, Dr. Heeks article on FLOSS issue, Negroponte's idea of 100 dollar laptop, ICT4D- Force or Farce etc. Here goes the summary of different discussion threads.

## Disaster Management

### Pakistani FM radio stations appeal for emergency broadcast licenses for disaster areas

The Association of Independent Radio (AIR) of Pakistan, the representative grouping of the country's licensed FM radio stations, have appealed for grant of emergency temporary broadcast licenses in the areas struck by the deadly October 8, 2005 earthquake that has killed an estimated 30,000 people, injured close to 60,000 and rendered about 4 million people in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, North West Frontier Province and the Northern Areas.

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall\\_readers/message/6815](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall_readers/message/6815)

### RISE: Pakistan Relief and Information Systems for Earthquakes

An information sharing web portal Pakistan Relief and Information Systems for Earthquakes (RISE) was launched which is designed to provide information about the 4,000 earthquake-affected villages in the largely rural North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) in Pakistan. To access the web site, please visit [www.risepak.com](http://www.risepak.com).

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall\\_readers/message/6881](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall_readers/message/6881)

### South Asia Quake Help

News and information about resources, aid, donations and volunteer efforts after the Earthquake of October 8th, 2005 at: <http://quakehelp.blogspot.com/WikiPakistan>, providing further information on the calamity at: [http://pakistan.wikicities.com/wiki/Earthquake\\_10-05](http://pakistan.wikicities.com/wiki/Earthquake_10-05)

## ICT4D

### Relief International - Schools Online, Bangladesh

Relief International - Schools Online (RI-SOL) is an international NGO, which formed from the merger of the Los Angeles-based relief and development agency Relief International [RI] <http://www.ri.org> and the Palo Alto-based Schools Online [SOL] <http://www.schoolsonline.org>. RI-SOL is establishing Internet Learning Centers (ILCs) in secondary schools throughout Bangladesh. These ILCs are designed to function as sustainable telecommunications centers serving both school and community users.

### Nicholas Negroponte on \$100 Laptop

The MIT Media Lab has launched a new research initiative to

develop a \$100 laptop, a technology that could revolutionize how we educate the world's children. To achieve this goal, a new, non-profit association, One Laptop per Child (OLPC), has been created. The initiative was first announced by Nicholas Negroponte, Lab chairman and co-founder, at the World Economic Forum at Davos, Switzerland in January 2005. Here Negroponte answers questions on the initiative.

<http://laptop.media.mit.edu/>

### Getting connected in rural India

The tech market in Bangalore may be racing ahead, but it is a very different story for India's 700 million farmers. Spencer Kelly has been to Northern India to see how plans to bring technology to rural areas are working.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/click\\_online/4364168.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/click_online/4364168.stm)

### Kiosks of Chaos

Once again the government of India has taken a decision that is going to spell a more of the same approach in extending the reach of information technology. Much like we declared that Indian villages had electricity, drinking water, healthcare, roads etc., the Govt. of India is half way to declaring that India's villages have also been computerized. Much like we do not have drinking water, electricity, healthcare or roads in majority of our villages, in the case of computerization as well we are likely to repeat the performance.

## World Summit on the Information Society

### Destination Tunis: Promoting resistance against software monopoly

Movements for social inclusion try to influence Latin American governments that will send representatives to the World Summit on the Information Society in Tunis. The idea is to promote resistance against software monopoly.

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall\\_readers/message/6871](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall_readers/message/6871)

### Summitry and strategies

In November 2005, the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society will meet for the last time in Tunis. In its five-year history, the WSIS has failed to succeed in redressing the North-South "digital divide".

<http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2005-10-19-banks-en.html>

## Open source

### Open source simple computer for agriculture in rural areas [OSCAR]

Launched in January 2004, OSCAR looks at developing an open source weed identification software for the major weed species of Rice-Wheat crop systems which can be deployed on Simputers. The application will address extension workers, farmers/farmer



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groups, and students in the Indo-Gangetic plains. By June 2006, complete versions of OSCAR for windows, Linux Desktop and Simputer will become ready.

<http://www.digitalopportunity.org/article/view/117977/1/1138>

## Japan aims to boost state use of free Linux software

Japan aims to switch some government computers to the free Linux operating system and reduce its dependence on Microsoft Windows. Japan is drawing up guidelines for its ministries recommending open source software such as Linux as an “important option” in government procurement, said an official at the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20051006/tc\\_afp/japanitsoftwarelinuxcompanymicrosoft](http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20051006/tc_afp/japanitsoftwarelinuxcompanymicrosoft)

## Open Source agreed in UN Information Society Summit preparations

Encouragement for the use of free and open source software and open standards for science and technology has quietly worked its way into the draft texts being prepared for the November second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

Such ideas have gained significant support in recent years as potentially low-cost, easy-access solutions for developing countries, but as they are put forward in the WSIS context they are balanced by stronger calls for proprietary approaches.

[http://www.ip-watch.org/weblog/index.php?p=98&res=1280\\_ff&print=0](http://www.ip-watch.org/weblog/index.php?p=98&res=1280_ff&print=0)

## Pre-WSIS eDevel Briefing 1: FOSS and Development

In the run-up to the WSIS-Tunis, Development Informatics Group at the University of Manchester will be releasing a series of “eDevelopment Briefings”. These are very short (one-two page) overviews of current evidence and thinking on key issues related to ICTs and socio-economic development.

<http://www.manchester.ac.uk/idpml/dig/briefings.htm>

## Battleground of ideas: FLOSS debate raises tempers at BytesForAll

APC member BytesForAll's mailing list[1] recently played host to a strong, and at times polemical, debate on proprietary-versus-FLOSS (Free/Libre and Open Source Software). In this debate, there were these couple of great posts that put things neatly in perspective — thanks to David Geilhufe who is co-founder of *theSocialSource Foundation.org* and Sunil Abraham of *Mahiti.org*.

<http://www.apc.org/english/news/index.shtml?x=2024998>

## Call for nominations for the 2005 FSF Award for the Advancement of Free Software

The Free Software Foundation (FSF) announces the creation of a new annual award, and a call for nominations: “Free Software Award for Projects of Social Benefit”. This award is presented to the project or team responsible for applying free software, or the ideas of the

free software movement, in a project that intentionally and significantly benefits society in other aspects of life.

<http://www.fsf.org/news/fsf-award-2005.html>

## Microsoft: Africa doesn't need free software

Microsoft has claimed the cost of software is not an important issue in the developing world. In response to a question on the role of open source software in Africa, Gerald Ilukwe, the general manager of Microsoft Nigeria, said that cost is not important, even though he admitted that the average annual salary in the West African country is only \$160 (Â£91).

<http://news.zdnet.co.uk/0,39020330,39231004,00.htm>

## Events and announcements

### 40th national annual convention of the Computer Society of India

The theme of the 40th national annual convention of the Computer Society of India is ‘ICT for National Development’. It is being held from November 9-12, 2005 at HiTech City in Hyderabad.

<http://www.csi2005.org/>

### Yahoo announces podcast directory

Yahoo will launch a new service to search podcasts, making it the first in search services to delve into that type of audio content.

<http://podcasts.yahoo.com/>

### National consultation on designing an enabling framework for community radio in Bangladesh

The broad base objectives are to share the experience on Community Radio to other campaigners of Asia and Pacific regions and to build up national and international linkages for strengthening movements on Community Radio in Bangladesh along with to draw the attention of the key players and policy makers to create a positive and favourable environment on community radio.

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall\\_readers/message/6790](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall_readers/message/6790)

### Telecentre Leaders Forum

telecentre.org invites to a special networking event, the Telecentre Leaders Forum (TLF), which will take place at the World Summit of the Information Society (WSIS) in Tunis, from November 14 to 19, 2005.

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall\\_readers/message/6792](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall_readers/message/6792)

Bytes for All: [www.bytesforall.net](http://www.bytesforall.net)

Bytes For All Readers Discussion: [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall\\_readers](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall_readers)

Bytes for All RSS syndication: [http://www.bytesforall.net/index\\_html/RSS](http://www.bytesforall.net/index_html/RSS)

Bytes for All Readers Forum RSS syndication:

[http://rss.groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall\\_readers/rss](http://rss.groups.yahoo.com/group/bytesforall_readers/rss)

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