

## **Tenth Anniversary Celebrations of Free Software in India Launched**

**Trivandrum, July 28, 2011** - Minister for Industries, IT and Urban Affairs, Shri P.K. Kunhalikutty inaugurated the Tenth Anniversary Celebrations of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) in India, commemorating *Freedom First!* Conference convened in Thiruvananthapuram in July 2001 when the first FOSS initiative was taken up in the country.

Shri Kunhalikutty released the Anniversary Poster in the presence of Mr. Satish Babu, Director, ICFOSS, at the occasion, thus kicking off a six-month long (July-December 2011) of celebration on the significant progress made by Free and Open Source Software in the State. The celebrations will conclude with the Third International Conference in the Series *Free Software, Free Society*, scheduled for the last week of December 2011.

As the first state in the country to take a pro-FOSS position, Kerala has made significant progress in the use of FOSS in almost all domains, from Education to e-Governance to Accessible Computing. Several of the FOSS-based projects from Kerala, such as [IT@School](#) and InSight, have gained national and international visibility, while other FOSS-based projects in e-Governance have positively impacted the lives of people in the state. Most recently, the Government of Kerala have taken an affirmative action on FOSS with the founding of the International Centre for FOSS (ICFOSS), aimed at FOSS-based academic, research and technology-based activities.

“ICFOSS seeks to consolidate, leverage and build on the early lead of Kerala in the FOSS domain,” said Satish Babu, Director, ICFOSS, who has been an active proponent of FOSS from the late 1990s, and the chief organizer of the 2001 event. “In the process, ICFOSS will explore employment generation in FOSS-based technology domain and will seek to promote Kerala as a FOSS destination”.

“Besides software and hardware, the philosophy of FOSS has spread to several other intellectual domains such as Literature, Music, Culture, and the Arts. As one of the earliest institutions to situate itself in this extended FOSS ecosystem, ICFOSS will seek to find a unique niche for itself in the coming years”, he said.

The first programme in the 6-month long Anniversary Celebrations is the Advanced Training on GNU/R, a powerful statistical analysis tool that is rapidly finding a place in the IT Industry. This programme, jointly organized by ICFOSS and the Department of Statistics, Kerala University during 1-2 August 2011, and has the foremost expert in GNU/R in the country, Dr. Sudha Purohit of Pune University, handling sessions for an audience consisting of statistics faculty as well as industry representatives.

Other scheduled programmes include a Workshop on Future Directions in FOSS (9 August 2011), launch of an Open Access Journal of FOSS (September 2011), workshop on Blender (16-17 September 2011), several programmes for Students, a workshop on “Transitioning to FOSS” for NGOs, and a workshop on “ICTs and Climate Change” in November 2011.



[www.icfoss.in](http://www.icfoss.in)

***For Immediate Release***

The Third International FOSS Conference in the ***Free Software, Free Society*** series, scheduled for the last week of December 2011, will bring together FOSS practitioners, advocates, academics, policymakers, programmers, students, NGO activists and users from India as well as Europe, Latin America, Africa and South Asia, to deliberate on the use and advocacy on FOSS around the world.

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