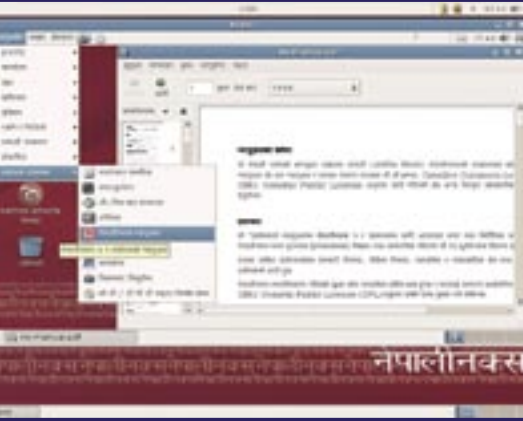# LINUX WORLD NEWS

A DISTRO FOR NEPALI SPEAKERS

With NepaLinux 1.1, released October 30, 2006, Nepali-speaking users can finally enjoy a sufficiently stable and user-friendly Linux distribution. (Even though it is named 1.0, its predecessor released more than a year ago was in fact a test version.)

The Debian derivative is being developed by Madan Puraskar Pustakalaya, an NGO library for Nepali books and other printed publications. Version 1.1 – among others – contains Linux 2.6.17, a localized GNOME 2.14 desktop, OpenOffice 2.0.2, GnuCash 2.0.1, Pango-enabled FireFox 1.5 and Thunderbird 1.5.0.4, Nepali spellchecker and thesaurus and many localized applications such as AbiWord, Gvim or Gnumeric. Xkb/Scim is used as input system.

The project promises version 2.0 in 2007 and 3.0 in 2008.
http://www.nepalinux.org/
http://mpp.org.np/

CREATIVE COMPUTING IN TAIWAN

It all started with lunch in Hackney (a town near London) in April 2005. Back then, artists and developers from Hiveware and the Space Media Arts studio decided to expand their network to Taiwan and interact with residents in Taipei during the Taipei Biennial exhibition – using Linux-based embedded systems, dubbed Hiveware.

These devices have a customized version of the embedded Linux distribution OpenWrt installed which runs on a variety of broadband routers and wireless access points including Cisco's Linksys WRT 54G and Asus' WL-HDD. They form Hive networks in which each device is capable of gathering content (through webcams, microphones, sensors) and disseminating it (through web servers, audio/video live streams, bluetooth, wlan). Artists can use Hive devices to create, store, and forward works of art.

Visitors to the Taipei Biennial at the Taipei Museum of Fine Art from November 4, 2006 to February 25, 2007, will be invited to utilize such open networks and pervasive wireless connections to form community networks amongst themselves, a kind of performance art that blends engineering and art as envisioned by FreeNetworks.org.
http://www.hivenetworks.net/
http://www.spacemedia.org.uk/
http://openwrt.org/

OPEN SOURCE CELEBRATIONS IN QUEBEC

For the third year and at the invitation of the non-profit group "Facil" "libre" user groups in Québec (Canada) celebrated the "Québec Free Computer Science Week" ("Semaine québécoise de l'informatique libre", SQIL). As an umbrella organization, Facil promotes open source software in the region. More than a dozen events were organized by almost twice as many community groups.

The week of November 11, started with two traditional install fests as well as with a debate on whether Linux is ready for secondary schools in the student city of Sherbrooke. "Technologies have a cost, but also an impact on the management in schools. Schools should promote values such as sharing and diversity," said Benoit St-André, who hosts LinuxÉdu-Québec, a community website for teachers. Some schools have been running Linux for a few years and it was observed that although they had the same budget as before, they were able to cover the costs of migration as well as pay for support contracts from local companies. The latter has stimulated local development in Sherbroke and some other regions of Québec.

The celebrations continued with an accessibility conference in Montréal. Miguel Ross demonstrated how his old Pentium 300 laptop supports a Braille display and also provides text-to-speech in French, using Orca, the assistive technology part of the Gnome project. "The progress this year has been incredible, and the range of applications available are giving us new opportunities," he said.

On the closing day Saturday the 18th, more install fests were held in the cities of Québec and Montréal as well as many festivities in various cities. On the same day during their annual general assembly, the non-profit organization Koumbit presented how numerous community organizations had been empowered with Drupal-based websites on new, self-managed hosting sites. Koumbit provides independent IT and design professionals with space to pool and share open source related skills and resources. Especially interesting to see was the progress graphics designers had made experimenting with open source software.
http://facil.qc.ca/ (French)
http://sqil.info/ (French)
http://www.linuxeduquebec.org/ (French)
http://koumbit.org/en/
http://linux-quebec.org/ (French)