



24th November, 2022

To,  
Mr. Dilip Asbe,  
CEO, NPCI.

**Subject: NPCI, BHIM and Open Source**

Dear Dilip,

I am writing to you on behalf of the FOSS United, a non-profit that aims to grow the Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) community in India. We have a ~2000 strong group from the tech community and industry who are active on our Telegram channel. Our members saw the [announcement by NPCI on Twitter](#) regarding BHIM's open sourcing and pointed out that the terms do not follow the [generally accepted definition of open source](#) articulated by the Open Source Initiative (OSI). In particular, the terms under which the BHIM code is being distributed, do not confirm with the following principles of the [Open Source Definition](#) are:

- Free Redistribution
- Source Code
- No Discrimination Against Persons or Groups
- No Discrimination Against Fields of Endeavor

NPCI making the BHIM app available under bilateral agreements is a welcome step and will help smaller banks. However, a bilateral agreement cannot be called "open source" because it does not meet OSI's condition of free redistribution and availability of source code. Therefore, NPCI can either (A) release the code under an approved OSI license or (B) issue a clarification that the code is not "open source" but available under bilateral agreements with regulated entities.

FOSS United would recommend that NPCI release the code under one of the [licenses that are approved by the OSI](#). This would help NPCI in building a community around BHIM and enable Collaborative Innovation. We believe this will enable faster innovation, better security and greater adoption for the BHIM app. We also believe that the time is right to do this and there would be community interest in such an initiative. In fact, we had a presentation titled, "How do we get a FOSS UPI mobile app" at the India FOSS 2022 event that we organized in July 2022 in Bangalore. The presentation can be seen at: <https://youtube.com/watch?v=XALTOoPpaCA>

If NPCI needs any help in this regard, selecting the right license etc, FOSS United would be happy to organize a workshop on the same. However, if NPCI's intention is to release the code through bilateral arrangements, we would request that NPCI issue a corrigendum so that everyone has clarity about the license conditions.

Regards,

Venkatesh Hariharan  
Public Policy Director  
FOSS United Foundation | Mobile: 9004011970