Proposal to encode Gurmukhi Letter Ssa

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This proposal requests the encoding of GURMUKHI LETTER SSA at U+0A37. This code point allocation corresponds with the position given to the same letter in other ISCII-based Indic scripts.

Introduction
Standard Gurmukhi (as taught in schools for the Punjabi language) has no unique letter to represent śa (श) or ṣa (ष). Instead, a nukta (referred to as a pairīṁ bindī in Punjabi), is used to differentiate between sa and śa:

\[ \text{ਸ} [sa] + \text{ੜ} \rightarrow \text{ਸ} [śa] \]

In colloquial use, if there is a need to represent a Sanskrit word that uses ṣa, Ṛ is also often employed. This derives from the fact that Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu have all lost the distinction between Ṛa and ṣa.

In more formal use, there is a definite need to represent śa distinctly. For example, when Sanskrit texts are written in Gurmukhi the distinction between śa and ṣa cannot be lost.

Problem
Unfortunately, although attested use of the character exists (see the samples section), there is no uniform visual appearance.

For example, a copy of the Bhagvat Gita in Gurmukhi script uses Ṛ with a large, heavy, secondary nukta to represent śa. On the other hand, the Mahan Kosh (a Sikh encyclopaedia) represents the character with a glyph that is virtually identical to the Devanagari form but with a nukta to distinguish it as a non-standard Gurmukhi character.

Solution
Regardless of the visual appearance of the character, there is a definite need for its encoding. It would be unwise to represent the character as a sequence of Sa + Nukta + Nukta because there is no precedent for double nuktas in Gurmukhi. In addition, this sequence is by no means a standard representation of the character.

Representing the character as a standalone code point is the preferred solution because it is a distinct character! The recommend visual form of the character is indicated at the top of this page. This is virtually identical to the form used in Mahan Kosh without the integrated Nukta.

Ultimately, if different publications wish to use different visual forms, they can achieve this by using an altered glyph for U+0A37.
Samples

2.1 परेख : भजन निर्देश : संजय उचाच

तम तथा कृपया आ-विषम, अशु-पूर्ण-आकृत-विषम। वि-सीद्धतम इदम वाकाम, उचाच मथु-यूदन:

उह उवा लघुप आ-विषम आभुवुल अवल विषमविः

विमोचने र्विमोचन लघुप आभु विषमविः

Chapter 2 of the Bhagvat Gita in Punjabi by Dr. Amar Komal. Showing the Gurmukhi form of the word आ-विषम ‘ā-viṣṭam.

Page 1618 of the Mahan Kosh by Kahan Singh Nabha. Showing the Gurmukhi form of चष् caṣ.

Page 2134 of the Mahan Kosh by Kahan Singh Nabha. Showing the Gurmukhi form of तृष्‍टित trṣita.