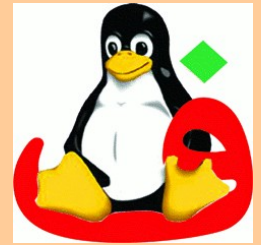


In the Name of God  
most Compassionate most Merciful



# Free/Open Source Software (FOSS) in Iran

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# Outline

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- A bit of history of FOSS in Iran
- Government view on FOSS
- Iran FOSS Project (formerly GNU/Linux Localization)
  - goals
  - policies
  - phases
- Iranian GNU/Linux distributions
- Overall FOSS status in the government, companies, developers and educational system.



# A bit of History

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- GNU/Linux has been used at least from 15 years ago at some universities as students projects delivery environment and for parallel processing.
- FarsiTeX is the most known FOSS project developed at Sharif University from 15 years ago.
- There was a few individual volunteer activities for GNU/Linux Localization before Feb. 2001.
- Feb. 2001: The feasibility study of localization of the GNU/Linux at ICT research center of Sharif University was started.
- May. 2001: The proposal for “GNU/Linux localization project” was submitted to the government.
- After 2 years of hard work on Feb. 2003 the project was officially started.



# FOSS is important for the government

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- Building a reliable and secure Information Technology infrastructure
- Vendor Independence
- Ease of localization
- Copyright and membership of WTO issues
- Long term financial benefit
- Promoting local software industry

# Iran FOSS project goals

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- To set the ground for an alternative operating system in Iran based on the localization of GNU/Linux and the most widely used FOSS.
- To eradicate the essential problems associated with the Persian language in the GNU/Linux internationalization process and most popular FOSS.
- Enhancing people awareness and promoting the culture of using FOSS



# Policies for the project success (1)

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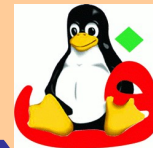
- Involving all stakeholders
  - The government makes the policies and funds the projects
  - The university leads the project technically, and
  - The private companies execute different sub-projects and internationalize the outputs.
  - The community bug reports and help new users to tackle their problem in FOSS



## Policies for the project success (2)

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- Provision of human resources by producing training materials which are going to be available to all people at negligible costs.
- Promotion of FOSS



# Localization technical phases (1)

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- Basic tools and libraries to support Persian language in the GNU/Linux. Five projects: "Unicode Bi-directional Algorithm and Joining," "Persian Sorting, Loose Searching and Persian Locale Requirements", "The Jalali Calendar", "Persian Keyboard", and "Persian Open Type and Reference Font" (completed)



# Localization Technical Phase (2)

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- Applying the results of the first phase to the important GNU/Linux libraries and applications.
  - Libraries: GNU C library (glibc), KDE base library (QT, KDEBase), GNOME base library (gtk+) and ICU (all in progress).
  - Server-side: MySQL, PostgreSQL, IMP (Web-based mail client) and webmin (web-based server administration) (all done).
  - Desktop applications: Korganizer, NOVELL Evolution, aspell, OpenOffice.org, Mozilla (in progress)



# Other Localizatation activities

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- The Persian Graphical User Interface Specifications and Guidelines project and a reference translation dictionary activities standard and compatible other activities (both done).
- Translation of KDE and GNOME desktops and OpenOffice.org (in progress).
- A multi-calander library is under development.
- Font design (in progress).
- A Persian to English dictionary (done)
- Iran Free/Open Source hosting: <http://projects.FOSS.ir>



# Iranian GNU/Linux distributions

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- **Shabdix:** A live GNU/Linux CD based on the *Knoppix* with Persian interface. This is the first Iranian distro. It has been intended to familiarize users with GNU/Linux.
- **Learnux:** A live/installable distro based on *Slacks* included 2200 training slides for 120 hours teaching material and 60 educational papers.
- **Parsix:** another Live distro based on *Kanotix* and *Debian sid* with Persian to English dictionary and GNOME interface. Prepared by Iran GNU/Linux User Group ([www.ilug.org](http://www.ilug.org))
- **Karamad:** Another live distro supported by DPI. DPI is the highest ranking Iranian IT company will provide commercial distros by mid 2006: different distro's for different applications (ISPs, Embedded, Server, etc)
- **Sharif Linux:** A fedora based installable distro.
- **Farlix:** a live/installable *Slacks* based distro.

# Government and FOSS

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- The government at the top level has already gained enough interest to FOSS but practical action needs enough time.
- Some parliament members have recently sent a letter to the president and asked for more attention to the FOSS in the IT planning and policy making and to provide legal, education FOSS necessary infrastructure.
- There is no legislation, announced policy, plan or recommendation for FOSS (specially client side) from the government at national or regional levels at the moment but some works are in progress.
- Problem: There is no complete/total FOSS-based enterprise solution with local support.

# Companies and FOSS

- Most of companies suspect FOSS as their product enemy. They suppose that FOSS means GNU/Linux operating system and Iran FOSS Project is going to replace all windows! They try to show FOSS is impractical and inefficient (no support for FOSS, many bugs, new costs, who is the integrator, etc).
- At the server-side, the problem is alleviated by proven FOSS benefits. The government usually asks for FOSS for server in new bids.
- A few companies make money with FOSS business models
  - localization, support and add-on modules
  - custom distro
  - server-side installation and configuration
- Government as the biggest client can direct the companies (egg and hen problem).



# Developers and FOSS (1)

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- Some developers are making good money from FOSS localization and server-side programming.
- Many developers have heard of FOSS but have fear and have a little incentive for investment specially for the client side programming.
  - The current government IT systems have been built up on the proprietary software specially Windows.
  - Lack of awareness, know-how and Persian resources.
  - short-coming of current educational system in FOSS.



# Developers and FOSS (2)

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- GNU/Linux communities and forums are very active to attract and maintain newbies: Iran GNU/Linux User Group ([www.Lugir.org](http://www.Lugir.org)), [www.technotux.org](http://www.technotux.org), [www.foss.ir](http://www.foss.ir).
- There is a free monthly newsletter for the IT managers at the government and companies: Ofogh-e-Linux (The Linux Horizon)
- There is a Free monthly technical e-magazine ([www.IranTUX.org](http://www.IranTUX.org)) for FOSS developers.
- Some e-newsletters distributed by community for promotion.
- ***Parsix distro*** is maintained by the Iran GNU/Linux User Group.



# Education and FOSS (1)

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- Ministry of education is still thinking on! There is no comprehensive plan for FOSS education in that ministry.
- For the first time, GNU/Linux will enter into a vocational training course in the next semester (from Feb. 2006).
- There will be a gathering of head of Computer Eng./Science departments of some universities on FOSS in Feb. 2006.
- There is a plan for a three unit course and some training workshops for teachers at colleges.



# Education and FOSS (2)

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- There are some financial supports for writing and publication of FOSS books.
  - The first book titled “Introduction to Free/Open source software” is under publication.
  - 10 other books planed to be published by mid 2006.
- More than 120 hours E-learning and CBT courses are at the final preparation and distribution through CD distributors
- The **Learnux** distro is a live distro with more than 2200 training slides.



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Thank you for your time and attention.

Any question?

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