

To,

Waukesha, 02/01/2011

Dr.Lisa Moore, Chair,

Unicode Consortium,CA.,U.S.A.

***Dear Dr.Lisa Moore,***

Sub: Grantha Proposals **L2/10-426 and L2/10-447**- Request to scotch the move to

sneak non-Tamil(Grantha) characters into Unicode Tamil characters.

It is in violation of the Fundamental Rights of 100 million Tamils to conserve and protect our language and script.

I have learnt with some concern that the Unicode Technical Committee is considering to encode the Grantha script through proposals L2/10-426 and L2/10-447. I wish to categorically state that these proposals spuriously include 7 Tamil characters into the Grantha block as follows :

1130E Letter (᱁), 11312 Letter (᱂), 11329 Letter (᱃) Letter (᱄), 11334 Letter (᱅), 11346 Letter Vowel Sign E, 1134A Letter Vowel Sign O

As for as tradition goes, these are purely Tamil Characters and have never been included as part of Grantha and as attested by many scholars of Tamil as well as Sanskrit.

You may be aware of the existence of a large number of inscriptions (more than 100000) in Tamilnadu with simultaneous Grandha and Tamil scripts. The ancient Tamils very carefully maintained Grandha as Grandha and Tamil script as Tamil script. The orthographic identities of the scripts were kept distinct. Bringing these 7 Tamil characters into the Grantha block would destroy/mutilate

that tradition. The study and research of these ancient documents would get permanently affected, if these 7 Tamil characters are encoded into the Grandha block.

The attempt to include 26 new alphabets into the Tamil language script and the five Tamil phonemes – a, o, zha, ra, na – and the inclusion of consonant vowels of 'a' and 'o' will only help destroy completely the Tamil language and create new language - Malayalam Type 2. It is one thing to ask for the numerical representation and preservation of historical documents/inscriptions as found on ancient rocks, in the proposed new Grandha Unicode but it is indeed a different matter to ask for a new Grandha coding with the inclusion of Tamil letters.

The author proposing this, thus says in **L2/10-447** :

***"But it is ONLY Tamils who will use the Grantha script. Unicode Consortium will be pleased in a few years' time, many Tamil script e-mails, e-lists, blogs, newspapers will have words written in Grantha script.***

So, Tamils will use Grantha script mixing it with Tamil even though Tamil will be more compared to Grantha words/sentences in a Web page."

This is an untenable argument as there has been no popular demand from the users of the Tamil language, scholars and the Tamil Nadu government to include these grantha script into Tamil script for usage in the text books, newspapers and or any other media. If this is not initiated at the grassroots level and with no government involvement to carry out this so called change, I cannot understand how these grantha letters will be popularised by the Tamils as claimed by the author. This is indeed preposterous.

I understand that the govt.of Tamilnadu, has constituted a high level Government panel to investigate these proposals and make formal recommendations on these characters to the Government of Tamil Nadu and then to the Central Government of India, through them.

I urge you to understand and respect the deep time honoured tradition of the Tamil people who live in all the five Continents spanning many countries and numbering approximately 100 million throughout the world. I also request you not to take any precipitative action on these matters to include these 7 characters into Grandha Script.

Doing so would permanently effect irrevocable damages to Tamil script, Tamil language and the glorious Tamil traditions.

Hence, I, hereby, vehemently oppose and condemn the imposition of the grandha letters which are known only to a few thousands in a country with a population of 120,00,00,000 . I oppose in the strongest terms of such moves which will destroy our language. David Crystal in his book ' Death of Language', asserts that a language is being destroyed once in a fortnight in the world. This attempt of encoding the Grandha script into Tamil block will only enhance the destruction of our language. **The right to one's usage and protection of one's mother tongue is an inalienable right and any attempt to wrest it away is certainly a violation of human rights.**

I, oppose the Grantha Proposal of Government of India (L2/10-426) submitted to Unicode Consortium in which unattested Tamil/Dravidian Letters are inserted. I am extremely concerned about the aims and scope of this move by the Government of India. I humbly request Unicode Consortium to reject this proposal as its impacts on our Tamil Language are extremely dangerous.

Yours Sincerely,

(Sd) *Albert Fernando*

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