ISO
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ISO-IEC JTC1/SC2/WG2
Multiple-Octet Coded Character Set

ISO-IEC/JTC1/SC2/WG2 N 1792
4th June 1998

Title	Comment on Proposal for Burmese Script, WG2 N 1729
Source	Hugh McG Ross U.K.
Status	Individual expert's contribution
Action	For consideration of N 1729

1)   Burmese script has the full set of vowels of the main Indic scripts, permitting amongst other things transliteration of Buddhist texts in Pali language and Devanagari script -- an important practical requirement in Myanmar (Burma). However it also has one additional vowel, unique to Burmese:

အို   BURMESE LETTER UI

◌ို   BURMESE VOWEL SIGN UI

The proposal for Burmese in WG2 N 1729 omits this vowel. These two characters should therefore be added.

There are precedents for including such 'extra' vowels. Sinhala has AE and AAE. Other southeast Asian scripts have 'extra' vowels.

(Name derived from ALA-LC Romanization Tables, page 24.)

2)   There is no valid evidence that the uses and meanings of the Virama character in Burmese are in any way different from the main Indic scripts. Therefore it it unnecessary to provide it in the two forms shown in N 1729, at 1737 named VIRAMA and at 1738 named KILLER.

In Unicode coding conventions, for any Indic script VIRAMA is used to code conjuncts and the function provided by the proposed KILLER character is coded VIRAMA + ZWNJ (this is termed 'Explicit Virama' page 6-36).

Furthermore, it would be highly undesirable, and economically disadvantageous, to have to use different coding conventions regarding Virama in Burmese compared with all other Indic and southeast Asian scripts.

Therefore the inclusion of KILLER in N 1729 must be regarded as an error. It should be deleted.

[The error originated in my old paper N 881, which in turn resulted from a misreading of the very old 'Burmese Grammar' by Lonsdale, 1899. Although I corrected this in my N 1321, it inadvertently got into N 1523. It was this document that was used to make N 1729.]

3)   The attached code table is derived from N 1729 with only the addition of the vowel UI at 172B and vowel sign UI at 1735, these being the correct positions corresponding to alphabetic sequence, and the deletion of KILLER.

TABLE XXX - Row 17: BURMESE

	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177
0	က (000)	ဇ (016)	� (032)	◌ (048)	၀ (064)	◌ (080)		
1	ခ (001)	ထ (017)	အ (033)	ေ◌ (049)	၁ (065)	◌ (081)		
2	ဂ (002)	ဒ (018)	အာ (034)	◌ (050)	၂ (066)	◌ (082)		
3	ဃ (003)	ဓ (019)	ကျ (035)	ေ◌ာ (051)	၃ (067)	◌ (083)		
4	င (004)	န (020)	ကြ (036)	ေ◌ာ် (052)	၄ (068)	◌ (084)		
5	စ (005)	ပ (021)	◌ (037)	◌ (053)	၅ (069)	◌ (085)		
6	ဆ (006)	ဖ (022)	◌ (038)	◌ (054)	၆ (070)	◌ (086)		
7	ဇ (007)	ဗ (023)	◌ (039)	◌ (055)	၇ (071)	◌ (087)		
8	ဈ (008)	ဘ (024)	◌ (040)	◌ (056)	၈ (072)	◌ (088)		
9	ဉ (009)	မ (025)	◌ (041)	◌ (057)	၉ (073)	◌ (089)		
A	ည (010)	ယ (026)	◌ (042)	◌ (058)	၊ (074)			
B	◌ (011)	ရ (027)	◌ (043)		။ (075)			
C	◌ (012)	လ (028)	◌ (044)		◌ (076)			
D	◌ (013)	ဝ (029)	◌ (045)		◌ (077)			
E	◌ (014)	သ (030)	◌ (046)		◌ (078)			
F	◌ (015)	ဟ (031)	◌ (047)		◌ (079)			

G = 00
P = 00

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