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Free software centre to hold workshops on Aakash apps

Thiruvananthapuram, Feb. 4:

A series of workshops will be held here to promote the development of applications for Aakash tablet.

International Centre for Free & Open Source Software (Icfoss) will host the events as part of its incubation support programme.

ROLLOUT SOON

Aakash is a device developed by the Union Ministry of Human Resources Development and is getting ready to for national rollout. A team at IIT-Bombay, under the leadership of D. B. Phatak, is involved in the effort.

Aakash runs on dual free and open source software (Foss)-based operating systems, Android and Ubuntu 12.

Applications can be developed on either of these platforms, a spokesperson for Icfoss said here.

The first workshop is scheduled for February 16 and 17 at Technopark here.

The workshop will benefit independent developers, students, and IT companies who want to develop applications on Aakash.

Kapil Sibal, Union Minister for Human Resources Development, had formally unveiled Aakash in October 2011.

Aakash 2, the second version, was released on November 11, 2012, and has significantly improved capabilities.

The Centre plans to distribute Aakash at subsidised offer of Rs1,130 to 50 lakh students over the next few months.

LINKING COLLEGES

The device is expected to link 25,000 colleges and 400 universities in a nationwide e-learning programme.

There are significant opportunities for independent developers and companies to create and market applications for this platform, says Satish Babu, Director, Icfoss.

As the device becomes popular, business applications as well as social computing applications may also become possible.

Once its planned penetration across the country is achieved, Aakash can be a useful tool in bridging the Digital Divide, he said.

This could also bring about inclusive development, Satish Babu added.

The first workshop covers the basics of designing, implementing, debugging, testing and version control for applications.

The workshop will also cover marketing and release mechanisms for the apps developed for the platform.

Icfoss invites students and developers and those who plan start-ups to the incubation support programme, Babu said.

Details can be had from www.icfoss.org/aakash.html.

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