

APRICOT-2026/ APNIC-61 FELLOWSHIP REPORT

APRICOT 2026 marked a meaningful milestone in my professional journey. It was my first time attending an APRICOT workshop, my first international conference experience on my own, and also the first time I had the honor of receiving a fellowship. Alhamdulillah, I am sincerely grateful to Allah (SWT), and deeply thankful to my family and colleagues for their constant support and encouragement that made this possible.

Being selected among many talented applicants was both humbling and inspiring. This opportunity was not only a personal achievement, but also a proud moment to represent Bangladesh on an international stage. In this report, I would like to share my experiences and reflections from APRICOT 2026.

Advanced BGP Masterclass

When I first looked at the lab topology, honestly, it felt a bit overwhelming. There were so many routers, IPs, and exercises lined up. But as we started, I realized this was exactly the kind of hands-on learning I needed. Exercise 1 was our warm-up. Nothing fancy, just getting comfortable with the FRRouting CLI.

We started with simple BGP peering, then moved to connecting with an IXP route server. Along the way, we filtered prefixes, blocked unwanted ASNs, and played with route maps. We set limits to protect our routers, made some paths longer using prepending, tagged routes with communities, and finally connected a real customer.

On the last day, I looked back at that topology diagram — the same one that scared me on day one. And I realized I actually understood it now. I knew what each line meant. I knew why things were connected the way they were. I knew what I would configure and why. And that, I think, is exactly what this masterclass was supposed to do. I learned a lot in the Masterclass in Advance BGP and distinctly **earned a badge**.

Deeply grateful to **Aftab Siddiqui**, **Phil Mawson**, and **Mark Duffell** for their incredible mentorship and practical insights.

Quiz Session

The Quiz Session at the end of the workshop was both exciting and memorable. Even though I didn't win, the interactive session tested our knowledge and supported the basic concepts we had learned. It was a great way to wrap up the workshop with a sense of accomplishment and fellowship among participants.

Soft Skills Session: Policy Making Exercise on Abuse Contact Requirement

The soft skills and leadership sessions were equally transformative — helping me grow in confidence, public speaking, and community leadership. Special thanks to **Aftab Siddiqui**, **William Stockbridge**, and **Terry Sweetser** for guiding us beyond our comfort zones.

During our soft skills session, we were given a very interesting and interactive task. The topic was: **Abuse Contact Requirement for IP Resources**, the core problem presented to us was that many IP resource holders either do not publish an abuse contact, or if they do, it is often outdated. This creates serious delays in responding to cyber incidents like DDoS attacks, phishing, or scanning activities, and makes life difficult for network operators trying to coordinate mitigation.

We were divided into groups and asked to create a policy that ensures every IP resource holder maintains a valid abuse contact. Our group sat together, discussed, and drafted a complete policy. But the real learning came after that — when we had to justify our policy in front of the opposite group and our mentors.

They questioned us on:

- Why did we make the policy mandatory instead of just recommended?
- How will we ensure everyone follows it?
- What about small organizations with limited staff — how will they comply?
- What happens if someone's abuse contact is invalid — warning, suspension, or public flagging?
- How often should verification happen — annually or through automated email checks?

This session taught us how to find real problems, create fair solutions, and make rules that actually work. We learned to balance strictness with understanding for smaller groups. Plus, we got to practice teamwork, thinking on our feet, and speaking up.

Feedback

One suggestion I would like to share is that the time allocated for the masterclass felt a bit short. If it could be extended to two days, or at least by one additional day, it would provide participants with more time to absorb the materials and enhance the overall learning experience.

Social Dinner and Networking

The Social Dinner was one of the most memorable parts of APRICOT 2026. It offered a relaxed environment to connect with mentors, experts, and fellow participants. Conversations with professionals from different countries broadened my perspective and made the experience even more meaningful and inspiring.

Special Thanks

I would like to sincerely thank the APRICOT Fellowship Program team and the APNIC team for their continuous support and guidance throughout this journey. My heartfelt appreciation also goes to the trainers and mentors for their valuable insights and encouragement. I am especially grateful to John Rattray, for his constant support and clear guidance from beginning to end.

Conclusion

Being part of APRICOT 2026 as a fellow was a truly meaningful experience for me. The technical sessions and masterclasses, particularly on advanced BGP concepts, strengthened my understanding of Internet operations and helped me connect theory with real-world practice. These insights are directly relevant to my current role, and I look forward to applying them to refine routing policies, enhance network stability, and build a more secure and scalable infrastructure within my organization.

Looking ahead, I would like to gradually share the knowledge and insights gained from APRICOT 2026 with the networking community in Bangladesh through local NOG engagement, technical discussions, and knowledge-sharing sessions. I am particularly interested in promoting awareness around IPv6 readiness and advanced BGP best practices. I also hope to guide and encourage junior engineers as they grow in their careers.

This fellowship has not only strengthened my technical foundation but also reminded me of the importance of collaboration and community contribution. I am sincerely grateful for the opportunity and look forward to staying connected and giving back in meaningful ways.

Sincerely,

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