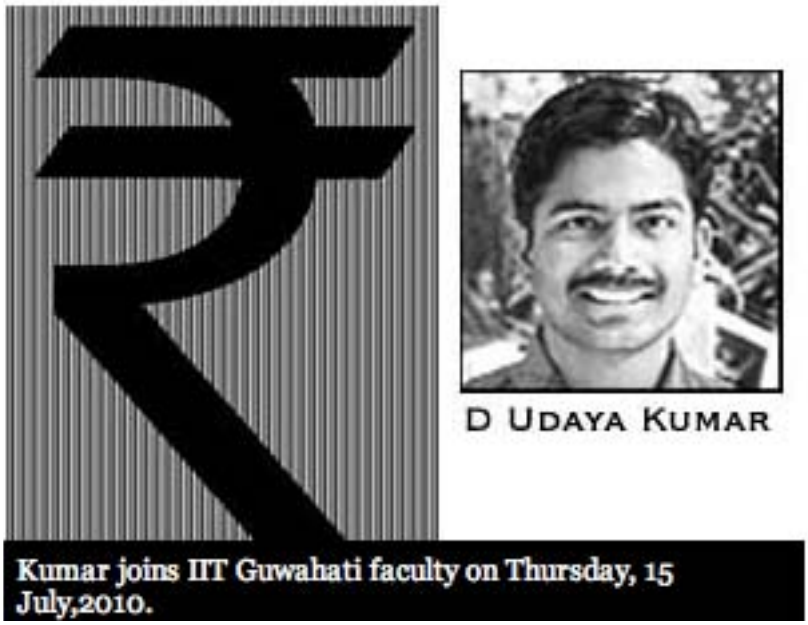
ISO/IEC JTC1/SC2/WG2 N3862
L2/10-249
2010-07-15

Universal Multiple-Octet Coded Character Set
International Organization for Standardization
Organisation internationale de normalisation
Международная организация по стандартизации

Doc Type: **Working Group Document**
Title: **Proposal to encode the INDIAN RUPEE SIGN and to change the glyph for the DRACHMA SIGN**
Source: **Michael Everson**
Status: **Individual Contribution**
Action: **For consideration by JTC1/SC2/WG2 and UTC**
Date: **2010-07-15**

1. The Indian Rupee Sign. In February 2009 Ministry of Finance for the Government of India initiated a contest to design a currency symbol for the *rupee*. On 2010-07-15 the winning design was announced. At the bottom of this page the winning designer, D. Udaya Kumar, is shown. His prize was R250,000 (€4200).

As with the EURO SIGN, HRYVNIA SIGN, and TENGE SIGN, the encoding of the INDIAN RUPEE SIGN would seem to be a matter of some urgency.



The shape of the currency sign has been specified as "an amalgam" of the DEVANAGARI LETTER RA, and the LATIN CAPITAL LETTER RA and it is likely that many fonts will take the Latin capital letter as the starting point for design, to harmonize with European digits and other currency signs. An example using a Times-like font is given below, between the encoded RUPEE SIGN and an ordinary Rs.

$ ¥ € Rs ₹ Rs

The **symbol of Indian Rupee** has finally been decided by the 5 member jury panel of Indian cabinet. There were 5 proposed designs and the jury choosed the design of **IIT post graduate Udaya Kumar** and recommended it for Cabinet approval.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Ambika Soni announced this, saying the Rupee had now arrived on the international platform in sync with universal standards. The Cabinet approved the design today.

Soni would not commit to a date by when the symbol would be officially in use but said it would take about six months in India and about two years to make it recognized internationally.

The government had organised a symbol design competition with a prize of Rs 2.5 lakh for the winner. Five designs were shortlisted. Udaya Kumar had submitted more than one design.

The contestants were asked to design a symbol that would be the Hindi alphabet Ra with two lines – to "reflect and capture the Indian ethos and culture," in Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee's words.

The growing influence of the **Indian economy** in the global space is said to have prompted this move. The **Rupee** will join the select club of global currencies like the **US dollar, the British Pound, European Euro** and **Japanese Yen** that have **unique symbols.**

Right now, the abbreviation for the Indian Rupee, '**Re' or 'Rs**' is used by India's neighbours **Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka** as well.

2. The Drachma Sign. Document N1946 "Addition of the drachma sign to the UCS" was prepared by me on behalf of ELOT.

Doc Type:	**Working Group Document**
Title:	**Addition of the DRACHMA SIGN to the UCS**
Source:	**ELOT**
Status:	**National Body Proposal**
Date:	**1999-01-20**

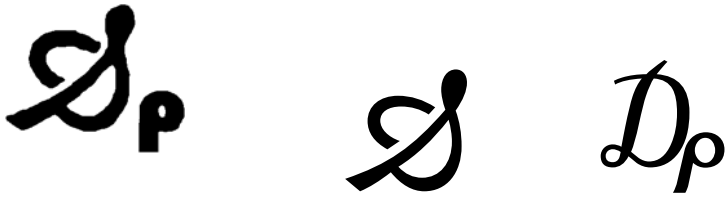
This document proposes the addition of a Greek currency sign to the UCS, and presents the proposal summary form.

Greece has proposed the addition of the DRACHMA SIGN to ISO/IEC 8859-7 in one of the empty positions (xA5 or 10/05). The creation of the EURO SIGN has necessitated the creation of a unique DRACHMA SIGN for use in banking, administration, and for general purposes in Greece and countries trading with Greece both inside and outside the the European Union, especially during the transitional period when both the drachma and the euro are in use.

The DRACHMA SIGN is a glyph with a stylized capital delta together with a small rho.

It contained a glyph made in Everson Mono on the basis of a glyph which had been provided to me.

That glyph consisted of a small Greek rho and a character encoded in Wingdings at U+F0D0, named internally “leafccwne”, which I interpret as “leaf counter-clockwise north-east”. The image I had from ELOT is given on the left, the Wingdings character in the centre, and the glyph currently used in the code charts.



There is no evidence at all that the glyph currently used in the code charts has ever been used in Greece for any purpose. Had it been, ELOT would probably not have given me a glyph using a dingbat. Nick Nicholas wrote about this, noting that Greek price-tags had made uses of a Drachma sign (see www.tlg.uci.edu/~opoudjis/unicode/ligatures.html). He suggested that the glyph be changed: “if we're going to have the codepoint, the price tag ligature has the advantage of having existed within living memory.”

> To my memory, the symbol for the now defunct drachma has never been anything but the abbreviation δρ. or δρχ. It is of course already possible to represent the abbreviation δρχ in Unicode using existing Unicode codepoints. In that regard, the drachma sign is unlike the other 17 currency signs in Unicode 4.0—although some glyph realisations of `U+20A3 French Franc Sign`, ₣, and `U+20A7 Peseta Sign`, ₧, are also squashed up abbreviations, and others can be realised readily with overstrike glyphs. Even if the cursive form of the glyph was current in the 19th century, it could still be composed straightforwardly with a simple font switch. So one might wonder why the codepoint was adopted.
>
> The answer is that this was an ELOT idea, and when ELOT wants something, Unicode is obliged to comply. This is the sum total of the justification given:
>
> > The creation of the EURO SIGN has necessitated the creation of a unique DRACHMA SIGN for use in banking, administration, and for general purposes in Greece and countries trading with Greece both inside and outside the European Union, especially during the transitional period when both the drachma and the euro are in use.
>
> And when asked whether the characters already exist:
>
> > The glyph looks like script capital DELTA and small RHO but the symbol is intended for unitary use in collocation with the EURO SIGN.
>
> Allow me to paraphrase this uncharitably. For over 150 years, the drachma is written as an abbreviation, with a delta and a rho and usually a chi. Two years before the drachma *ceases to exist*, ELOT decides that if the Euro gets to have a single glyph, so should the drachma—even though that single glyph *is* a delta followed by a rho, and it has a graphical form that has not been seen for at least 50 years, and possibly ever. Why it is so pressing that the drachma has a single glyph now that it would be shown next to € is never made clear. National pride? *DM* remained good enough for the Germans. Sorting? Surely that's an issue for spreadsheet implementers, not Unicode. Visual display? The two character saving doesn't solve the problem of labels now having two prices on them instead of one. And the whole shebang gets adopted into Unicode, where it will reside as a codepoint for centuries, in September 1999—15 months before the drachma is abolished, and the rationale for the existence of the codepoint (coocurrence with the Euro) ceases to apply.
>
> Riiight.
>
> > To be fair, as Alexandros Diamantidis reminds me, some price tags did print delta-rho in a single space, which might be counted as a ligature—with the delta either above or to the top left of the rho:
> >
> > 
> >
> >
> > Of course, this is still a ligature and not a single character; but if we're going to have the codepoint, the price tag ligature has the advantage of having existed within living memory.
>
> This character was proposed by ELOT in January 1999, and adopted in Unicode 3.0.

I recommend that the chart glyph be changed from 𝒟ρ to:

A. Administrative

1. Title

Proposal to encode the INDIAN RUPEE SIGN and to change the glyph for the DRACHMA SIGN

2. Requester's name

Michael Everson

3. Requester type (Member body/Liaison/Individual contribution)

Individual contribution.

4. Submission date

2010-07-15

5. Requester's reference (if applicable)

6. Choose one of the following:

6a. This is a complete proposal

Yes.

6b. More information will be provided later

No.

B. Technical -- General

1. Choose one of the following:

1a. This proposal is for a new script (set of characters)

No.

Proposed name of script

1b. The proposal is for addition of character(s) to an existing block

Yes.

1b. Name of the existing block

Currency Symbols.

2. Number of characters in proposal

1

3. Proposed category (see section II, Character Categories)

Category A.

4a. Proposed Level of Implementation (1, 2 or 3) (see clause 14, ISO/IEC 10646-1: 2000)

Level 1.

4b. Is a rationale provided for the choice?

Yes.

4c. If YES, reference

Spacing character.

5a. Is a repertoire including character names provided?

Yes.

5b. If YES, are the names in accordance with the character naming guidelines in Annex L of ISO/IEC 10646-1: 2000?

Yes.

5c. Are the character shapes attached in a legible form suitable for review?

Yes.

6a. Who will provide the appropriate computerized font (ordered preference: True Type, or PostScript format) for publishing the standard?

Michael Everson.

6b. If available now, identify source(s) for the font (include address, e-mail, ftp-site, etc.) and indicate the tools used:

Michael Everson, Fontographer.

7a. Are references (to other character sets, dictionaries, descriptive texts etc.) provided?

No.

7b. Are published examples of use (such as samples from newspapers, magazines, or other sources) of proposed characters attached?

Yes.

8. Does the proposal address other aspects of character data processing (if applicable) such as input, presentation, sorting, searching, indexing, transliteration etc. (if yes please enclose information)?

No.

9. Submitters are invited to provide any additional information about Properties of the proposed Character(s) or Script that will assist in correct understanding of and correct linguistic processing of the proposed character(s) or script. Examples of such properties are: Casing information, Numeric information, Currency information, Display behaviour information such as line breaks, widths etc., Combining behaviour, Spacing behaviour, Directional behaviour, Default Collation behaviour, relevance in Mark Up contexts, Compatibility equivalence and other Unicode normalization related information. See the Unicode standard at http://www.unicode.org for such information on other scripts. Also see Unicode Character Database http://www.unicode.org/Public/UNIDATA/ UnicodeCharacterDatabase.html and associated Unicode Technical Reports for information needed for consideration by the Unicode Technical Committee for inclusion in the Unicode Standard.

The character should have the same properties as other currency signs.

C. Technical -- Justification

1. Has this proposal for addition of character(s) been submitted before? If YES, explain.

No.

2a. Has contact been made to members of the user community (for example: National Body, user groups of the script or characters, other experts, etc.)?
No.
2b. If YES, with whom?
2c. If YES, available relevant documents
3. Information on the user community for the proposed characters (for example: size, demographics, information technology use, or publishing use) is included?
People in India and elsewhere.
4a. The context of use for the proposed characters (type of use; common or rare)
To represent the Indian rupee currency in monetary amounts.
4b. Reference
5a. Are the proposed characters in current use by the user community?
No.
5b. If YES, where?
6a. After giving due considerations to the principles in Principles and Procedures document (a WG 2 standing document) must the proposed characters be entirely in the BMP?
Yes. Position U+20B9 is proposed.
6b. If YES, is a rationale provided?
Yes.
6c. If YES, reference
Keep with other currency signs.
7. Should the proposed characters be kept together in a contiguous range (rather than being scattered)?
8a. Can any of the proposed characters be considered a presentation form of an existing character or character sequence?
No.
8b. If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?
8c. If YES, reference
9a. Can any of the proposed characters be encoded using a composed character sequence of either existing characters or other proposed characters?
No.
9b. If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?
9c. If YES, reference
10a. Can any of the proposed character(s) be considered to be similar (in appearance or function) to an existing character?
No.
10b. If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?
10c. If YES, reference
11a. Does the proposal include use of combining characters and/or use of composite sequences (see clauses 4.12 and 4.14 in ISO/IEC 10646-1: 2000)?
No.
11b. If YES, is a rationale for such use provided?
11c. If YES, reference
12a. Is a list of composite sequences and their corresponding glyph images (graphic symbols) provided?
No.
12b. If YES, reference
13a. Does the proposal contain characters with any special properties such as control function or similar semantics?
No.
13b. If YES, describe in detail (include attachment if necessary)
14a. Does the proposal contain any Ideographic compatibility character(s)?
No.
14b. If YES, is the equivalent corresponding unified ideographic character(s) identified?