

Doc Type: Working Group Document
Title: Comments on the Proposal to Encode Characters for the Kamatapuri Language (L2/09-098)
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In February 2009, the Kamatapuri Bhasha Unnayan Parishad submitted a proposal (L2/09-098) for encoding seven characters used historically for writing the Kamatapuri language:

KAMATAPURI LETTER A
KAMATAPURI LETTER AA
KAMATAPURI LETTER VOCALIC R
KAMATAPURI LETTER VOCALIC RR
KAMATAPURI LETTER AE
KAMATAPURI LETTER PHA
KAMATAPURI VOWEL SIGN AE

These characters may be considered glyphic variants of the following Bengali characters:

অ U+0985 BENGALI LETTER A
আ U+0986 BENGALI LETTER AA
ঋ U+098B BENGALI LETTER VOCALIC R
ঌ U+0990 BENGALI LETTER VOCALIC RR
ঐ U+098F BENGALI LETTER AI
ফ U+09AB BENGALI LETTER PHA
ঐ U+09C8 BENGALI VOWEL SIGN AI

Several of the glyphs presented by K.B.U.P. are not unique to Kamatapuri orthography. Some are found in other scripts related to Bengali and some appear to be cursive forms of Bengali characters:

- The forms for KAMATAPURI LETTER A, KAMATAPURI LETTER AA, and KAMATAPURI LETTER PHA are also found in manuscripts written in the Maithili script.
- The KAMATAPURI LETTER AE could be considered a cursive form of BENGALI LETTER AI; however, KAMATAPURI VOWEL SIGN AE appears distinct from its Bengali counterpart.
- Additional investigation is required for the forms of KAMATAPURI LETTER VOCALIC R and KAMATAPURI LETTER VOCALIC RR. These letters contain a *repha*-like element, which is curved as is done in Maithili as opposed to the angular form used in Bengali. The forms shown resemble glyphs in other Indic scripts for the consonant-vowel ligature RA + VOCALIC R / VOCALIC RR, eg. Devanagari र्र and र्र.

Further information is requested from K.B.U.P. in order to determine that the Kamatapuri forms are unique characters and not simply variants of their Bengali analogues. Specimens of manuscript folios in which these characters are used would be valuable.

Pending such a determination, all of the characters proposed for representing Kamatapuri may be implemented by designing a font based upon Bengali in which the glyphs for the Bengali characters are replaced with the Kamatapuri forms.