REPORT ON
SOFTWARE FREEDOM DAY

Date: **20-09-2025**

Venue: **Ground Floor Seminar Hall**

Organized by FOSS CLUB, BJI

Bishop Jerome Institute, Kollam

A Centre of Excellence in Professional Education for Engineering and Technology, Management and Architecture Catholic Diocese of Quilon

Fatima College Internal Road, Jawahar Nagar, Karbala, Kollam, Kerala 691001

Contents

1 Introduction

As part of the Software Freedom Day 2025 celebrations at Bishop Jerome Institute, a special class session was conducted from **12:00 PM to 1:00 PM** by three final-year students. The primary objective of this session was to introduce the concept of software freedom and familiarize the participants with various free and open-source software (FOSS) tools. The session aimed to create awareness about the importance of digital freedom and how open-source technologies empower users to learn, share, and innovate.

Software Freedom Day is an annual worldwide celebration that emphasizes the value of free and open-source software in education, research, and everyday life. By organizing such events, institutions like Bishop Jerome Institute play a vital role in shaping students' knowledge of alternatives to proprietary systems. The session highlighted the importance of having access to software that is not only cost-effective but also transparent, secure, and community-driven.

The three student presenters began by providing an overview of the significance of the day and why free and open-source software has become a global movement. They explained how FOSS encourages collaboration, reduces dependency on expensive licenses, and gives users the freedom to study, modify, and share software without restrictions. This made the session particularly relevant for the student audience, as many were keen to explore practical tools that could aid their academic projects and professional growth.

Furthermore, the introduction to FOSS was not limited to technical aspects alone; the speakers also focused on the values of openness, community contribution, and shared learning. By stressing these principles, the session reminded participants that software is not just a tool but a gateway to innovation and creativity. The purpose was not only to teach but to inspire students to become active contributors to the open-source community.

2 Session Content

During the session, the students began by outlining the **schedule of the day's events** and provided participants with an overview of the significance of Software Freedom Day. They then proceeded to introduce and explain the features of several **free and open-source software tools**, highlighting their applications in academics, professional projects, and personal use.

One of the first tools introduced was **Linux**, a popular open-source operating system known for its security, stability, and wide community support. The students explained how Linux is widely used in servers, research environments, and even personal computers. They emphasized its advantages over proprietary systems, including freedom from license fees, high levels of customization, and strong performance for developers and IT professionals.
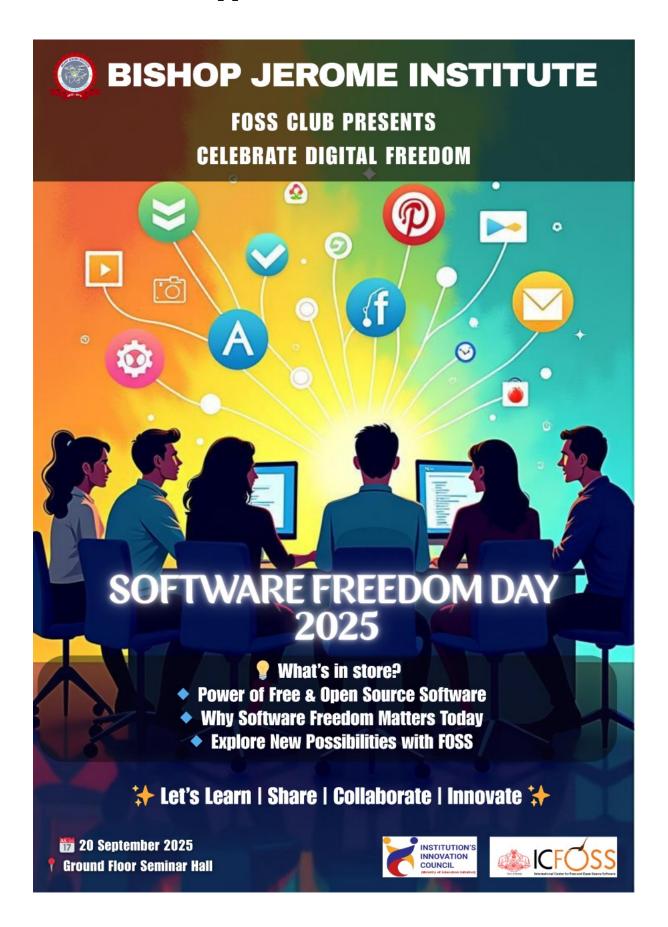
Next, the session covered **Mozilla Firefox**, a free and open-source web browser. The presenters highlighted its focus on privacy, security, and user control compared to other commercial browsers. Features such as open-source extensions, tracking protection, and lightweight performance were demonstrated to show how Firefox helps users safeguard their digital freedom while browsing the internet.

The discussion then moved on to design and prototyping tools. **Penpot**, an open-source design and prototyping platform, was introduced as a collaborative tool for creating user interfaces. The students explained how Penpot is particularly beneficial for teams, since it allows both designers and developers to collaborate seamlessly without the need for costly licenses.

To make the session more engaging, a **comparison between Penpot and Figma** was also presented. While Figma is widely used in the industry, it operates as a proprietary, subscription-based platform. Penpot, on the other hand, offers many of the same features, such as vector design, prototyping, and team collaboration, but with the added advantage of being completely free and open-source. The presenters noted that Penpot can be self-hosted, giving organizations more control over their data, whereas Figma relies on a cloud service that users cannot fully control.

The class was conducted in an interactive manner, where participants were encouraged to ask questions and explore the tools demonstrated. Each tool was presented with practical examples to help the audience understand its utility in real-world scenarios. The discussion emphasized how open-source software not only reduces dependency on costly proprietary tools but also promotes collaboration and innovation.

3 Poster & Snippets

BISHOP JEROME INSTITUTE

A Centre of Excellence in Professional Education for
Engineering and Technology, Management and Architecture
Catholic Diocese of Quilon
Fatima College Internal Road, Jawahar Nagar, Karbala, Kollam, Kerala 691001

FOSS CLUB

🎉 Software Freedom Day 2025 🎉

4   Conclusion

The session proved to be highly informative and impactful for the participants. By learning about different free and open-source software tools, students gained valuable insights into how they can leverage these resources for their studies, projects, and future careers. The class successfully reinforced the importance of adopting open-source solutions, encouraging participants to embrace digital freedom, collaborate with the community, and continue exploring new possibilities with FOSS.