FOSS IN KERALA -

a Case of Inmates are running the asylum ?

By

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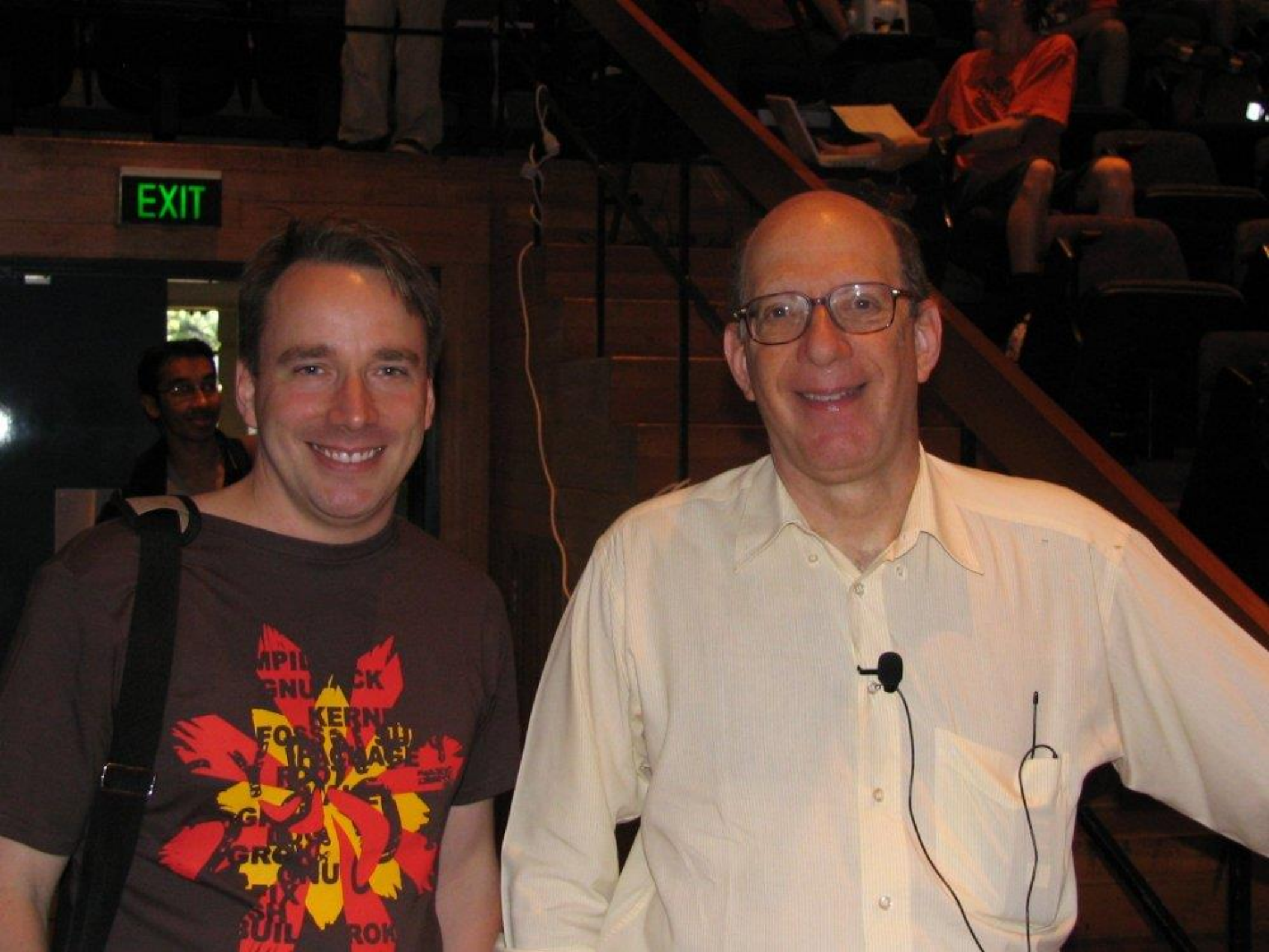
Some History

Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

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George Santyana

Some background !

- History of Free Software

- Linux and it's Origins

- Linguistic "chaos" and FOSS

- GPL , LGPL and OSI

- Private , Published and Proprietary software

- Free/Libre vs Open Source

- It is Licensing talk all the way , thus brought it with all the chaos

USES AND ABUSES OF FOSS

Why FOSS matters ?

- Helped reduce the infrastructure and setting up cost of small software companies

- Emergence of PHP , Python , Perl as a platform/language for writing and distributing applications

- Linux is an excellent Programming Platform

- Apache + Linux is a good hosting option

- A "virus" free operating systems for the masses

- A Learning tool for aspiring computer programmers

Why proprietary software matters?

- Better Developer friendly tools

- APIs are coarse grained which helps developer productivity

- There is no need for "Demand Side Learning" as in FOSS

- Better support for "average" companies

- A Risk mitigation mechanism

- Underlying Layers are kept in Sync

- "Barbie doll" effect of FOSS !

How to be Platform Agnostic ?
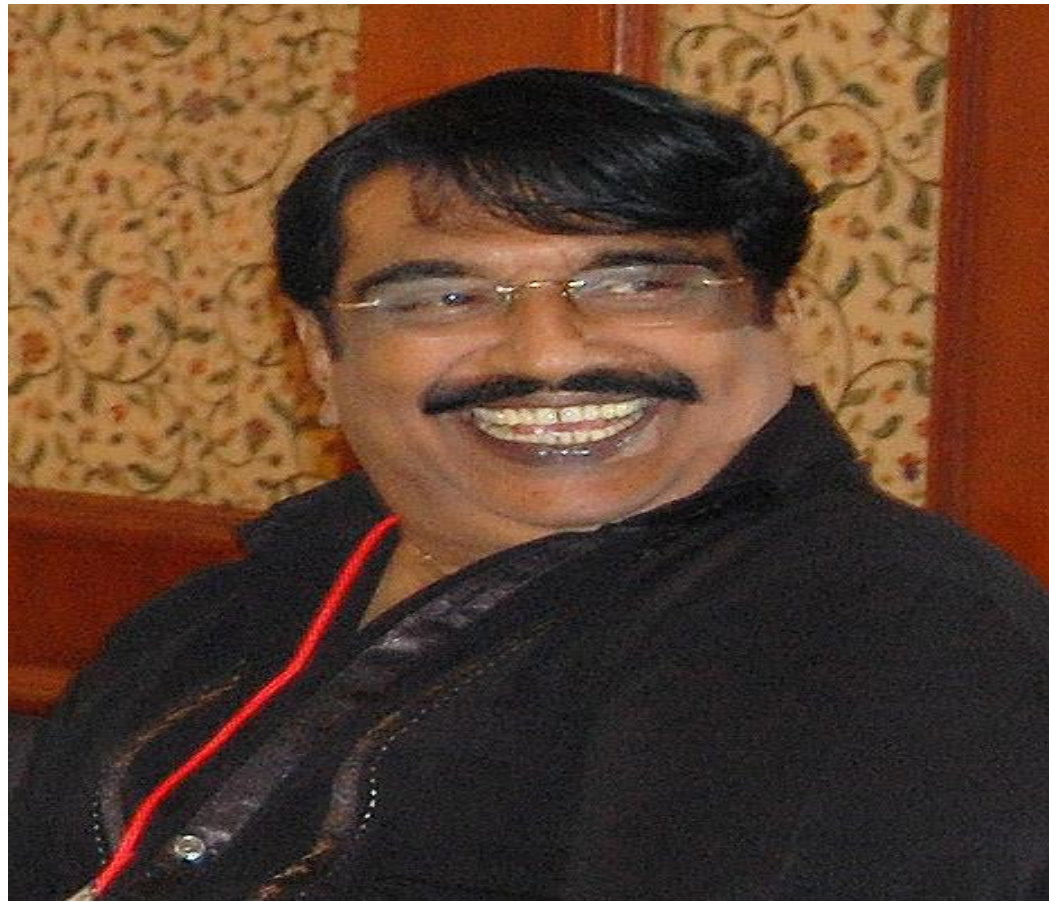
" IN INDIA , IT IS LIKE THIS , NOT MUCH IDEA ABOUT HOW IT IS IN PUNJAB "

PUNJABI HOUSE , 1998
(Malayalam Movie)

Flirting with FOSS ! - a personal perspective

- (re)-learned Posix Programming with Fedora 10 and Debian Lenny

- Learned Objective C/C++ under Linux to transition myself into a MAC OS X/iPhone developer

- Used Wine as a software development platform to port 50,000+ lines of Windows code to Linux

- Used harbour project to "rescue" a Clipper accounting package to run on Linux (using GCC)

Flirting with FOSS (contd...)

- Used Mono to port a C# based accounting package to Linux and MAC OS X

- Consulted on couple of Linux programming projects

- Used to DOS BOX to run some MSDOS apps under Linux

- Now a days working with Windows , Linux and MAC OS X to earn a daily living

US AND THEM

Good and Bad are two sides of the same coin

Free/Libre movement in Kerala

- Started out as Linux user groups

- Initial group , found productive use of the then nascent operating system

- Then settlers , "arrived on the scene".

- They stressed "Freedom" and Libre

- It is license talk all the way

- Lawyers , Professors , Social reformers and Politicians are now in Control

"Corrupted" Minds of Kerala

- The FOSS movement is irritatingly assertive about "Freedom " and Libre

- They will only use Debian etc

- They inject this mode of thought into youngsters

- In most companies , employment opportunities are on the proprietary platforms

- The Stakeholders , Project leaders and team members do suffer because of this advocacy.

Final thoughts

A "Prescription"

- Use Tools based on their technical merit

- Learn C/C++ to understand the true spirit of Linux and FOSS

- Try to become a programmer who is comfortable with different platforms

Q&A

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