



December 2009 Version

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ONE-LINER NEWS ITEMS

• Internet search giant Google has lifted the lid on its operating system, known as Chrome OS.



• Microsoft ha backed off from antiGoogle activities



• American innovations are one decline. The gap between developing countries and USA is closing (source:Newsweek, Nov 2009). For more information see

<http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2009/11/releasing-chromium-os-open-source.html>

FIT



The next conference, FIT (Frontiers of Information Technology) is going to be held in Islamabad in December 2009. Among the participants renowned scientists from various European and America countries are also taking part. The FIT is organized every year in Islamabad by the COMSATS Institute of Information Technology (CIIT). From Lahore CIIT, the participants are Dr Rafiq Asim, Dean FIST, Mr. Faisal Tehseen Shah, assistant professor, Mr. Abid Bhuttta lecturer, Mr Abdul Qayyum RA, and Mr. Shahid Butt, RA. All the participants belong to the Computer Science Department of CIIT Lahore.

TEACHER ATTENDANCE

A project is underway at CS department by which a daily teacher attendance sheet will be conveyed from the department in a tabular form automatically to the administration block. All leaves, earned and casual, can be recorded and immediate result can be seen by the admin. Four undergraduates are doing this project using PHP and are being supervised by their teacher.



RESEARCH

(Information about research papers published by the CS department will henceforth be published quarterly, because there are not enough publications to report monthly .The issues of March, June, September and December will carry the research report. The next Mar issue will contain the list of the CS department researchers who have produced their research papers)

Research under free will is scant. My unpublished survey reveals that on the average less than some 15% of the university faculty (Pakistani universities) do research under free will. The numbers are definitely greater for the research-prone universities. In the presence of practically-no-compulsion and doling of continuous yearly increments with no question asked, the affair is tantamount to discouraging research. The administration should take the fair share of the blame.

The least we can do is to interview the faculty every year when they are filling their evaluation forms. A bench -- we have departmental review committee (DRC)-- can be assigned to meet just before faculty evaluation to interview those faculty members who have produced nothing in the previous year. AND ASK THEM WHY.

Their short answers under their signatures can be had and for the next semester their promises can be taken. If they do not stick to their promises.....

Also university should provide guidance. When I was in Singapore National University, an America vice chancellor was invited for endowment lecture. His words still ring in my ears. He said his university took decision to excel in one area, Nuclear Physics. The university coaxed faculty to switch to Nuclear Physics and offered incentives. After 18 years they have a name in Nuclear Physics. I wonder if we can do that.



OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE

Mr Fwad Bajwa and Ahsan Puri, were invited by the CIIT Lahore IT committee for their suggestions on improvement of CIIT's network. The Computer Science department was represented Mr Inran Raza, Lecturer of the CS department. The Virtual University was represented by its IT manager. The meeting was also attended by the Director of the institute, Dean FIST of CIIT, Heads of Departments of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering. Many more attended the meeting. The agenda was to discuss the use of Open source software instead of proprietary one. The director of the institute expressed his desire to convert to open software as soon as possible.

DEPARTURE

Dr Ahtisham, Associate Professor, and Mr. Sohaib , Lecturer at CS department are departing in December 2009 for an assignment and PhD study abroad respectively. The department is organizing a farewell tea party for them and wish them the best of luck.

COMSPEC

An event CPOMSPEC is being organized by the Computer Science department on 17 Dec 2009 in the Lahore campus of CIIT. The event will feature,

- Speed Programming
- Quizzes
- Computer Games

The students of the campus will take part in the activities.

EXTREMELY ENORMOUS ENERGY AT A VERY CHEAPER RATE

Newsweek of Nov 23, 2009 ha published an article on POWER, which says that energy of supertanker full of fuel can be produced by tiny pellet of the size of multivitamin tablet containing a few milligrams of deuterium and tritium, the isotopes of hydrogen. How? By fusing isotopes of hydrogen to produce fusion This requires a huge LASER which Lawrence Livermore National Lab is trying to produce at the lab under the supervision of 60 year old scientist Mr Moses who may be called the father of Hydrogen Bomb. You will forget about nuke plants, coal, oil, wind and solar energy. Computer can provide a great help in modeling the LASER system and reduce the cost of the construction of a LASER system.

Some people joke that fusion energy is only 40 years away and will always be only 40 years away. But I compare these efforts at Lawrence Livermore Laboratory to the story of a King who got defeated many a time by his enemy and hid himself in a cave where he saw a spider struggling to get to the roof through a thread of a web. He fell over and over again and finally succeeded. The king took a lesson from the spider. TRY AND TRY AGAIN and he finally succeeded.

