

2. Release of Indian Language Software Tools & Fonts in Public Domain

Release of Tamil Software Tools & Fonts in Public Domain, Chennai, April 15, 2005

The Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, Government of India has taken another key step towards the implementation of Indian languages on computers with the release of a complete set of Tamil software tools and fonts on a CD at a function organized at the Park Sheraton, Chennai.



The CD contains tools developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing, Chennai Kavigal Technologies, Learn Fun Systems, Palaniappa Brothers, Cadgraf Digitals Pvt. Ltd, Modular Systems and AU-KBC. The tools include True Type Fonts (TTF) and Open Type Fonts (OTF) for Tamil, Optical Character Recognition (OCR)-Pon Vizhi for Tamil, Firefox in Tamil, E-Mail Client in Tamil, Office productivity suite in Tamil (BharateeyaOO.o),



Tamil Spell checker (Min Olai) & Dictionary. Many of these product/ technologies have been developed under the nationwide projects launched by TDIL programme of DIT.

The short description of released software is given below :

- Tamil Open Type Fonts (50) : for Windows and Linux developed by C-DAC.
- Tamil True Type Fonts (50): for Windows 95/98, NT, 2000, 2003 developed by C-DAC.
- Bharateeya Open Office : for Tamil (Spread Sheet, Presentations, Word processing & drawing tools) for Linux and Windows
- FireFox : Tamil UI browser for Linux and Windows
- Columba : Email client for Tamil
- Tamil True Type Fonts (50): for Windows developed by Chennai Kavigal.
- Tamil Open Type Fonts (50): for Windows developed by Cadgraf digitals pvt. Ltd.
- Tamil Open Type Fonts (20) : for Windows and Linux Modular Infotech Pvt. Ltd.
- Min Olai : Java based Tamil Editor with spell checker
- PonVizhi : Tamil OCR
- Pals Tamil e-Dictionary : Tamil Dictionary Tool
- Aasaan typing tutor for Tamil and English
- Tamil Keyboard driver
- Tamil Nursery Rhymes : for Windows

Dr. Kalaingar M. Karunanidhi, former Chief Minister, Tamil Nadu was the chief guest on the occasion and released the CD amidst a large gathering of stalwarts from the industry, academia, research organizations and officials from the DIT.

The event was presided by Thiru Dayanidhi Maran, Hon'ble Minister for Communications and IT, Government of India. Commenting on the release, Thiru Dayanidhi Maran expressed his pleasure and excitement to note that the release of the Tamil

software tools and fonts coincided with the auspicious occasion of a new Tamil New Year. Quoting an UNDP report, he said that although "India has emerged as a pioneer in the Information Technology", while the "digital divide in the country is the highest". Attributing this to the "non-availability of user friendly affordable IT tools in local languages", he explained the initiative of "Language Technology Mission" to marshal Technology Development in Indian Languages (TDIL) programme launched by DIT, MC&IT, Government of India, at various agencies as well as that of other public and private agencies. The objective was to bring out practically usable products and solutions into the marketplace at the earliest, even while aiming for world-class research. He said "such tools will not only facilitate common masses but will also encourage software application developers to develop applications in local languages in various sectors of economy". Terming the event as the beginning of a process "for dedicating the tools, products and resources of public use in Indian languages developed so far by government support to the masses", Thiru Dayanidhi Maran hoped that "this process will continue and within a year or so we will be able to deliver such products in all Indian languages".

The CD will be made available by the C-DAC, DIT to the general public free of cost through a massive circulation campaign to be spread over a period of a year.

On the occasion, Microsoft Corporation also released its Tamil interface for its Office application under the aegis of Project Bhasha, an extensive program launched by Microsoft and aimed at accelerating local language computing in India.

Earlier, Mr. S. Ramakrishnan, Director General, C-DAC delivered a presentation on C-DAC's Indian language computing initiative and introduced the various products developed by C-DAC. Thiru G. K. Vasan MP, Thiru Ravi Venkatesan, Chairman, Microsoft India and Thiru N. Ram, Editor-in-Chief, The Hindu were the other special invitees at the event.

The TTF fonts for Tamil have been selected through interactions with the publication industry and are used widely in systems working on the Windows 95/ Windows 98/ Windows NT

platform. The OTF fonts are for systems working on the Windows 2000/XP/2003 and Linux platforms. This effort is the first of its kind and most of the word processors (existing and new) will be able to make use of these fonts. This in turn will make more fonts available for users with Tamil Net/Tamil 99 and Typewriter keyboards for data entry. The OCR makes it possible to convert scanned image (printed page scanned using scanner) to editable text so that it can be used for other applications and can be modified accordingly. The publishing industry is one of the major beneficiaries, who can use this software to reproduce and bringing out new editions of old and priceless works.

BharateeyaOO.o is a Unicode based office suite in Indian Languages based on an Open Source project developed by Sun Microsystems for its StarOffice™ Productivity Suite, which can be deployed across all major platforms. Presently, it has been customized for the Tamil language and will find applications in content generation and management in areas like education and training, product marketing, campaigns and presentations, web media, Small Office/Home Office and so on.

The Tamil OCR-Pons Vizhi has built-in default font information and can recognize a large number of fonts without any training. It provides special facilities for making required corrections very quickly and offers nearly 100% accuracy.

The other tools in the CD like Firefox in Tamil, E-mail Client in Tamil, Tamil Dictionary and Spell checker also offer a host of benefits to users who would like to avail the benefits of IT in the Tamil language.



Release of Hindi Software Tools & Fonts in Public Domain, *New Delhi, June 20, 2005*

Smt. Sonia Gandhi, Hon'ble Chairperson, National Advisory Council released a set of Hindi Software Tools and Fonts in a CD for free public distribution at a function organized by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing, an autonomous Society under the Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MC&IT), Government of India at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. The release was part of a national initiative by the DIT, MC&IT to proliferate the use of Indian languages in Information Technology.



Speaking on the occasion, Smt. Sonia Gandhi stated that "Information Technology has emerged as an all-pervasive technology to impact the lives of people across the globe" and "to ensure the complete reach of the benefits of the Information Revolution in India, people should be in a position to operate and benefit from the use of computers in all Indian languages". Commenting that the release of the free Hindi Software Tools and Fonts was a progressive step in the right direction, she expressed confidence that it would "help in bridging the digital divide, in turn empowering the people belonging to all strata of society, speaking different languages of the country".

The CD contains tools developed by C-DAC, Modular Infotech, Cyberscape Multimedia Ltd, Priya Informatics, IIIT Hyderabad, Cadgraf Digital System Ltd, C K Technologies, Prologix and Softview. The tools include Hindi True Type Fonts (TTF) with Font Driver, UNICODE compliant Open Type Fonts



(OTF) for Hindi, Hindi Language Multifont Keyboard Engine for TTF, Hindi UNICODE compliant Keyboard Driver, BharateeyaOO.o in Hindi, Firefox browser in Hindi, GAIM-Multiprotocol Messenger in Hindi, Columba-Hindi E-mail Client, Hindi OCR, Hindi Dictionary, Hindi Spellchecker, Generic fonts code and storage code converter for Hindi, Assan typing tutor for Hindi & English, Integrated word processor, Hindi language translation tool and text to speech system and so on. Many of these product/ technologies have been developed under the nationwide projects launched by TDIL programme of DIT.

Short description of the released products is given below :

- Hindi True Type Fonts (365) and Keyboard drivers : For Hindi on Windows 95/98, NT, 2000 and above.
- Hindi Language Multifont Keyboard Engine for True Type Fonts : For Hindi on Windows 95/98, NT, 2000 and above.
- Hindi Open Type Fonts (160) : For Unicode applications on Windows 2000/XP and Hindi OT Fonts for Linux .
- Hindi Keyboard drivers: For Unicode applications on Windows 2000/XP Supports INSCRIPT, Phonetic & Typewriter

- PARIVARTAN : Generic Converter for Windows
- Bharateeya Open Office : For Hindi (Spread Sheet, Presentations, Word processing & drawing tools) for Windows and Linux
- FireFox : Hindi User Interface (UI) browser for Windows and Linux
- Columba : Hindi Email client for Windows and Linux
- Chitrakan : Hindi OCR for Windows
- Aasaan : Hindi & English Typing Tutor for Windows
- C-DAC: Integrated Word processor for Windows
- C-DAC : Hindi Dictionary Tool for Windows
- C-DAC : Spell checker for Windows
- C-DAC : Hindi Language Transliteration Tool

for Windows

- Prologix, IIIT - Hyderabad: Hindi TTS system for Windows
- Multi protocol massanger
- English - Hindi Translation system (online)
- Hindi Text Corpora

Smt. Gandhi emphasized the role played by Information Technology towards bridging the knowledge gap by facilitating the acquisition, absorption and dissemination of knowledge. "There should be a continuing effort to tap global knowledge, assimilate and create knowledge of local relevance, to make it available for the benefit of people at large" and the need to "motive private sector through market incentives to contribute to this critical area" she added.

Speaking at the release function, Thiru Dayanidhi Maran, Hon'ble Minister for Communications and IT, Government of India said that the release marked "another major milestone in the fulfillment of the



National Agenda articulated in the Common Minimum Programme of our Government within a short span of one year". Commenting that "while commercial products have their place in any economy, at our current stage of nascent growth of domestic IT consumption, distribution of fonts and other software tools freely will have the potential to unleash the creative capacities of our people to make use of these in ways we cannot even dream of - as the experience of advanced countries have shown", he expressed pleasure at the shaping up of the language technology mission as "laboratory products are converted to utility products for the benefits of the common man". This mission will also accelerate the PC penetration relevance of telecom and broadband revolution in rural areas and trigger a range of applications and contents including those in e-Governance and education to be locally meaningful", he added.

Dr. Shakeel Ahmed, Minister of State for Communications and IT thanked the dignitaries for their active support to the cause of Indian language computing and extended an invitation to like-minded individuals/ organizations to contribute to the TDIL programme for the greater progress of the country in the field of IT.

An audio-visual presentation outlining a brief history of language computing development in India and demonstrating the contents of the released CD of the Hindi Software Tools and Fonts was also showcased at the function.

Earlier, Mr. Brijesh Kumar, Secretary, DIT welcomed the dignitaries and gave a brief introduction on the language initiatives of the DIT. Two well-known experts in the field of language computing, Prof. Rajeev Sangal, Director, IIIT Hyderabad and Prof. R. M. K. Sinha from IIT, Kanpur also spoke on the R&D

roadmap in the field. Also present on the occasion was Mr. S. Ramakrishnan, Director General, C-DAC.

As part of the programme, the Hindi version of the Indian Language Data Centre (ILDC) website (www.ildc.gov.in) was also launched from which the Hindi tools and fonts are downloadable by the public and the developer community.

Because of launch of these tools there has been surge in the usage of this website. The ildc websites usage details are as follows:

ILDC websites

	www.ildc.gov.in	www.ildc.in
Registration	51721	40190
Unique Ids	43809	32706
• Distribution of Tamil CD's		: 47,835
• Distribution of Hindi CD's		: 31,711
• Total Hindi site visits		: 162489
• Total Tamil site visits		: 194962

Courtesy/Source:

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