

# Activity Report 2007



**Bangladesh Open Source Network**  
<http://www.bdosn.org>

## **Introduction**

2007 is the second year of Bangladesh Open Source Network. In the beginning of the year the network decided to focus on awareness building as its key activity for the year. It was also decided that the awareness building campaign would also be amalgamated with the capacity building effort. As a result, the networked arranged seminar, talks, media campaign as well as camps and workshops in different parts of the country. This year, BdOSN opened up its government frontier as starts its policy advocacy task. The Open Source Awareness campaign thus covers the senior policy makers in the government. The publicity and campaign through electronic and print media was also continued in this year. To make the Open Source Software and Open Content available in the country, BdOSN re-distribute Ubuntu, Wiki CD as well as OpenCD collection. The volunteers of the network also helped different organization to start migration to open source platform.

## The Activities for the year 2007

### 1. Seminar/Talks

#### **1.1 SoftExpo 2007**

BdOSN participated in the country's largest soft exposition organized by BASIS. In the fair BdOSN distributed different Open Source Product, leaflets and papers and also organized a seminar on "Open Source and Open Content" on 30th March 2007 jointly with BASIS. The seminar was marked as the biggest seminar in the exposition and acclaimed a lot of attention from the audience. Mr Munir Hasan, General Secretary of BdOSN and Mr Fakruzzaman presented two keynote lectures. Mr Hasan covered broadly the aspect and philosophy of Open Source while Mr Zaman gave emphasis on Open Source Business Model. In his speech Prof. Dr M Zafar Iqbal expressed his hope that one day our young generation would uphold the beauty of the open source and collaboratively build an open society.

As designated discussant Dr Mumit Khan of BRAC University addressed the audience regarding Open Access while Dr Zahidur Rahman mentioned about cryptography limitation of US Based software.

Session Chair Dr M Masroor Ali pointed out the needs for national office packages and dreamt that it would be a reality in near future.

In the open floor discussion Dr Lutful Kabir of BUET, Shamim Ahsan of BASIS and others participated. The Seminar was at end with unpacking of Wiki CD by the chief guest.

#### **1.2 Wikipedia in 3<sup>rd</sup> Zohurul Haque-Abdullah Al-Muti Sarfuddin Memorial**

As previous year, the activities of the year begin in parallel with the participation in Bangladesh Mathematical Olympiad and helping Society for the Popularization of Science, Bangladesh (SPSB). SPSB observed its third Zohurul Haque-Abdullah Al-Muti Sarfuddin Memorial Lecture on 15th January 2007. The theme of the lectures was - *Information For All*. Two memorial lecturers presented their talk in this theme. Ragib Hasan, PhD Student, Dept of Computer Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA, the Administrator of English and Bangla Wikipedia as well as the core member of BdOSN covered the Physical Science part of the talk. In his lecture title **Wikipedia- Peoples Encyclopedia**, Ragib covered the different aspect of the free encyclopedia and people's right to information. He informed that with an effort from 2/3 person in USA, the Wikipedia

now becomes the world's largest information base. All this happened because of Open Source Philosophy. He explain how a sister organization of BdOSN, *Bangla Wiki* made Bangla Wikipedia as the 44th ranked Wikipedia in the world with massive support from Bangla spoken community all around the world. He expressed his profound thanks to all electronic and printing media for their support in creation of Bangla Content in the Internet. He requested all to come forward to take the movement to its ultimate goal- A free and open resource for all Bangla spoken people of the world. The biological science of the theme was elaborated by Dr Jesmin, Assistant Professor, Department of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology of Dhaka University. The title of her speech was *-Bioinformatics- Biological Information Super Highway*. She explained the terms Bioinformatics and elaborated the different aspects of the same. She added that the revolution of bioinformatics, that we are now realizing, was due to open source philosophy. She informed that the all regional DNA databases are open sourced and open for all. That made it possible for a country like us to join this field. To be a part of this new era, one needs only an Internet enable computer and some basic background of Biology and Computer Science. She also informed the audience about the researches that are now being held in Bangladesh in this field. Later both lecturer answered different questions from the audience.

## **2. Capacity Building**

### **2.1 Open Source Camp**

This year BdOSN introduce the Open Source Camp in the country. The first ever Open Source Camp in Bangladesh held at SUST, Sylhet on 23-24th March 2007. CSE Society and SUST OSN jointly organized the event. Ankur and BdOSN provided the support. Students from SUST and BRAC University participated in the camp. The 2 Day long camp focuses the capacity building of the students towards Open Source Software and Open Content Development. The camp covered the hands on experience with GNU Linux, Open Office, Mozilla, LAMP/WAMP as well as Wikipedia.

After the successful camp at SUST, similar camps were organized in BUET, JU, AIUB and IIUC. A total of 5 Open Source Camps were organized in the year 2007.

### **2.2 Open Source Support Centre Start its functions**

Bangladesh Open Source Network (BdOSN) opened its Open Source Support centre in Dhaka on 31st May 2007. In a simple inaugural ceremony the centre started its operation by providing service to a university student. The centre, the first of its kind, hopefully caters the long cherished dream of Open Source enthusiastic in the country.

Initially the centre will remain open on Saturday and Thursday from 3 to 6pm. One can collect CDs, books and other materials related to Open Source and Open Content from the centre. The centre will provide some hands-on support to the user as well. The centre is located at BdOSN office at 291 Sonargaon Road, 3rd Floor, Dhaka. User can contact the centre through e-mail at [bdosn@yahoo.com](mailto:bdosn@yahoo.com). Centre will be run by the BdOSN volunteers.

### **2.3 FOSS camp for Community eCentre Personnel**

UNDP organized a 4-day workshop as part of its Open Source Campaign on 27-30 September, 2007. The training on Free and Open Source Solutions (FOSS) took place at New Horizons Computer Learning Center, Dhaka and was participated by more than 40 participants from 15 different organizations, including Grameen Phone CIC, Katalyst, D.Net etc. One of the major objectives of this ToT (Training of Trainers) is to have some trainers to implement open source software in their respective organizations and persuade others to follow their suits.

Prominent educationist Professor Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, Mr. K. A. M. Morshed, Assistant Country Director, UNDP, Mr. Munir Hasan, PIS of Access to Information Programme of UNDP Bangladesh attended this workshop to inspire the participants to effectively implement Free Open Source Solutions (FOSS).

## **2.4 Awareness among the policy makers**

The Bangla Linux Distribution, Hoimontee, released by Ankur has been demonstrated to the Deputy Commissioners of the country. The demonstration was held in a training workshop organized by the Access to Information programme at Chief Adviser's Office, Dhaka. The demonstration also included Open Office.Org, the open sourced office suit.

Later BdOSN volunteers also provided training to Support to ICT Task Force Project (SICT), a government funded e-Governance project in Bangladesh which opted open source software for its e-governance training programme. The training programme was inaugurated by Mr Abdus Salam Khan, Secretary, Ministry of Establishment at Bangladesh Korea ICT Training Centre for Education (BKITCE) on 20th November. Mr Rafiqul Islam, Project Director of SICT Project informed that the programme would cover 740 government officials and will focus on open source technology. The officials will participate in 6 different training modules on e-governance.

The first 2 batch training programme will cover Open Office, Mozilla FireFox and Thunderbird. It will also cover the Unicode based Bangla computing. The training programme is organized by BKITCE and the volunteers from Bangladesh Open Source Network are providing open source resources for the training programme.

## **2.5 Distribution of UBUNTU CD to all winners of the 5th BdMO**

From its inception, BdOSN helps Bangladesh mathematical Olympiad committee in their nationwide mathematical festival. This year, all winners of the 5th Bangladesh Mathematical Olympiad (BdMO) received UBUNTU CD from BdOSN and expressed their wishes to use Open Source Software in future. The two days long Dutch Bangla Bank Prothom Alo Mathematical Festival-2007 including 5th BdMO has come to at end on 17th February in a colourful closing ceremony. This year BdOSN support BdMOC to make "Open Source" as a part of its nationwide programme. In 14 Divisional festivals the participants were introduced to Open Source Philosophy. Prof. M Zafar Iqbal, Munir Hasan and Tamim Shariar explained the concept of Open Source to

them and requested them to give up the uses of pirated software. BdOSN also arranged a fair in Dhaka divisional festival and at national festival. The fair made a good number of participants curious about open source.

### 3. **Wiki**

#### **3.1 The year long Wiki activities**

Throughout the year BdOSN and Bangla wiki organized wikipedia related activity including wiki adda, wiki seminar and a wiki conference. A gathering of wikipedians of Dhaka took place with lots of cheers and enthusiasms. The wikipedians met each other, greeted and exchanged views on this occasion. Bangla Wiki, a wing of Bangladesh Open Source Network (BdOSN), arranged this program at its Sonargaon road office on 14 July. They discussed on the expansion, modification and improvement of Bangla Wikipedia article as well as improving and increasing the number of article about Bangladesh in English Wikipedia. The meeting had a call to everyone to work for developing a free and open source of information in the Internet for people of all walks of life throughout the country.

Rajibul Hasan, one of the administrators of Bangla Wikipedia, informed in the meeting that the emerging of Bangla Wikipedia has attracted attention of concerned people in almost every country. To recognize this achievement, this is for the first time; Bangladesh has been invited to the world conference of Wikipedia, Wikimania 2007. An administrator of Bangla Wikipedia, Belayet Hossain will represent Bangladesh in Wikimania 2007 which is going to take place in Taipei, Taiwan starting from August 3, 2007. The meeting made a call to people of all profession and expertise to share their skills and knowledge with all by adding the information, they have acquired, to Wikipedia voluntarily. Munir Hasan, coordinator of BdOSN, also added that it is possible to share and spread the knowledge of our society and culture all over the world easily with the help of Wikipedia. The wikipedians decided to start a bi-weekly Wiki Adda and a Wiki Camp. They also arranged an offline wiki entry system for those who do not have easy access to the Internet. In this system, any body can submit her contribution in pen paper. Volunteers of Bangla Wikipedia will add the information with proper credits.

## **4. Special Celebrations**

### **4.1 Pohela Boishak Celebration**

With the Nation, Bangla Wikipedians around the country celebrated the Bangla Noboborsho (The New Year's Day) on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2007. The celebration included a central gathering in front of the National Public Library followed by a rally covering the Teachers Students Centre area of Dhaka University. They also distributed a leaflet and appealed to all to enrich the Bangla Wikipedia (<http://bn.wikipedia.org>). The bangla wiki volunteers explained the different aspects of the Wikipedia to interested people. They also explained how to join in the Wikipedia community. With this programme Bangla Wiki formally begins its campaign "Enrich Bangla Wikipedia". The campaign targeted the enrichment of at least 3000 entry to moderately fair information based. Among others following Bangla Wikipedians attended the rally - Mr Belayet Hossain, Bappi, Mahey Alam Khan, Tanin Ahmed, Naim Ahmed, Kabya Ahmed, Ayub Sarker etc. It is worth to mention that Bangla Wiki is an initiative of Bangladesh Open Source Network (BdOSN).

### **4.2 Celebrating Software Freedom Day 2007**

Bangladesh Open Source Network celebrates Software Freedom Day (SFD) 2007 and continues its celebration for the week. As part of its weeklong programme, BdOSN's members arranged different programmes in different parts of the country. On 13th September, BdOSN lunched its media campaign through online national daily Bdnews24.com. On the same day, a screening of the documentary "The Code Breakers" by BBC was also arranged at BdOSN office. On 14th, the largest National Daily, Prothom Alo published an article on SFD. Later on the same day SUST\_OSN organized UBUNTU InstaFest at their campus. 25 students converted to Ubuntu computing environment and one of the labs was also transferred to Linux environment.

On 15th, the SFD began with an appeal by BdOSN secretary, Munir Hasan through Electronic Media to every fellow countryman to use open source software to uphold the freedom of software.

In collaboration with I-Mesh multimedia, BdOSN volunteers organized an Open Day at the centre. Students from different schools and colleges enjoyed and learnt about different Open Source Software. They also learnt about the open world of the Wikipedia. In Sylhet, the programme continued for second day with a seminar. BdOSN and its member networks will continue their celebration till 22nd of this

month. The rest of the programme includes Insta Fest, Open House, Rally and a wikicamp.

The other celebration news will be published in this site as soon as they are available.

## **5. CD Launching**

### **5.1 Launching of Ubuntu in Bangladesh**

In Ekushey Book Fair 2007, BdOSN formally launched its redistribution of UBUNTU CD in Bangladesh. In a simple inauguration programme, Dr Zafar Iqbal launched the distribution in Ekushe Book Fair. The CD was also distributed in different programme throughout the country.

### **5.2 Release of SOS Wiki CD**

As part of its Open Content popularization programme BdOSN released a English Wikipedia CD for the children. The CD was released at SoftExpo2007 on 30th March 2007. Prof. Dr M Zafar Iqbal unpacked the CD Cover after the Open Source Seminar. In total the CD has 2011 articles, more than 8000 images and over 3.5 million words (equivalent to a 4,000 page book in text alone).

The contents of this CD includes: 549 Wikipedia articles on places, including countries and capital cities, 599 Wikipedia articles on plants and animals (including crops, and dinosaurs!), 457 Wikipedia articles on science including the Weather and Space, 405 Wikipedia articles on general knowledge.

The original CD was compiled by Save the Children, UK and BdOSN re-distributed it in Bangladesh.

## **6. Networking**

### **6.1 Developing Local Open Source Network**

In the reporting year, BdOSN started its activities in different universities and expanded it activities in different areas. Local Open Source Networks were constituted at State University of Bangladesh, South East University, International Islamic University of Chittagong, Mowlana Bhasani Science and Technology University, Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (KUET), Ahasanullah University of Engineering and Technology etc. All local OSNs were active through out the year and organized seminars, talks and workshop in respective campuses.

## **7. International Activities**

### **7.1 FOSS Business Model, Hanoi, Vietnam.**

The general Secretary of BdOSN participated as a resource person in the workshop organized by IOSN, ASEAN+3 in Hanoi, Vietnam. The workshop was held in 30-31<sup>st</sup> July 2007. In his session, Munir Hasan, presented how a start-up business organization could leverage Open Source for their business opportunity. He shared the experience of Bangladesh in Open Source business model with the participants from Vietnam and Phillipines.

### **7.2 NGO in a Box Workshop at Orissa, India**

Mr. Mahay Alam Khan, Program Coordinator of BDoSN, had participated in the 3rd NGO-in-a-box workshop held from 13th November to 17th November at Orissa in India. NGO-in-a-box is a collection of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) tools selected for use by non-profit organizations. The workshop was open to participants from the voluntary sector from various part of India. Mr. Mahay ALam Khan participated as a special guest of Mahiti Infotech. Mahiti Infotech is the South Asian hub for NGO-in-a-box initiatives.

This was an event for experienced professionals actively working in advocacy NGOs, educational organizations, NGO resource centers, community centers and health information organizations in India. All participants were required to be proficient desktop users of computers and to have some past experience of using technology in the voluntary sector. The workshops covered the following broad thematic areas: Base FOSS applications, migration to Open Source Software; Open Publishing: Desktop publishing, image editing, web publishing and collaboration, content management; Audio Visual: Audio editing and distribution, CD burning and ripping, media capture, audio visual playing tools; Security: Internet security, passwords, data storage and backup, communication and encryption. The workshops covered tools like Ubuntu Linux operating System, Plone content management system, Wordpress blog software, Thunderbird mail client, Media Wiki etc.

Mr. Mahay Alam Khan also facilitated two Sessions. As being an expert on Localization he conducted the half day long session on localization and "how to input your local language in Ubuntu". He helped the Telegu, Malayalam, and Oriya speaking people to learn how to type in their language easily in Ubuntu.

### **7.3 FOSS.in Delhi, India**

Recently BdOSN took an initiative to translate the Open Office Manual in Bangla Language. This will meet a longtime demand for Bangla handbook on Open Office. Mr. Mahay Alam Khan, Programmed Coordinator of BdOSN reported this at the FOSS.in seminar held recently at Bangalore, India. Mr. Louis Suarez Potts, Community Manager and Chair of the Community Council for OpenOffice.org praised this effort and requested Mr Khan to release the manual in the OO.o site. Dr. Frank Peters, manager in the Information Products Group of Sun Microsystems working on Desktop documentation from Hamburg, Germany and leading Sun's documentation efforts for open source software, also appreciated the voluntary efforts of BdOSN and hoped that this will inspire other local language volunteers to localize the manual.

In the picture Mr Louis Suarez Potts is on the left of Mr Khan while Dr. Frank Peters was on the right. Picture is taken at FOSS.in seminar of OO.o