

The Chillu Issue

Malayalam Chillus should be encoded since

1. They are unique characters in Malayalam, which cannot be represented by existing characters in the Malayalam Unicode code space (0D00 - 0D7F).
2. There is difference in meaning, when chillu consonant + chandrakkala combination is used in place of Chllu. See the examples below

Slno	The Original Malayalam	English Translation
1	ആ മനുഷ്യൻ കൊടുക്കുന്നു	That man is giving
2	ആ മനുഷ്യന് കൊടുക്കുന്നു	Giving to that man
3	വില്ലൻ പോയി	"The villain left"
4	വില്ലന് പോയി	"A loss for the villain"
5	അത് വാര്	"Dig it up"
6	അത് വാർ	"That is a metal strip"
7	മനുഷ്യന്റെ കാല്	"Man's leg"
8	മനുഷ്യന്റെ കാൽ	"One fourth of a human being"
9	കുഞ്ഞ് ആണ്	"It's a child!!"
10	കുഞ്ഞ് ആൺ	"It is a male child!!"
11	കോള്ട് അടിച്ചു	"Hit a jackpot"
12	കോൾനിലം	A kind of swampy land

3. Use of joiners for linguistic functions will result in overloading the joiners/using them for purposes other than their defined functions.
4. Last and the most important, As per the IDN standards, the format characters like ZWJ, ZWNJ etc are prohibited in domain names. Because of this with the present representation of chillus using ZWJ, we will not be able to use a large number of words like സർക്കാർ തൊഴിൽ സിവിൽ etc. in domain names.

Quoted below are the comments on the Malayalam character table from the registrars of Malayalam IDN for .IN registry.

//The table does not conform to RFC 3491 (Nameprep). Some of the characters should not be in the table (eg, 200C, 200D - control characters) which are explicitly banned in the DNS. We request that the team at C-DAC review RFC 3491 and ensure that the table conform to this RFC. //

200C and 200D Zero width non-joiner and Zero width joiner resp.

UTC was convinced of all the points above and that resulted in the approval of Chillu for encoding in May 2005 meeting of UTC.
This approval was later differed because of some arguments from Rachana Aksharavedi.

According to Rachana, the solution for solving the Chillu issue is as follows.

- a) Accepting only $\delta^{\check{}}$ (Ψ) (**0D41 + 0D4D**) form as the samvruthokaram, following its predominance in the original system,
- b) Giving the chandrakkala the sole function of minus-vowel marker when used with consonants, and
- c) Retaining the existing situation of chillaksharam using Joiners

This is not a practical solution.

The use of $\delta^{\check{}}$ (Chandrakkala + u sign) to represent the short 'u' sound was not predominant in the original system. (Not sure what they mean by original system). It was prevalent only in the southern part of Kerala. And that too disappeared in the 1970s. None of the major publishing houses, Newspapers, magazines, textbooks etc. do not use this form. Please see (www.deepika.com, www.manoramaonline.com, www.mathrubhumi.org, www.keralakaumudi.com, www.deshabhimani.com, etc.)

Please see the attached sheets in Annexure 1. It was published in Malayalam year 1073 and 1065, which corresponds to AD 1907 and 1899 respectively. It may be noted that these pages have either chandrakkala or chandrakkala+usign. We have marked the chandrakkala in places where it should appear in the present writing. So the history goes like this. Initially there were no vowel omission sign used in Malayalam. Then in some parts of Kerala people began to use chandrakkala and in some other parts chandrakkala +U sign was used. And later chandrakkala alone is used at least in printing. There may be people writing in the other way. Hence one particular form of writing cannot be imposed on the users. After all we don't understand the logic behind combining Chillu issue and samvruthokaram,

Use of joiners are not recommended for reasons given in 3 & 4 above.

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