

Proposal to encode the Divehi script in Unicode

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1 Introduction

This is a proposal to encode the ‘Divehi’ block in Unicode. It supersedes the following documents:

- L2/09-191: Preliminary Proposal to Encode the Dhivehi Script in ISO/IEC 10646
- L2/10-213: Preliminary Proposal to Encode Dhives Akuru in ISO/IEC 10646

This document is a complete revision of L2/10-213 and contains substantial changes:

- Assignment of new identifier for the script block and character names
- Revised encoding model and repertoire for vowel letters
- Renewed analysis of vowel signs, nasalization signs, and gemination marks
- Expansion of consonant repertoire to include aspirated consonants and additional letters
- Separation of the vowel-silencing and conjunct control functions of *virama* into two characters
- Expanded details on types of consonant conjuncts and inclusion of examples
- General revision and improvement of representative glyphs
- Inclusion of data for Indic syllabic and positional categories
- Additional attestations and specimens of usage

2 Background

The proposed Unicode block for ‘Divehi’ provides an encoding for a script used in Maldives that is known indigenously as *divehi akuru*, or “islanders’ letters”. The *divehi akuru* was used from the 9th–20th centuries for recording Dhivehi (ISO 639-3: div), an Insular Indo-Aryan language, which is also known as ‘Maldivian’. The *divehi* script (hereafter, Divehi) is a left to right alpha-syllabic writing system descended from Brahmi through Grantha. It is related most closely to the medieval form of the Sinhala script (Fritz 2002: 6); and it shares characteristics with the Tulu, or Tigalari, script (Geiger 1919: 151). A comparison of Divehi and Sinhala is given in figures 50–51, and a comparison with other scripts is shown in figure 52.

The earliest epigraphical record from Maldives is a coral stone block from the 6th–8th centuries, which was unearthed on the island of Landū. Its inscription, however, is in a form of Grantha. A distinctive Divehi script first appears on inscriptions on two statues (IC 009, IC 010; see figures 5–6) unearthed on Māle, with

Vajrayana Buddhist text and features, which have been dated to the 9th–10th centuries (Gippert 2014: 112). Very few records of early Divehi have been preserved apart from these statues. The majority of sources were destroyed deliberately during the conversion of Maldives from Buddhism to Islam in the 12th century.

As a result, a consistent palaeographical record for Divehi begins in the 12th century. From this time Divehi was used as an official script by Maldivian rulers, starting with copper plate grants, known as *lōmāfānu*, which were issued for the building and maintenance of mosques. The earliest records are the *Gāmu Lōmāfānu* and *Isdū Lōmāfānu*, which were issued in 1194 during the reign of the king Gaḍanādīya. This ruler issued another in 1195, which is known as the *Daṁbidū Lōmāfānu* (see figure 7). A fourth plate, the *Kudahuvādu Lōmāfānu*, is dated to 1237–8 and was produced during the reign of the queen Rārādesvara. The script began to evolve during the 14th century, as is apparent from the style used for the *Boḍugalu Miskit Lōmāfānu*, issued during the reign of queen Rādābarrna in 1357. Three other *lōmāfānu* have been preserved, bringing the total to eight. They are identified by scholars using the names of the islands upon which they were found, and are numbered as L1 through L8. Specimens of L3 and L6–L8 are given in figures 7, 8–10.

By the 16th century, usage of *lōmāfānu* had given way to paper documents and wooden boards known, respectively, as *fatkoḷu* and *filā fatkoḷu*. These official decrees are produced in a form of Divehi that is considered a modern style (see figures 11–12). The first *fatkoḷu* is known as the *Koḷufuṣi Fatkoḷu*, issued during the reign of Muhammad Bodu Takurufanu (1573–1585). Several *fatkoḷu* were produced over the next two centuries. The latest is the *Havoḍḍā Fatkoḷu*, which was produced during the second half of the 18th century. Thirteen *fatkoḷu* are preserved at the present; they are identified as F1–F13.

The script was also used for writing dynastic chronicles, known as *rādavaḷi*, in the late 18th century. Of the three extant chronicles, two are in the Thaana script and one is in Divehi. Other Divehi records include stone epitaphs from the 16th–18th century; wood engravings in the Hukuru Miskit and Galoḷu Bau Miskit on Māle; and inscribed pottery, such as a lacquer jar from Tuḷādū. The first modern book written in the script, a work by Bodufenvallhuge Sidi titled *Divehi Akuru*, was commissioned by the prime minister Ibrahim Nasir and published by the government of Maldives in 1959 (see figures 13–25).

When the early *lōmāfānu* were rediscovered by European colonial officials in the 19th century, it became apparent that their script and language differed from the prevailing forms of *divehi akuru* and the Dhivehi language. These plates were unintelligible to contemporary Maldivians. The British scholar H. C. P. Bell coined the term ‘*evēla akuru*’, literally the “script of that time” in Dhivehi, or the “ancient script”, for classifying the archaic style on these *lōmāfānu* (1919: 149). He used the term ‘*dives akuru*’, “islanders’ letters”, for the prevalent style. Although they were neologisms, the terms were convenient for periodizing Divehi palaeography. Some scholars continue to refer to the script of the 12th–14th centuries as ‘*evēla akuru*’, and the style after the 14th century as either ‘*dives akuru*’ or ‘*divehi akuru*’ proper.

Divehi records exhibit linguistic and palaeographic diversity. The early *lōmāfānu* contain marginal and occasional intralinear text in a script of the Nagari family, which bears some similarity to Nandinagari. Later plates contain Arabic text in the Arabic script. The *fatkoḷu* also contain interspersed text in the Arabic language and script.

Beginning in the early 18th century, another script began to appear alongside Divehi. This new script, known as *tāna akuru*, or ‘Tāna’ and ‘Thaana’, is a right to left script consisting originally of 18 letters, which appear to be derived from the digits of both the Divehi and Arabic scripts (cf. Prinsep 1836: 794; Wilson 1841: 42). From the 1700s until 1870, both Divehi and Thaana were used for official purposes (Mohamed 1999: 29). But, by the turn of the 19th century, Thaana had completely replaced Divehi as the regular script for writing the Dhivehi language.

Despite the near obsolescence of Divehi in the 20th century, individual Maldivian users and both native and non-native scholars continued to express interest in the script. The Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka published translations of the *Isdū Lōmāfānu* (Maniku and Wijayawardhana 1986) and *Dam̃bidū Lōmāfānu*. The National Centre for Linguistic and Historical Research (NCLHR) in Māle published *Dhivehi Writing Systems* (1999) by Naseema Mohamed. But, native Maldivian scholarship on Divehi has also declined. New information and studies of Divehi materials is made possible by the meticulous work on Divehi palaeography and epigraphy (see Gippert 2003, 2004, 2013, 2014), Dhivehi language and linguistics (see Fritz 2002), and translations of Maldivian texts (see Romero-Frias 2003, 2012) performed by scholars outside of Maldives.

At present, the Divehi script is not only extinct, but the very existence of it and its record is threatened. A few months after I first began working on this encoding in 2009, the president of Maldives, Mohammed Nasheed, held a cabinet meeting underwater in scuba gear in October to raise awareness of rising sea levels (*Daily Mail* 2009). But, the ocean is not the only physical threat to the island nation. During the political turmoil in February 2012 criminals burglarized the National Museum and vandalized thirty Buddhist artifacts, some dating back to the 6th century (*New York Times* 2012). The two statues, IC 009 and IC 010, mentioned at the outset of this section were demolished (Gippert 2014: 111–112). They now exist only in the photographic record. While material objects cannot be replaced, this Unicode encoding for Divehi may serve the secondary objective of preserving the palaeographical and linguistic heritage of Maldives through digital technologies.

3 Approach to the encoding

3.1 Unification

The ‘Divehi’ block provides a unified encoding for *evēla akuru* and *divehi akuru*. Although there are differences in character repertoire, letterforms, and orthography, these two scripts are identical in terms of structure and typology. They represent major palaeographic styles in the historical development of a Brahmi-based script used in Maldives. For this reason, a single Unicode encoding is appropriate and suitable for representing both styles.

3.2 Character repertoire

Divehi has a nearly complete character repertoire that aligns with the basic Brahmi inventory. The broadest repertoire occurs in *evēla akuru* records. Over time, the repertoire was gradually reduced by the removal of letters that did not correspond to phonemes of the evolving Dhivehi language. The emergence of the Thaana script also resulted in truncation of the repertoire. By the time Sidi wrote *Divehi Akuru* in 1959, the modern orthography used 25 Divehi letters aligned with the Thaana repertoire (see section 5.10).

The modification of the base repertoire resulted in the displacement of various letters. The greatest change to the repertoire was the dropping of letters for aspirated consonants owing to the absence of aspirated sounds in modern Dhivehi. Only *kha* and *dha* were retained. The unassigned aspirate letters were, in turn, used as variants for their unaspirated counterparts. Nasal letters were replaced by either the dental *na*, or in the case of clusters, by a generic sign. The trend of assimilation occurred also with sibilants: the palatal *śa* and retroflex *ṣa* were replaced with the dental *sa*. Likewise, sound changes involving transformation of palatals to dentals resulted in the dropping of several palatal letters.

Unfortunately, there is no *varṇamālā*, or traditional script inventory, in the epigraphical record that illustrates the original repertoire, nor any indigenous documentation that describes the changes to the script. The first charts of *divehi akuru* were compiled and published by European scholars in the 19th century, cf. Christopher (figure 47), Geiger (figures 26–27, 48). However, in many cases the European inventories of *divehi akuru* were conducted from the perspective of Thaana, and the published repertoires focused on comparisons with Thaana. These types of sources, therefore, do not provide a true sense of the original character inventory.

A legitimate and accurate character inventory can only be compiled by analyzing the letters and signs of the extant records. Fortunately, such an effort has been made. The most complete inventory has been offered by Jost Gippert (2013), who analyzed each *akṣara* in the available *lōmāfānu* and *fatkoḷu*. His charts are reproduced here in figures 1–2. However, as complete as it is in its historical survey, Gippert’s table does not include all Divehi sources, some of which contain distinctive letters not shown in the table. For instance, Sidi’s monograph shows a modern form of *ya* and an alternate form of *na*.

All distinctive characters attested across the available sources have been identified in terms of their palaeographic value in accordance with the character-glyph model used for Brahmi-based scripts in the Unicode Standard. Variant forms are not encoded independently and are to be managed through the selection of fonts. The proposed repertoire enable the complete representation of all extant text in the Divehi script and is a superset of all particular orthographic styles.

3.3 Representative glyphs

In the absence of a standard for *evēla akuru* or *dives akuru*, the representative glyphs assigned to the proposed characters are normalizations of letterforms used across the sources. The aim is to provide glyphs that can be used for representing both the earliest and latest records in a way that depicts the identity of each character separate from style.

3.4 Script identifier

The identifier ‘Divehi’ has been assigned to the Unicode block. It is derived from the indigenous name *divehi akuru* “islanders’ letters” (Thaana: ދިވެހި އަކުރު). The name *divehi akuru* has various spellings in English: ‘Divehi Akuru’, ‘Dives Akuru’, ‘Dhivehi Akuru’, ‘Dhives Akuru’. The names containing ‘Dhivehi’ and ‘Dhives’ are variants of ‘Divehi’ and ‘Dives’, which are the result of an idiosyncractic romanization scheme used in Maldives in the 1980s. In this system, the letter ‘dh’ is used for the dental stop, while ‘d’ for the retroflex stops; the *h* does not indicate aspiration, as in the conventional transliteration of Brahmi-based scripts. Although the previous proposal (L2/10-213) used ‘Dhives Akuru’, it has become clear since that time that ‘Dives Akuru’ and ‘Divehi Akuru’ are preferred in scholarly materials, both by western and Maldivian scholars (eg. Gippert 2013, 2014; Mohamed 1999: 21, see figure 36; Romero-Frias 2003, see figures 3–4).

The descriptor ‘Akuru’ is used in the Dhivehi language for referring to writing systems: *divehi akuru*, *tāna akuru*, *latin akuru*. It is identical to the terms *akṣara*, *lipi*, etc. that are used in other South Asian languages for ‘letter’ or ‘script’. Usage of such labels is redundant within an English context, for instance, a ‘Divehi Akuru letter’ means a ‘Divehi letter letter’. Moreover, such ‘script’ labels are not used for identifying script blocks in the Unicode Standard. A suitable English name can be obtained by eliminating the ‘*akuru*’ label. Applying this rule to the Dhivehi names for the three scripts given above yields the following bare names ‘Divehi’, ‘Tana’, ‘Latin’. These are distinctive names used in English. However, dropping the ‘script’ label from ‘Dives Akuru’ yields ‘Dives’, which is not used in English as a proper noun. On the other hand, ‘Divehi’ has a history of usage in English as a proper noun.

‘Divehi’ is the most suitable English identifier for the script in the international Unicode standard. It follows the naming convention for other Brahmi-based scripts in Unicode. Also, it provides a meaningful taxonomic label for grouping *evēla akuru* and *dives akuru* as styles of a single script. The name assists in clear identification of character names, eg. ‘DIVEHI LETTER KA’, which would translate into Dhivehi as ‘*divehi akuru ka*’ (as opposed to the onomastically and semantically redundant *‘DIVEHI AKURU LETTER KA’). The identifier ‘Divehi’ also distinguishes between the script and the ‘Dhivehi’ language on account of official spelling, but also on account of context, as Unicode is a standard for writing systems, not languages. Furthermore, it uniquely distinguishes the Unicode encodings for the two Maldivian scripts used for writing Dhivehi: ‘Divehi’ and ‘Thaana’.

4 Proposed character repertoire

The proposed repertoire contains 71 characters. The code chart and names list follow page 8.

4.1 Vowel letters

There are two methods for representing independent vowels. Both are attested across the corpus and both appear concurrently in some records:

	<i>a</i>	<i>ā</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>ī</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>ū</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>ai</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>au</i>
‘type 1’	ޅ	ޅަ	ޅި	ޅީ	ޅު	ޅޫ	ޅެ	ޅެއ	ޅު	ޅުއ
‘type 2’	އ	އަ	އި	އީ	އު	އޫ	އެ	އެއ	އު	އުއ

The ‘type 1’ forms are the original distinctive, palaeographic forms. The ‘type 2’ forms are consonant-vowel syllables comprised of a vowel carrier and dependent vowel signs. Following Bell (1930: 568), ‘type 1’ refers to the forms used in Male in the central atoll, while ‘type 2’ refers to the forms used in Addu in the southernmost atoll. The distribution suggests regional preferences. However, there are no rules specifying the contexts of usage for either set, and both are used interchangeably within the same document. Therefore, it is necessary for the encoding model to support representation of both types.

In the modern script, the letter ޅ represents the vowel *a*. But, palaeographically it is the letter *ya*. Likely on account of the phonological shift of initial *ya* to *da* in Old Dhivehi (Gippert 2013), ޅ was no longer needed for *ya* and was reassigned as a vowel carrier. As a result, the letter ޅ came to represent the independent and initial vowel *a*; however, it continued to function as *ya* in cluster-final position, as evidenced by its participation in conjuncts. In the later script, ޅ was used solely for representing vowel letters and its association with *ya* was entirely dropped. The modern usage of *ya* as a vowel-carrier is shown in figure 13, where ޅ is transcribed in Thaana as ޅަ *a*. This figure shows a related development: the letter ޅ is transcribed as Thaana ޅަ *ya*. It appears this letter was introduced for *ya* to replace ޅ.

In order to accommodate the complete representation of vowels, as well as the forms of *ya*, the following encoding model has been adopted:

1. Encode the ‘type 1’ set as the representative independent vowel letters.
2. Encode ޅ as YA, maintaining its original palaeographic identity as a consonant. This will enable it to function as a base for combining dependent vowel signs for expressing ‘type 2’ forms (see section 5.1). It will also permit the letter to participate in conjuncts and in *sukun*-letter combinations.
3. The alternate ޅ *ya* has been proposed for encoding as the letter YYA.

Accordingly, the proposed repertoire contains the following 10 independent vowel letters:

Glyph	Character name	Major variants	Latin	Thaana
އ	DIVEHI LETTER A		<i>a</i>	ހ
ޅ	DIVEHI LETTER AA		<i>ā</i>	ޅ
އި	DIVEHI LETTER I		<i>i</i>	އި
ޅި	DIVEHI LETTER II	އި, ޅި	<i>ī</i>	ޅި
އު	DIVEHI LETTER U	އު	<i>u</i>	އު
ޅު	DIVEHI LETTER UU		<i>ū</i>	ޅު
އެ	DIVEHI LETTER E	އެ, ޅެ, ޅެ	<i>e</i>	އެ
ޅެ	DIVEHI LETTER AI	ޅެ, ޅެ, ޅެ	<i>ai, ē</i>	ޅެ
އޮ	DIVEHI LETTER O	އޮ, ޅޮ, ޅޮ	<i>o</i>	އޮ
ޅޮ	DIVEHI LETTER AU	ޅޮ, ޅޮ	<i>au, ō</i>	ޅޮ

Notes on the vowel letters:

- The VOWEL SIGN AI and VOWEL SIGN AU are used for both diphthongs /ai/ and /au/ in early records, and for the long vowels /e:/ and /o:/ in later records.
- Letters corresponding to the Brahmi vocalic *ṛ*, *ṝ*, *ḷ*, *ḹ* are not attested.

4.2 Dependent vowels signs

There are 9 dependent vowel signs:

Glyph	Character name	Major variants	Latin	Thaana
ޅ	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN AA	ޅ	<i>ā</i>	ޅ
އި	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN I		<i>i</i>	އި
ޅި	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN II	އި, ޅި	<i>ī</i>	ޅި
އު	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN U	އު, ޅު, ޅު, ޅު	<i>u</i>	އު
ޅު	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN UU	ޅު	<i>ū</i>	ޅު
އެ	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN E	އެ	<i>e</i>	އެ
ޅެ	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN AI		<i>ai, ē</i>	ޅެ
އޮ	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN O		<i>o</i>	އޮ

𑍌	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN AU	<i>au, ō</i>	𑍍
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Notes on the vowel signs:

- The following are two-part vowel signs:

character	glyph	decomposition
VOWEL SIGN O	𑍌)	𑍌 VOWEL SIGN E +) VOWEL SIGN AA
VOWEL SIGN AU	𑍌𑍍	𑍌 VOWEL SIGN E + 𑍍 VOWEL SIGN U

- Letters corresponding to the Brahmi vocalic *ṛ, ṝ, ṛ̥, ṝ̥* are not attested.

4.3 Consonants

There are 35 consonant letters:

Glyph	Character name	Major variants	Latin	Thaana
𑍇	DIVEHI LETTER KA	𑍇	<i>ka</i>	𑍇
𑍈	DIVEHI LETTER KHA	𑍈	<i>kha</i>	—
𑍉	DIVEHI LETTER GA	𑍉	<i>ga</i>	𑍉
𑍊	DIVEHI LETTER GHA	𑍊	<i>gha</i>	—
𑍋	DIVEHI LETTER NGA		<i>ṇa</i>	𑍋
𑍌	DIVEHI LETTER CA	𑍌, 𑍍	<i>ca</i>	𑍌
𑍍	DIVEHI LETTER CHA		<i>cha</i>	—
𑍎	DIVEHI LETTER JA	𑍎	<i>ja</i>	𑍎
𑍏	DIVEHI LETTER NYA		<i>ṇa</i>	𑍏
𑍐	DIVEHI LETTER TTA	𑍐	<i>ṭa</i>	𑍐
𑍑	DIVEHI LETTER TTHA	𑍑	<i>ṭha</i>	—
𑍒	DIVEHI LETTER DDA	𑍒, 𑍓	<i>ḍa</i>	𑍒
𑍓	DIVEHI LETTER DDHA		<i>ḍha</i>	—
𑍔	DIVEHI LETTER NNA	𑍔	<i>ṇa</i>	𑍔
𑍕	DIVEHI LETTER TA		<i>ta</i>	𑍕
𑍖	DIVEHI LETTER THA		<i>tha</i>	—

މ	DIVEHI LETTER DA	މ, ځ	da	މ
ޅ	DIVEHI LETTER DHA	ޅ	dha	—
ނ	DIVEHI LETTER NA		na	ނ
ފ	DIVEHI LETTER PA	ފ, ބ, ލ	pa, fa	ފ
ކ	DIVEHI LETTER PHA	ކ	pha	ކ
ބ	DIVEHI LETTER BA	ބ, ވ, ލ	ba	ބ
ޅ	DIVEHI LETTER BHA	ޅ	bha	—
މ	DIVEHI LETTER MA	މ	ma	މ
ޔ	DIVEHI LETTER YA	ޔ, ރ	ya, a	ޔ
ލ	DIVEHI LETTER YYA		ya	ޔ
ރ	DIVEHI LETTER RA	ރ	ra	ރ
ލ	DIVEHI LETTER LA	ލ	la	ލ
ވ	DIVEHI LETTER VA	ވ, ވ	va	ވ
ޝ	DIVEHI LETTER SHA	ޝ	śa	ޝ
ޞ	DIVEHI LETTER SSA	ޞ	ṣa	—
ސ	DIVEHI LETTER SA		sa	ސ
ހ	DIVEHI LETTER HA	ހ	ha	ހ
ލ	DIVEHI LETTER LLA	ލ, ލ	ḷa	ލ
ޯ	DIVEHI LETTER ZA	ޯ	za	ޯ

Each consonant letter possesses the inherent vowel *a*. This inherent vowel is silenced using the sign *halanta* in order to produce a bare consonant. Consonant clusters are rendered as conjuncts; however, geminated consonants may be indicated using special forms.

Notes on the consonant letters:

- **NGA** The letter މ historically represents the velar nasal *nga*, but it was adapted for use as a generic nasalization mark. It is encoded as a letter in order to enable its behavior as a nasal mark using the conjunct model (see section 5.5).
- ***JHA** A distinctive letter for the palatal aspirate *jha* and has not been identified. Space has been reserved for it in the code block at the appropriate position.
- **NNA** The form ޞ is used for the retroflex nasal *ṇa* in place of the representative form ޞ in Sidi (see figure 13). The letter is certainly related to Thaana ޖ; but the nature of the connection is unknown. In

terms of this proposal, 𐢆 is classified as a glyphic variant. However, if concurrent usage of it and 𐢆 occurs, then it may be encoded as an alternate form.

- **YA / YYA** As explained in the discussion of the encoding model for vowel letters, these letters have been encoded separately in order to accommodate old and new values for the letter *ya*.
- **ZA** The representative form 𐢆 for ZA is based upon that used in Sidi (see figure (see figure 13)). A variant form 𐢆 is shown by Geiger (figure 27), which bears some similarity to the form shown by Gippert (figure 2). Although 𐢆 and 𐢆 are distinctive, it is not clear if they are true alternates. At present, 𐢆 is to be considered a glyphic variant.

4.4 Nasalization signs

There are two distinctive nasalization signs:

Glyph	Character name	Major variants	Latin	Thaana
◌̣	DIVEHI SIGN ANUSVARA		<i>ṃ</i>	𐢆, 𐢆
◌̤	DIVEHI SIGN CANDRABINDU	◌̤	<i>m̤</i>	𐢆, 𐢆

4.5 Gemination mark

The following mark is used for indicating doubled consonants:

Glyph	Character name	Major variants	Latin	Thaana
◌̥	DIVEHI GEMINATION MARK			

4.6 Halanta & Virama

The *halanta* and *virama* are proposed for separate encoding:

Glyph	Character name	Major variants	Latin	Thaana
◌̣	DIVEHI SIGN HALANTA	—	—	◌̣
◌̤	DIVEHI VIRAMA	—	—	—

The Divehi sign ◌̣ is used for silencing the inherent vowel, similar to the *halanta* / *virama* in other Brahmi-based scripts. However, it also represents other features. In *evēla akuru* records, it is sometimes used for the VOWEL SIGN U. When combined with certain letters in *dives akuru*, it represents a glottal stop or gemination of nasal consonants (see section 5.2). In order to simplify the representation of *halanta*, its function is separated from *virama*, with which it is usually merged in other scripts. This establishes ◌̣ HALANTA as a basic vowel-silencing sign parallel to ◌̣ U+07B0 THAANA SIGN SUKUN, which will be practical for users of Divehi, who are also generally users of Thaana.

The conjunct forming function is retained in the  VIRAMA. This is a control character that is used only for producing conjuncts. It does not suppress the inherent vowel and does not interact with the preceding character in rendered output. It is represented in the code chart as  in order to indicate that it is a special character.

4.7 Digits

The script has a full set of digits:

Glyph	Character name	Major variants	Latin	Thaana
◌	DIVEHI DIGIT ZERO		0	
ހ	DIVEHI DIGIT ONE		1	
ށ	DIVEHI DIGIT TWO		2	
ނ	DIVEHI DIGIT THREE		3	
ރ	DIVEHI DIGIT FOUR		4	
ބ	DIVEHI DIGIT FIVE		5	
ޅ	DIVEHI DIGIT SIX		6	
ކ	DIVEHI DIGIT SEVEN		7	
އ	DIVEHI DIGIT EIGHT		8	
ވ	DIVEHI DIGIT NINE		9	

4.8 Punctuation

The following sign of punctuation is used in the script:

Glyph	Character name	Major variants	Latin	Thaana
”	DIVEHI SECTION MARK		.	

5 Encoded Representation

5.1 Alternate representations of vowels

The ‘type 2’ set of vowel letters is represented as shown below (see also figure 26). The interactions between the base consonant and dependent vowel signs is described in section 5.4.

Vowel	‘type 1’	‘type 2’	Encoded sequence for ‘type 2’
<i>a</i>	ޅ	އ	<އ YA>
<i>ā</i>	ޅ)	އ)	<އ YA, ަ VOWEL SIGN AA>
<i>i</i>	ޅ	އި	<އ YA, ި VOWEL SIGN I>
<i>ī</i>	ޅ	އި	<އ YA, ީ VOWEL SIGN II>
<i>u</i>	ޅ	އު	<އ YA, ު VOWEL SIGN U>
<i>ū</i>	ޅ	އު	<އ YA, ބ VOWEL SIGN UU>
<i>e</i>	އ	އެ	<އ YA, ެ VOWEL SIGN E>
<i>ai</i>	އ	އެ	<އ YA, ޭ VOWEL SIGN AI>
<i>o</i>	އ	އޮ	<އ YA, ޮ VOWEL SIGN O>
<i>au</i>	އ	އޮ	<އ YA, ޅ VOWEL SIGN AU>

5.2 Halanta

The sign ް HALANTA combines with a consonant letter to indicate the absence of the inherent vowel /a/. It is written as a ligature with the base and is positioned to the right of the letter. In some cases, the shape of the consonant is modified.

<i>k</i>	ކ	<ކ KA, ް SIGN HALANTA>
<i>t</i>	ޅ	<ޅ TTA, ް SIGN HALANTA>
<i>t</i>	ޅ	<ޅ TTA, ް SIGN HALANTA>
<i>n</i>	ނ	<ނ NA, ް SIGN HALANTA>
<i>s</i>	ސ	<ސ SA, ް SIGN HALANTA>

According to Mohamed (1999: 27, reproduced here in figure 42), in *dives akuru* the HALANTA is used with certain letters for representing special features of Dhivehi. Mohammed provides very brief details about these ‘*sukun* letters’, shown below, which are named according to corresponding Thaana names. They can be represented a combination of the respective letter and the HALANTA:

	Glyph	Sequence	Function	Thaana
<i>alifu sukūn</i>	ފ	<ފ YA, ް HALANTA>	word-final glottal stop /ʔ/	ހ
<i>sīnu sukūn</i>	ސ	<ސ SA, ް HALANTA>	vowel-less sibilant	ސ
<i>nūnu sukūn</i>	ނ	<ނ NA, ް HALANTA>	nasal gemination	ނ
<i>tā sukūn</i>	ތ	<ތ TA, ް HALANTA>	/y/ off-glide	ތ
<i>śaviyani sukūn</i>	ޖ	<ޖ SHA, ް HALANTA>	glottal stop; dative suffix	ޖ

5.3 Consonant conjuncts

Consonant clusters are represented as conjuncts in Divehi. The majority of conjuncts consist of clusters of two consonants, but conjuncts with up to three consonants are attested. In encoded text, conjuncts are produced by placing the  VIRAMA after each bare consonant in a cluster. The combining character for an accompanying vowel sign is placed after the last letter in the cluster.

Conjuncts are rendered as ligatures and as ‘touching’ forms. Therefore, a particular cluster may have more than one conjunct representation, eg. *kta* occurs as both ބްތ and ބްތް, *nna* occurs as both ނނ and ނނ. Both types of conjuncts may be used interchangeably and are orthographic variants. As such, there is no requirement at present to distinguish between the two in plain text. The choice of which conjunct type to display should be determined either by the source text being reproduced, or in the case of new content, by the typographic preferences of the user. Ideally, a Divehi font would contain glyphs for both types, which could be selected as stylistic sets.

The letter ރ RA presents an exception to the above. It exhibits special behavior when it occurs in initial and final positions in a cluster.

‘Touching’ form A conjunct may be produced by joining the regular forms of letters linearly at their adjacent edges, generally without modification:

<i>kta</i>	ބްތ	<ބ KA,  VIRAMA, ތ TA>
<i>nta</i>	ންތ	<ނ NA,  VIRAMA, ތ TA>
<i>nna</i>	ނނ	<ނ NA,  VIRAMA, ނ NA>
<i>mma</i>	މްމ	<މ MA,  VIRAMA, މ MA>
<i>spa</i>	ސްޖ	<ސ SA,  VIRAMA, ޖ PA>
<i>lla</i>	ލްލ	<ލ LLA,  VIRAMA, ލ LLA>

Ligature Consonants may be combined into a single distinctive ligature. In such representations, the constituent glyphs are modified in order to produce the ligature.

<i>kta</i>	ކްތ	<ކ KA, ް VIRAMA, ތ TA>
<i>kṣa</i>	ކްଷ	<ކ KA, ް VIRAMA, ސ SSA>
<i>nga</i>	ންގ	<ނ NGA, ް VIRAMA, ގ GA>
<i>ṇḍa</i>	ނ̣	<ނ NNA, ް VIRAMA, ޅ DDA>
<i>ttha</i>	ތްތ	<ތ TA, ް VIRAMA, ބ THA>
<i>ntha</i>	ނ̣	<ނ NA, ް VIRAMA, ބ THA>
<i>ndha</i>	ނ̣	<ނ NA, ް VIRAMA, ބ DHHA>
<i>nnā</i>	ނ̣	<ނ NA, ް VIRAMA, ނ NA>
<i>mba</i>	މްބ	<މ BA, ް VIRAMA, ބ BA>
<i>ṣṭa</i>	ސ̣	<ސ SSA, ް VIRAMA, ޅ TTA>
<i>sta</i>	ސ̣	<ސ SA, ް VIRAMA, ތ TA>
<i>sva</i>	ސ̣	<ސ SA, ް VIRAMA, ބ VA>

Halanta forms Conjuncts are also represented by marking the first consonant with halanta.

<i>kta</i>	ކްތ	<ކ KA, ް HALANTA, ތ TA>
<i>sva</i>	ސ̣	<ސ SA, ް HALANTA, ބ VA>

The letter YA When the letter ޅ YA is the last member of a cluster, it forms a ligature with the preceding consonant. In such positions, *ya* is written as ްޅ, which be considered a post-base form.

<i>dhya</i>	ޅ	<ބ DHHA, ް VIRAMA, ޅ YA>
<i>sya</i>	ސ̣	<ސ SA, ް VIRAMA, ޅ YA>

The letter RA The letter ރ RA takes special forms when it occurs in conjuncts. It is written as ްރ *repha* when C₁ in a cluster. The *repha* is placed above the following letter, or in the case of multi-letter clusters, it is placed above the last letter.

<i>rka</i>	ރްކ	<ރ RA, ް VIRAMA, ކ KA>
<i>rmma</i>	ރ̣	<ރ RA, ް VIRAMA, މ MA, ް VIRAMA, މ MA>

When non-initial, RA is written as ރ̣ *ra-kāra*. The *ra-kāra* attaches to the right edge of the preceding letter

and curves fully around the letter to the top left edge. In the case of multi-letter clusters, it attaches to the last letter and its curve spans the entire conjunct.

<i>kra</i>		<KA,  VIRAMA, ɖ RA>
<i>pra</i>		<PA,  VIRAMA, ɖ RA>
<i>śra</i>		<SHA,  VIRAMA, ɖ RA>
<i>stra</i>		<SA,  VIRAMA, TA,  VIRAMA, ɖ RA>
<i>spra</i>		<SA,  VIRAMA, PA,  VIRAMA, ɖ RA>

5.4 Consonant-vowel combinations

Combinations of a consonant and dependent vowel sign are rendered following the pattern shown in section 5.1 for the ‘type-2’ independent vowels. Certain vowel signs have contextual forms when combined with certain consonants. Shown below are examples with other consonants and consonant clusters.

Vowel sign AA Written to the right of the base, detached from the letter.

<i>ka</i>		<KA,  VOWEL SIGN AA>
<i>ma</i>		<MA,  VOWEL SIGN AA>

In some records, the sign is extended below the base, similar to vowel sign i, but it remains detached.

<i>ka</i>		<KA,  VOWEL SIGN AA>
<i>ma</i>		<MA,  VOWEL SIGN AA>

Vowel sign I Written to the right of the base. If a letter has a round stroke at the right edge, then the sign attaches to the curve. For letters with terminals at the right edge, the sign attaches to the final point of the terminal.

<i>di</i>		<DA,  VOWEL SIGN I>
<i>dhi</i>		<DHA,  VOWEL SIGN I>
<i>hi</i>		<HA,  VOWEL SIGN I>

When written with conjunct medial *ra*, the curve of VOWEL SIGN I extends below the *ra-kāra*:

<i>kri</i>		<KA,  VIRAMA, ɖ RA,  VOWEL SIGN I>
<i>śri</i>		<SHA,  VIRAMA, ɖ RA,  VOWEL SIGN I>

Vowel sign ii Behaves like vowel sign i.

kī ڪي <ڪ KA, ۽ VOWEL SIGN II>

dhī ڏي <ڏ DHA, ۽ VOWEL SIGN II>

In some *evēla akuru* records, the VOWEL SIGN II is written above the letter using the form ٿ. This form is a glyphic variant for the representative form.

kī ڪي <ڪ KA, ٿ VOWEL SIGN II>

dhī ڏي <ڏ DHA, ٿ VOWEL SIGN II>

Vowel sign u The vowel sign u is rendered using three contextual forms, which are determined by the shape of the base letter. For most letters, the representative form ۾ is used:

mu ڀي <ڀ MA, ۾ VOWEL SIGN U>

su ڇي <ڇ SA, ۾ VOWEL SIGN U>

For letters with a terminal at the right edge, the form ۾ is used. For most letters, the form ۾ is used:

dhu ڏھ <ڏ DHA, ۾ VOWEL SIGN U>

pu ڀھ <ڀ PA, ۾ VOWEL SIGN U>

In old records, the sign is written as ڏھ, which resembles the HALANTA. Additional research is required in order to determine if there is a requirement to encode this sign as an alternate form.

tu ڌھ <ڌ TTA, ۾ VOWEL SIGN U>

dhu ڏھ <ڏ DHA, ۾ VOWEL SIGN U>

Letters with curves at the right edge form a ligature with the vowel sign:

ku ڪي <ڪ KA, ۾ VOWEL SIGN U>

ru ڙي <ڙ RA, ۾ VOWEL SIGN U>

Vowel sign uu The sign attaches to the right edge of a letter.

gū ڳو <ڳ GA, ۾ VOWEL SIGN UU>

rū ڙو <ڙ LA, ۾ VOWEL SIGN UU>

Vowel sign E Written to the left of the base.

ke ބެ <ބ KA, ެ VOWEL SIGN E>

ru ރެ <ރ RA, ެ VOWEL SIGN E>

Vowel sign AI Written to the left of the base.

kai ބޭ <ބ KA, ޭ VOWEL SIGN AI>

nai ނޭ <ނ NA, ޭ VOWEL SIGN AI>

Vowel sign O Written to the left and right of the base. When occurring with a consonant cluster, the left and right elements of the sign are rendered before the first and last letters, respectively.

ko ބޮ <ބ KA, ޮ VOWEL SIGN O>

nno ނަވ <ނ NA, ަ VIRAMA, ވ NA>

nno ނަވ <ނ NA, ަ VIRAMA, ވ NA>

mo މޮ <މ MA, ޮ VOWEL SIGN O>

In records where the elongated form of VOWEL SIGN AA is used, the right-side element of VOWEL SIGN O is similarly elongated:

ko ބޮޅ <ބ KA, ޮ VOWEL SIGN O>

mo މޮޅ <މ MA, ޮ VOWEL SIGN O>

Vowel sign AU Written to the left and right of the base. The right-side element, which is based upon ޅ VOWEL SIGN U, ligates with the base and takes the appropriate contextual form. When occurring with a consonant cluster, the left and right elements of the sign are rendered before the first and last letters, respectively.

kau ބޭޅ <ބ KA, ޭ VOWEL SIGN AU>

pau ފޭޅ <ފ PA, ޭ VOWEL SIGN AU>

rau ރޭޅ <ރ RA, ޭ VOWEL SIGN AU>

sau ސޭޅ <ސ SA, ޭ VOWEL SIGN AU>

5.5 Nasalization

Nasalization in Divehi is indicated in two ways:

1. *Post-vocalic nasalization* Vowel nasalization is indicated using the signs 〰 CANDRABINDU and 〰 ANUSVARA, as follows:

<i>om</i>	〰	<〰 O, 〰 SIGN CANDRABINDU>
<i>kam</i>	〰	<〰 KA, 〰 SIGN ANUSVARA>
<i>kām</i>	〰	<〰 KA, 〰 VOWEL SIGN AA, 〰 SIGN ANUSVARA>

2. *Pre-nasalized stop* The element 〰 is used as a sign for indicating prenasalized stops in Dhivehi. It attaches to the left edge of a letter. Palaeographically, this sign is the cluster-initial form of 3 NGA. It represents the velar nasal by default, but also functions as a generic homorganic nasal marker, ie. it assumes the value of the nasal belonging to the same class as the consonant that it precedes. When used as a generic nasal marker, the NGA forms a ligature with the following consonant, and is represented in encoded text as a conjunct.

<i>nga</i>	〰	<3 NGA, 〰 VIRAMA, 〰 GA>
<i>ndha</i>	〰	<3 NGA, 〰 VIRAMA, 〰 DHA>

A similar, if not identical, element is used for indicating gemination. As discussed in the section below, they can both be represented using NGA in a conjunct context. However, it is possible that the pre-nasal sign is a distinctive mark. Additional research is required to determine if a separate ‘pre-nasal sign’ should be encoded separate from NGA.

5.6 Gemination

Doubled, or geminated, consonants are indicated in Divehi records in two ways: 1) duplicated letters expressed as conjuncts; 2) above-base combining signs and post-base signs. However, the method using signs may appear distinctive, but the resulting forms can be traced back palaeographically to conjuncts and secondary forms of consonants used in conjunct ligatures. This may be explained by the lack of usage of certain conjunct forms in the later script, which presented an opportunity for reuse. Some examples of geminated forms are discussed below, as well as their recommended encoded representations.

- Doubling letters using conjuncts, such as 〰 *ssa*.
- The element 〰 is used for indicating gemination in 〰 *nna* and 〰 *tta*, but palaeographically they represent the clusters *ntha* and *ttha*, respectively. The glyph 〰 represents a form of THA used in conjuncts. As the letter 〰 THA had fallen out of use in *dives akuru*, it appears that conjuncts with the letter were reused for indicating duplication of the first letter in the conjunct. Such forms are to be represented in encoded text using the conjunct model. It is impractical to analyze the cluster-medial form 〰 of *tha* as a distinctive gemination sign.

‘ <i>tta</i> ’	〰	<〰 TA, 〰 VIRAMA, 〰 THA>
<i>ttha</i>	〰	<〰 TA, 〰 VIRAMA, 〰 THA>
<i>ntha</i>	〰	<〰 NA, 〰 VIRAMA, 〰 THA>

‘*nna*’ 𑌛 <𑌛 NA, 𑌛 VIRAMA, 𑌛 THA>

- The element 𑌛 is used for marking gemination in cases such as 𑌛 *ppa*. This element can appear with an open or a tight loop. Palaeographically, it is a post-base form of the letter 𑌛 YA, eg. 𑌛 *pya*. As the Dhivehi language does not have -*ya* clusters, the post-base form appears to have been repurposed for gemination. Such forms are to be represented in encoded text using the conjunct model. It is impractical to analyze the cluster-final form 𑌛 of *ya* as a distinctive gemination sign.

‘*ppa*’ 𑌛 <𑌛 PA, 𑌛 VIRAMA, 𑌛 YA>

pya 𑌛 <𑌛 PA, 𑌛 VIRAMA, 𑌛 YA>

- The element 𑌛 is written above the letter to be doubled, either joined to the left edge: 𑌛 *gga*; or detached: 𑌛 *gga*. This element may have originally represented the velar nasal 𑌛 NGA in cluster-initial position, eg. 𑌛 *nga*. In modern *dives akuru*, as attested in Sidi (1959), the sign is written detached above the letter, eg. the form 𑌛 *gga*, shown above. While it appears to be derived from the cluster-initial form of NGA, the form shown in Sidi is a modern evolution that may be considered a distinctive character. Its disconnected placement also differs from the ligating behavior of cluster-initial NGA. The detached sign 𑌛 is, therefore, encoded as a the distinctive character GEMINATION MARK. Forms that use a connected 𑌛 are to be represented in encoded text as conjuncts with cluster-initial NGA. It is impractical to analyze the connected form of 𑌛 as a distinctive gemination sign.

nga 𑌛 <𑌛 NGA, 𑌛 VIRAMA, 𑌛 GA>

‘*gga*’ 𑌛 <𑌛 NGA, 𑌛 VIRAMA, 𑌛 GA>

gga 𑌛 <𑌛 KA, 𑌛 GEMINATION MARK>

5.6.1 Nukta

The 𑌛 NUKTA is used for representing new sounds. It is written beneath a letter whose base value most closely approximates the foreign sound.

fa 𑌛 <𑌛 PA, 𑌛 NUKTA>

5.7 Line-breaking

Formal rules for line-breaking do not exist. Hyphenation and other continuation marks are not used. A word may be broken along orthographic syllables at any position at the end of a line. It is important that the components of two-part vowel signs be kept together with the base, for example, the left-side element should not be separated from the syllable at the end of line.

5.8 Numeration system

Some *lōmāfānu* are numbered in the margins using a numeration system based upon letters. The values are as follows (Bell 1930: 559):

value	letter		value	letter		value	letter	
1	މ	<i>ma</i>	4	ތ	<i>ta</i>	7	ނ	<i>na</i>
2	ޕ	<i>pa</i>	5	ލ	<i>la</i>	8	ސ	<i>sa</i>
3	ދ	<i>dha</i>	6	ގ	<i>ga</i>	9	ޅ	<i>ḍa</i>

5.9 Collation

The default sort order for the script is to be based upon the Brahmi pattern:

ޅ A < ޅޅ AA < ޅ I < ޅ II < ޅ U < ޅ UU < ޅ E < ޅ AI < ޅ O <
 ޅ AU < ޅ KA < ޅ KHA < ޅ GA < ޅ GHA < ޅ CA < ޅ CHA < ޅ JA <
 ޅ NYA < ޅ TTA < ޅ TTHA < ޅ DDA < ޅ DDHA < ޅ NNA < ޅ TA <
 ޅ THA < ޅ DA < ޅ DHA < ޅ NA < ޅ PA < ޅ PHA < ޅ BA < ޅ BHA <
 ޅ MA < ޅ YA < ޅ YYA < ޅ RA < ޅ LA < ޅ VA < ޅ SHA < ޅ SSA < ޅ SA <
 ޅ HA < ޅ LLA < ޅ ZA < ޅ SIGN AA < ޅ SIGN I < ޅ SIGN II < ޅ SIGN U <
 ޅ SIGN UU < ޅ SIGN E < ޅ SIGN AI < ޅ SIGN O < ޅ SIGN AU

The following characters have secondary weights:

̣ ANUSVARA, ̤ CANDRABINDU, ̥ NUKTA, ̦ HALANTA, ̧ GEMINATION MARK

5.10 ‘Modern’ repertoire for Divehi

The modern Divehi (‘D’) orthography contains the following letters, which are aligned with the inventory and order of Thaana (‘T’)

D	T	name	D	T	name
ހ	ހ	haa	ލ	ލ	laamu
ށ	ށ	shaviyani	މ	މ	gaafu
ނ	ނ	noonu	ރ	ރ	gnaviyani
ރ	ރ	raa	ބ	ބ	seenu
ބ	ބ	baa	ޅ	ޅ	daviyani
ޅ	ޅ	lhaviyani	ކ	ކ	zaviyani
ކ	ކ	kaafu	ދ	ދ	taviyani
އ	އ	alifu	ލ	ލ	yaa
ވ	ވ	vaavu	ޏ	ޏ	paviyani
މ	މ	meemu	ޑ	ޑ	javiyani
ފ	ފ	faafu	ޒ	ޒ	chaviyani
ދ	ދ	dhaalu	ޛ	ޛ	naa
ތ	ތ	thaa			

The vowel signs are:

D	T	name	D	T	name
—	ަ	abafili	ޅަ	ަ	ebefili
ޅ	ާ	aabaafili	ޅް	ާ	eybeyfili
ޅ	ި	ibifili	ޅި	ި	obofili
ޅ	ީ	eebeefili	ޅި	ީ	oaboafili
ޅ	ު	ubufili	ޅު	ު	sukun
ޅ	ާ	ooboofili			

The modern orthography can be represented using the proposed repertoire.

6 Character Data

6.1 Unicode character data: UnicodeData.txt

```

11B00;DIVEHI LETTER A;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B01;DIVEHI LETTER AA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B02;DIVEHI LETTER I;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B03;DIVEHI LETTER II;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B04;DIVEHI LETTER U;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B05;DIVEHI LETTER UU;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B06;DIVEHI LETTER E;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B07;DIVEHI LETTER AI;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B08;DIVEHI LETTER O;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B09;DIVEHI LETTER AU;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B0A;DIVEHI LETTER KA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B0B;DIVEHI LETTER KHA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B0C;DIVEHI LETTER GA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B0D;DIVEHI LETTER GHA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B0E;DIVEHI LETTER NGA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B0F;DIVEHI LETTER CA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B10;DIVEHI LETTER CHA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B11;DIVEHI LETTER JA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B12;DIVEHI LETTER JHA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B13;DIVEHI LETTER NYA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B14;DIVEHI LETTER TTA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B15;DIVEHI LETTER TTHA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B16;DIVEHI LETTER DDA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B17;DIVEHI LETTER DDHA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B18;DIVEHI LETTER NNA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B19;DIVEHI LETTER TA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B1A;DIVEHI LETTER THA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B1B;DIVEHI LETTER DA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B1C;DIVEHI LETTER DHA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B1D;DIVEHI LETTER NA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B1E;DIVEHI LETTER PA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B1F;DIVEHI LETTER PHA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B20;DIVEHI LETTER BA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B21;DIVEHI LETTER BHA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B22;DIVEHI LETTER MA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B23;DIVEHI LETTER YA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B24;DIVEHI LETTER YYA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B25;DIVEHI LETTER RA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B26;DIVEHI LETTER LA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B27;DIVEHI LETTER VA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B28;DIVEHI LETTER SHA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B29;DIVEHI LETTER SSA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B2A;DIVEHI LETTER SA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B2B;DIVEHI LETTER HA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B2C;DIVEHI LETTER LLA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B2D;DIVEHI LETTER ZA;Lo;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B2E;DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN AA;Mc;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B2F;DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN I;Mc;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B30;DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN II;Mc;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B31;DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN U;Mc;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B32;DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN UU;Mc;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B33;DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN E;Mc;0;L;;;;N;;;;;
11B34;DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN AI;Mc;0;L;11B29 11B26;;;;N;;;;;
11B35;DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN O;Mc;0;L;11B29 11B28;;;;N;;;;;
11B36;DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN AU;Mc;0;L;11B29 11B04;;;;N;;;;;
11B37;DIVEHI SIGN ANUSVARA;Mn;0;NSM;;;;N;;;;;

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11B38;DIVEHI SIGN CANDRABINDU;Mn;0;NSM;;;;;N;;;;;
11B39;DIVEHI SIGN NUKTA;Mn;7;NSM;;;;;N;;;;;
11B3A;DIVEHI SIGN HALANTA;Mc;9;L;;;;;N;;;;;
11B3B;DIVEHI VIRAMA;Mn;9;NSM;;;;;N;;;;;
11B3C;DIVEHI SECTION MARK;Po;0;L;;;;;N;;;;;
11B3D;DIVEHI GEMINATION MARK;Mn;0;NSM;;;;;N;;;;;
11B50;DIVEHI DIGIT ZERO;Nd;0;L;;0;0;0;N;;;;;
11B51;DIVEHI DIGIT ONE;Nd;0;L;;1;1;1;N;;;;;
11B52;DIVEHI DIGIT TWO;Nd;0;L;;2;2;2;N;;;;;
11B53;DIVEHI DIGIT THREE;Nd;0;L;;3;3;3;N;;;;;
11B54;DIVEHI DIGIT FOUR;Nd;0;L;;4;4;4;N;;;;;
11B55;DIVEHI DIGIT FIVE;Nd;0;L;;5;5;5;N;;;;;
11B56;DIVEHI DIGIT SIX;Nd;0;L;;6;6;6;N;;;;;
11B57;DIVEHI DIGIT SEVEN;Nd;0;L;;7;7;7;N;;;;;
11B58;DIVEHI DIGIT EIGHT;Nd;0;L;;8;8;8;N;;;;;
11B59;DIVEHI DIGIT NINE;Nd;0;L;;9;9;9;N;;;;;

```

6.1.1 Linebreak data: LineBreak.txt

```

11B00..11B09;AL      # DIVEHI LETTER A..DIVEHI LETTER AU
11B0A..11B2D;AL      # DIVEHI LETTER KA..DIVEHI LETTER ZA
11B2E..11B36;CM      # DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN AA..DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN OO
11B37..11B3A;CM      # DIVEHI SIGN ANUSVARA..DIVEHI SIGN HALANTA
11B3B;CM              # DIVEHI VIRAMA
11B3C;BA              # DIVEHI SECTION MARK
11B3D;CM              # DIVEHI GEMINATION MARK
11B50..11B59; NU     # DIVEHI DIGIT ZERO..DIVEHI DIGIT NINE

```

6.1.2 Indic syllabic categories: IndicSyllabicCategory.txt

```

# Indic_Syllabic_Category=Bindu

11B37..11B38 ; Bindu          # Mn      [2] DIVEHI SIGN ANUSVARA..DIVEHI SIGN CANDRABINDU

# Indic_Syllabic_Category=Nukta

11B39          ; Nukta          # Mn      DIVEHI SIGN NUKTA

# Indic_Syllabic_Category=Pure_Killer

11B3A          ; Pure_Killer     # Mn      DIVEHI SIGN HALANTA

# Indic_Syllabic_Category=Invisible_Stacker

11B3B          ; Invisible_Stacker # Mn      DIVEHI VIRAMA

# Indic_Syllabic_Category=Vowel_Independent

11B00..11B09 ; Vowel_Independent # Lo      [10] DIVEHI LETTER A..DIVEHI LETTER AU

# Indic_Syllabic_Category=Vowel_Dependent

11B2E..11B36 ; Vowel_Dependent  # Mc      [3] DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN AA..DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN AU

# Indic_Syllabic_Category=Consonant

11B0A..11B2D ; Consonant        # Lo      [35] DIVEHI LETTER KA..DIVEHI LETTER ZA

```

```
# Indic_Syllabic_Category=Gemination_Mark
11B3D          ; Gemination_Mark    # Mn          DIVEHI GEMINATION MARK

# Indic_Syllabic_Category=Number
11B50..11B59 ; Number                # Nd   [10] DIVEHI DIGIT ZERO..DIVEHI DIGIT NINE
```

6.1.3 Indic positional categories: IndicPositionalCategory.txt

```
# Indic_Positional_Category=Right
11B2E..11B32 ; Right                # Mc   [5] DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN AA..DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN UU
11B3A          ; Right                # Mc   DIVEHI SIGN HALANTA

# Indic_Positional_Category=Left
11B33..11B34 ; Left                  # Mc   [2] DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN E..DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN AI

# Indic_Positional_Category=Left_And_Right
11B35..11B36 ; Left_And_Right # Mc   [2] DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN O..DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN AU

# Indic_Positional_Category=Top
11B37..11B38 ; Top                  # Mn   [2] DIVEHI SIGN ANUSVARA..DIVEHI SIGN CANDRABINDU
11B3D          ; Top                  # Mn   DIVEHI GEMINATION MARK

# Indic_Positional_Category=Bottom
11B39          ; Bottom              # Mn   DIVEHI SIGN NUKTA
```

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	11B0	11B1	11B2	11B3	11B4	11B5
0	ހ 11B00	ށ 11B10	ނ 11B20	ރ 11B30		ބ 11B50
1	ޅ 11B01	ކ 11B11	އ 11B21	ވ 11B31		މ 11B51
2	ފ 11B02		ދ 11B22	ތ 11B32		ލ 11B52
3	ގ 11B03	ޏ 11B13	ސ 11B23	ޑ 11B33		ޒ 11B53
4	ޒ 11B04	ޓ 11B14	ޔ 11B24	ޕ 11B34		ޖ 11B54
5	ޖ 11B05	ޗ 11B15	ޘ 11B25	ޙ 11B35		ޚ 11B55
6	ޛ 11B06	ޜ 11B16	ޝ 11B26	ޞ 11B36		ޟ 11B56
7	ޟ 11B07	ޠ 11B17	ޡ 11B27	ޢ 11B37		ޣ 11B57
8	ޣ 11B08	ޤ 11B18	ޥ 11B28	ަ 11B38		ާ 11B58
9	ާ 11B09	ި 11B19	ީ 11B29	ު 11B39		ޫ 11B59
A	ޫ 11B0A	ެ 11B1A	ޭ 11B2A	ޮ 11B3A		
B	ޯ 11B0B	ް 11B1B	ޱ 11B2B	޲ 11B3B		
C	޳ 11B0C	޴ 11B1C	޵ 11B2C	޶ 11B3C		
D	޷ 11B0D	޸ 11B1D	޹ 11B2D	޺ 11B3D		
E	޻ 11B0E	޼ 11B1E	޽ 11B2E			
F	޿ 11B0F	޿ 11B1F	޿ 11B2F			

This block unifies Evela Akuru and Dives Akuru.

Independent vowels

11B00	අ	DIVEHI LETTER A
11B01	ආ	DIVEHI LETTER AA
11B02	ඈ	DIVEHI LETTER I
11B03	ඉ	DIVEHI LETTER II
11B04	ඊ	DIVEHI LETTER U
11B05	උ	DIVEHI LETTER UU
11B06	එ	DIVEHI LETTER E
11B07	ඔ	DIVEHI LETTER AI
• also used for ee		
11B08	ඌ	DIVEHI LETTER O
11B09	ඍ	DIVEHI LETTER AU
• also used for oo		

Consonants

11B0A	ක	DIVEHI LETTER KA
11B0B	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER KHA
11B0C	ග	DIVEHI LETTER GA
11B0D	ං	DIVEHI LETTER GHA
11B0E	ආ	DIVEHI LETTER NGA
• also represents pre-nasal or gemination mark when initial in a conjunct		
11B0F	ආ	DIVEHI LETTER CA
11B10	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER CHA
11B11	ආ	DIVEHI LETTER JA
11B12	ඃ	<reserved>
11B13	ආ	DIVEHI LETTER NYA
11B14	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER TTA
11B15	ආ	DIVEHI LETTER TTHA
11B16	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER DDA
11B17	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER DDHA
11B18	ආ	DIVEHI LETTER NNA
11B19	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER TA
11B1A	ආ	DIVEHI LETTER THA
11B1B	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER DA
11B1C	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER DHA
11B1D	ආ	DIVEHI LETTER NA
11B1E	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER PA
11B1F	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER PHA
11B20	ආ	DIVEHI LETTER BA
11B21	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER BHA
11B22	ආ	DIVEHI LETTER MA
11B23	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER YA
• also used for representing independent and initial vowels		
• also represents gemination when final in a conjunct		
11B24	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER YYA
11B25	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER RA
11B26	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER LA
11B27	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER VA
11B28	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER SHA
11B29	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER SSA
11B2A	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER SA
11B2B	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER HA
11B2C	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER LLA
11B2D	ඃ	DIVEHI LETTER ZA

Dependent vowel signs

11B2E	ඃ	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN AA
11B2F	ඃ	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN I
11B30	ඃ	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN II
11B31	ඃ	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN U
11B32	ඃ	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN UU
11B33	ඃ	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN E

11B34	ඃ	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN AI
• also used for ee		
11B35	ඃ	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN O
≡ 11B33 ඃ 11B2E ඃ		
11B36	ඃ	DIVEHI VOWEL SIGN AU
≡ 11B33 ඃ 11B31 ඃ		
• also used for oo		

Nasalization signs

11B37	ඃ	DIVEHI SIGN ANUSVARA
11B38	ඃ	DIVEHI SIGN CANDRABINDU

Nukta

11B39	ඃ	DIVEHI SIGN NUKTA
• used for extending the alphabet		

Halanta

11B3A	ඃ	DIVEHI SIGN HALANTA
= sukun		
• silences the inherent vowel		
• also used for vowel sign u		

Virama

11B3B	ඃ	DIVEHI VIRAMA
• used for producing conjuncts		

Punctuation

11B3C	ඃ	DIVEHI SECTION MARK
-------	---	---------------------

Gemination mark

11B3D	ඃ	DIVEHI GEMINATION MARK
-------	---	------------------------

Digits

11B50	0	DIVEHI DIGIT ZERO
11B51	1	DIVEHI DIGIT ONE
11B52	2	DIVEHI DIGIT TWO
11B53	3	DIVEHI DIGIT THREE
11B54	4	DIVEHI DIGIT FOUR
11B55	5	DIVEHI DIGIT FIVE
11B56	6	DIVEHI DIGIT SIX
11B57	7	DIVEHI DIGIT SEVEN
11B58	8	DIVEHI DIGIT EIGHT
11B59	9	DIVEHI DIGIT NINE

Skt.	Dhiv.	PI	SI	LI-3	L4	L5	L6	L7	L8	F1	F2	F1058	F3	F4	MM	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F13	F1153
a	a	ހ	ށ	ނ	ރ	ބ	ޅ	ކ	އ	ވ	މ	ފ	ދ	ތ	ލ	ގ	ޏ	ސ	ޑ	ޒ	ޛ	ޜ
ka	} ka	ކ	ވ	މ	ދ	ޑ	ޒ	ޛ	ޜ	ޝ	ޞ	ޟ	ޠ	ޡ	ޢ	ޣ	ޤ	ޥ	ަ	ާ	ި	ީ
k ^h a		އ		ޅ																		
ga	} ga	ގ	ވ	މ	ދ	ޑ	ޒ	ޛ	ޜ	ޝ	ޞ	ޟ	ޠ	ޡ	ޢ	ޣ	ޤ	ޥ	ަ	ާ	ި	ީ
g ^h a		އ	ޅ	ޅ	ޅ	ޅ																
na	(na) (gem.)			ނ	ރ	ބ	ޅ	ކ	އ	ވ	މ	ފ	ދ	ތ	ލ	ގ	ޏ	ސ	ޑ	ޒ	ޛ	ޜ
ca	} ha, sa	ހ		ނ	ރ																	
c ^h a		ކ		މ	ދ																	
ja	} da	ގ		މ	ދ																	
j ^h a		ކ		މ	ދ																	
ña	(nya)			ނ																		
ta	} ta	ހ	ށ	ނ	ރ	ބ	ޅ	ކ	އ	ވ	މ	ފ	ދ	ތ	ލ	ގ	ޏ	ސ	ޑ	ޒ	ޛ	ޜ
t ^h a		ކ																				
da	} da	ގ		މ	ދ	ޑ	ޒ	ޛ	ޜ	ޝ	ޞ	ޟ	ޠ	ޡ	ޢ	ޣ	ޤ	ޥ	ަ	ާ	ި	ީ
d ^h a		އ		ޅ																		
na	na	ހ	ށ	ނ	ރ	ބ	ޅ	ކ	އ	ވ	މ	ފ	ދ	ތ	ލ	ގ	ޏ	ސ	ޑ	ޒ	ޛ	ޜ
ta	ta	ހ	ށ	ނ	ރ	ބ	ޅ	ކ	އ	ވ	މ	ފ	ދ	ތ	ލ	ގ	ޏ	ސ	ޑ	ޒ	ޛ	ޜ
t ^h a	(gem.)	ކ		މ	ދ	ޑ	ޒ	ޛ	ޜ	ޝ	ޞ	ޟ	ޠ	ޡ	ޢ	ޣ	ޤ	ޥ	ަ	ާ	ި	ީ
da	} da	ގ		މ	ދ	ޑ	ޒ	ޛ	ޜ	ޝ	ޞ	ޟ	ޠ	ޡ	ޢ	ޣ	ޤ	ޥ	ަ	ާ	ި	ީ
d ^h a		އ		ޅ																		
na	na	ހ	ށ	ނ	ރ	ބ	ޅ	ކ	އ	ވ	މ	ފ	ދ	ތ	ލ	ގ	ޏ	ސ	ޑ	ޒ	ޛ	ޜ
pa	} pa	ހ	ށ	ނ	ރ	ބ	ޅ	ކ	އ	ވ	މ	ފ	ދ	ތ	ލ	ގ	ޏ	ސ	ޑ	ޒ	ޛ	ޜ
p ^h a		ކ																				
ba	} ba	ގ		މ	ދ	ޑ	ޒ	ޛ	ޜ	ޝ	ޞ	ޟ	ޠ	ޡ	ޢ	ޣ	ޤ	ޥ	ަ	ާ	ި	ީ
b ^h a		އ		ޅ																		
ma	ma	ހ	ށ	ނ	ރ	ބ	ޅ	ކ	އ	ވ	މ	ފ	ދ	ތ	ލ	ގ	ޏ	ސ	ޑ	ޒ	ޛ	ޜ

Figure 1: Inventory of Divehi letters A, KA .. MA across various *lōmāfānu* and *fatkoḷu* (from Gippert 2013: Table 1). Continued in figure 2.

Skt.	Dhiv.	PI	SI	L1-3	L4	L5	L6	L7	L8	F1	F2	F1058	F3	F4	MM	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F13	F1153
ya	(y)a	𑌵	𑌶	𑌷	𑌸	𑌹	𑌺	𑌻	𑌼	𑌽	𑌾	𑌿	𑍀	𑍁	𑍂	𑍃	𑍄	𑍅	𑍆	𑍇	𑍈	𑍉
ra	ra	𑍊	𑍋	𑍌	𑍍	𑍎	𑍏	𑍐	𑍑	𑍒	𑍓	𑍔	𑍕	𑍖	𑍗	𑍘	𑍙	𑍚	𑍛	𑍜	𑍝	𑍞
la	la	𑍟	𑍠	𑍡	𑍢	𑍣	𑍤	𑍥	𑍦	𑍧	𑍨	𑍩	𑍪	𑍫	𑍬	𑍭	𑍮	𑍯	𑍰	𑍱	𑍲	𑍳
va	va	𑍴	𑍵	𑍶	𑍷	𑍸	𑍹	𑍺	𑍻	𑍼	𑍽	𑍾	𑍿	𑎀	𑎁	𑎂	𑎃	𑎄	𑎅	𑎆	𑎇	𑎈
											𑎉											
śa	} ha, sa	𑎋 𑎌 𑎍 𑎎 𑎏										𑎐	𑎑	𑎒	𑎓	𑎔						
ṣa		𑎕	𑎖	𑎗	𑎘	𑎙	𑎚	𑎛	𑎜	𑎝	𑎞	𑎟	𑎠	𑎡	𑎢	𑎣	𑎤	𑎥	𑎦	𑎧	𑎨	𑎩
sa		𑎪	𑎫	𑎬	𑎭	𑎮	𑎯	𑎰	𑎱	𑎲	𑎳	𑎴	𑎵	𑎶	𑎷	𑎸	𑎹	𑎺	𑎻	𑎼	𑎽	𑎾
ha		𑎿	𑏀	𑏁	𑏂	𑏃	𑏄	𑏅	𑏆	𑏇	𑏈	𑏉	𑏊	𑏋	𑏌	𑏍	𑏎	𑏏	𑏐	𑏑	𑏒	𑏓
ḷa	ḷa	𑏕	𑏖	𑏗	𑏘	𑏙	𑏚	𑏛	𑏜	𑏝	𑏞	𑏟	𑏠	𑏡	𑏢	𑏣	𑏤	𑏥	𑏦	𑏧	𑏨	𑏩
za												𑏪										
											𑏫											

Figure 2: Inventory of Divehi letters YA .. ZA across various *lōmāfānu* and *fatkoḷu* (from Gippert 2013: Table 1). Continued from figure 1.

Early Divehi Akuru (Evela Akuru)

Vowels

අ	ඳ	ඳ්	ඳ්	ඳ්			
ඳ		ඳ					ඳ

Consonants

ඳ	ඳ	ඳ		ඳ			ඳ
ඳ		ඳ		ඳ	ඳ	ඳ	
ඳ		ඳ		ඳ	ඳ	ඳ	ඳ
ඳ		ඳ	ඳ	ඳ	ඳ	ඳ	
ඳ		ඳ		ඳ	ඳ		

Figure 3: Chart of ‘Early Divehi Akuru’ (from Romero-Frias 2003).

Latter Divehi Akuru (Divehi Akuru)

Vowels

ಎ	ಅ	ಆ	ಇ	ಀ	ಊ
ಋ	ೠ	ಌ	಍		

ಁ
alifu sukun

Consonants

ಕ	ಖ	ಗ					ಙ
ಚ		ಛ		ಝ	ಞ	ಟ	
ಠ		ಡ		ಢ	ತ	ಥ	ದ
ನ		ಪ	ಫ	ಬ	ಭ	ಮ	
ಯ		ರ		ಲ	ಳ		

ಱ
z

Figure 4: Chart of ‘Later Divehi Akuru’ (from Romero-Frias 2003).



Figure 5: IC 009: a Vajrayana statue from Māle (from Gippert 2013: figures 1, 3). The inscription has been traced in color by Gippert.



Figure 6: IC 010: a Vajrayana statue from Māle (from Gippert 2013: figures 2, 4). The inscription has been traced in color by Gippert.



Figure 7: L3: ‘*Dam̐bidū Lōmāfānu*’. Plates 1, 2 of 16. Image from Wikimedia Commons.



Figure 8: L6: Single plate. From Bell 1930: Plate I, “Lómáfánu No. 1”.

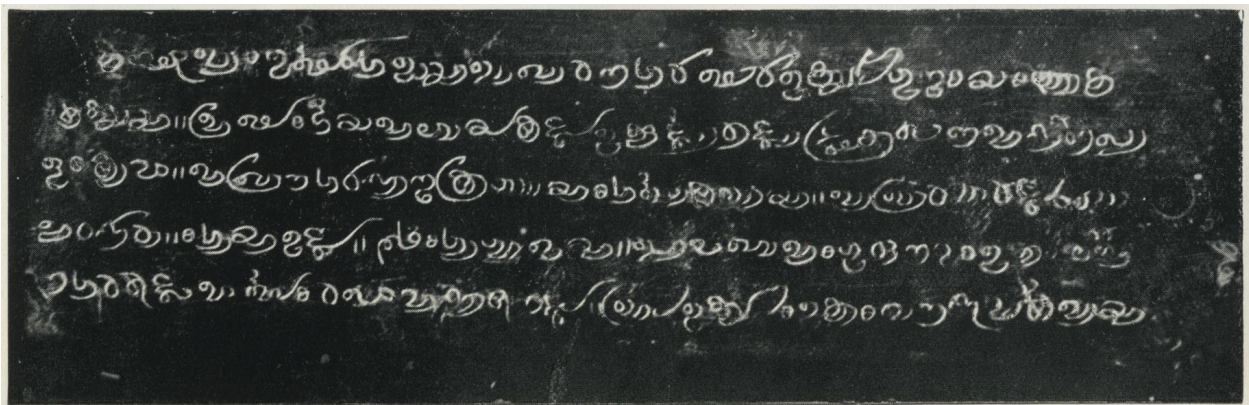
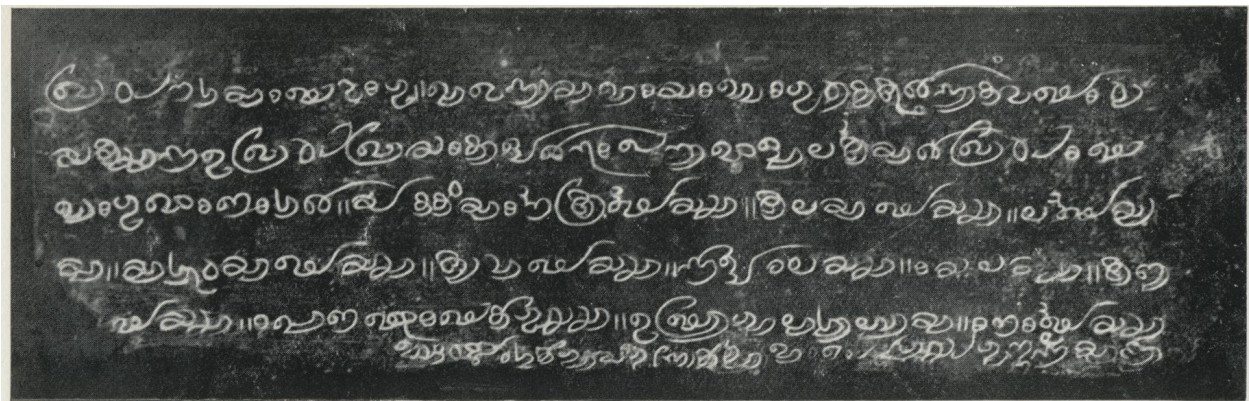


Figure 9: L7: Single plate. From Bell 1930: Plate II, “Lómáfānu No. 2”.

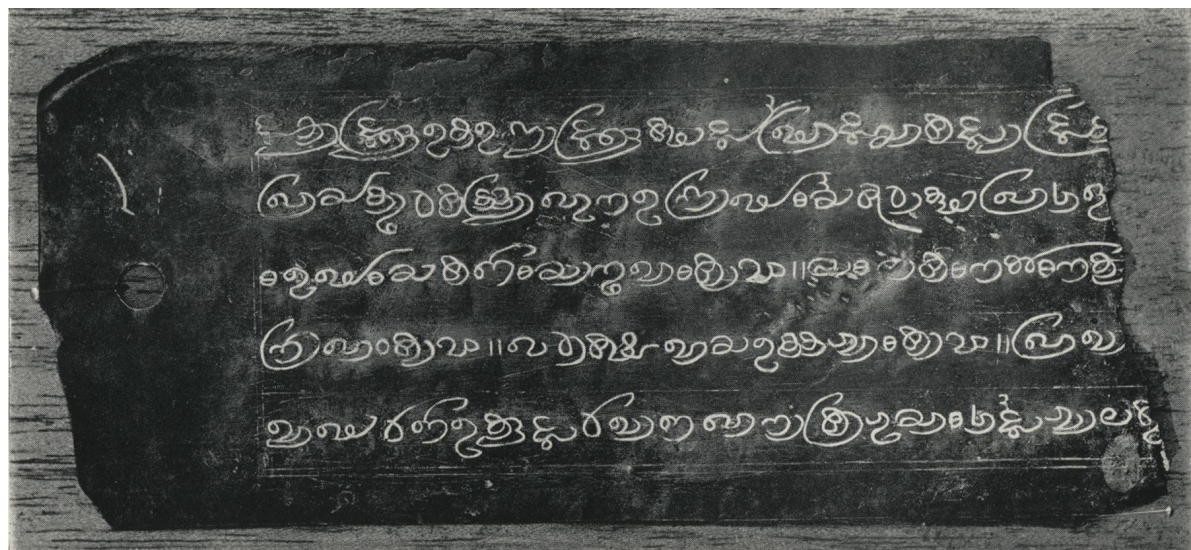
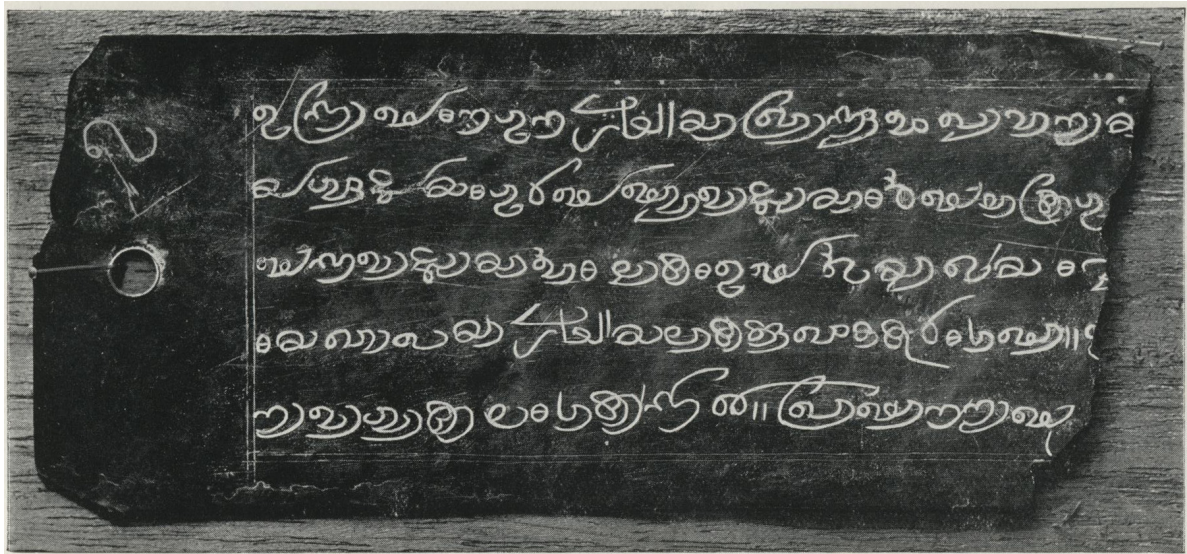


Figure 10: L8: Single plate (fragment). From Bell 1930: Plate III, IV, “Lómáfānu No. 3”.

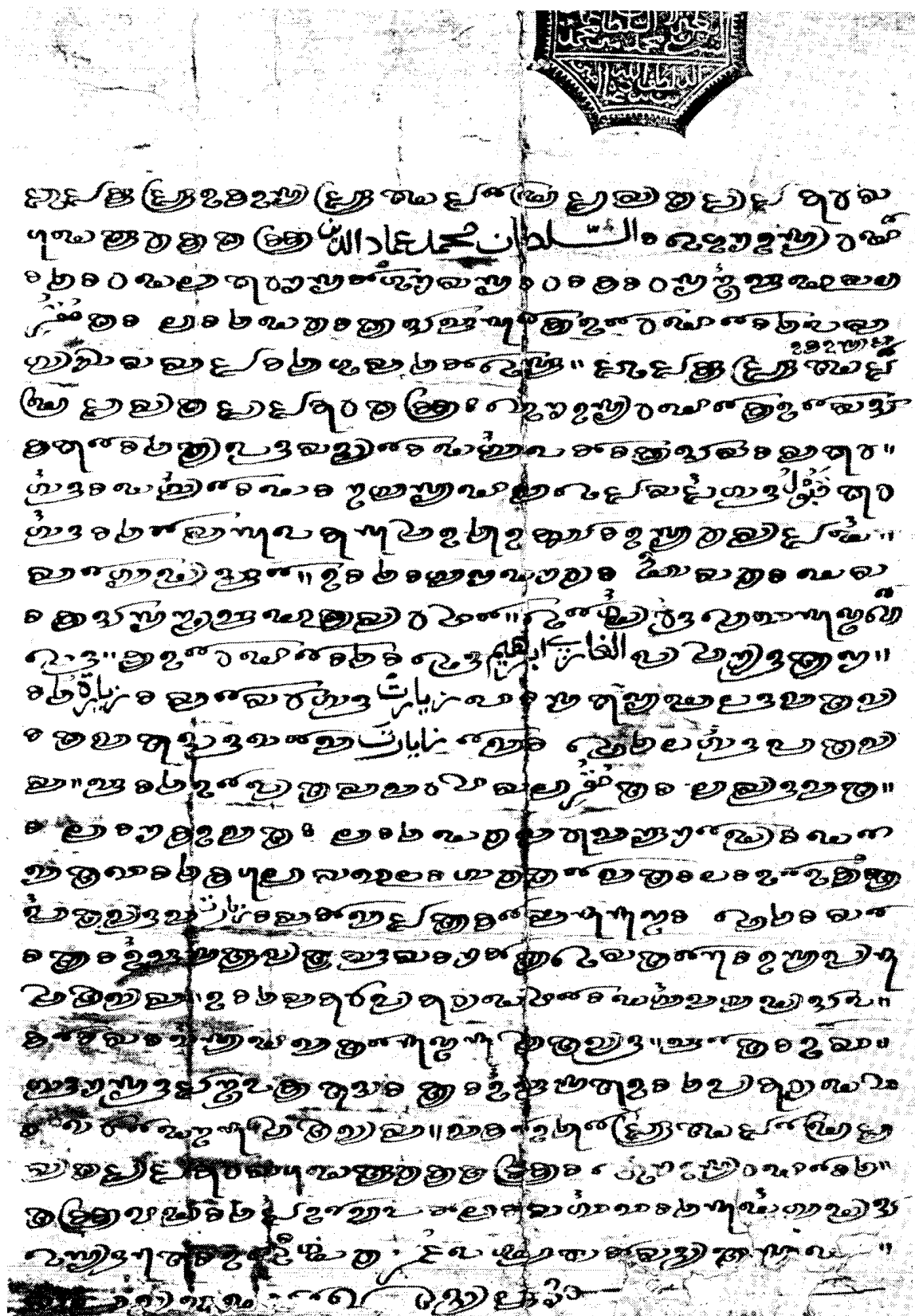


Figure 11: A fatkoḷu of Muhammad Imaduddin (from Mohamed 1999: 30).

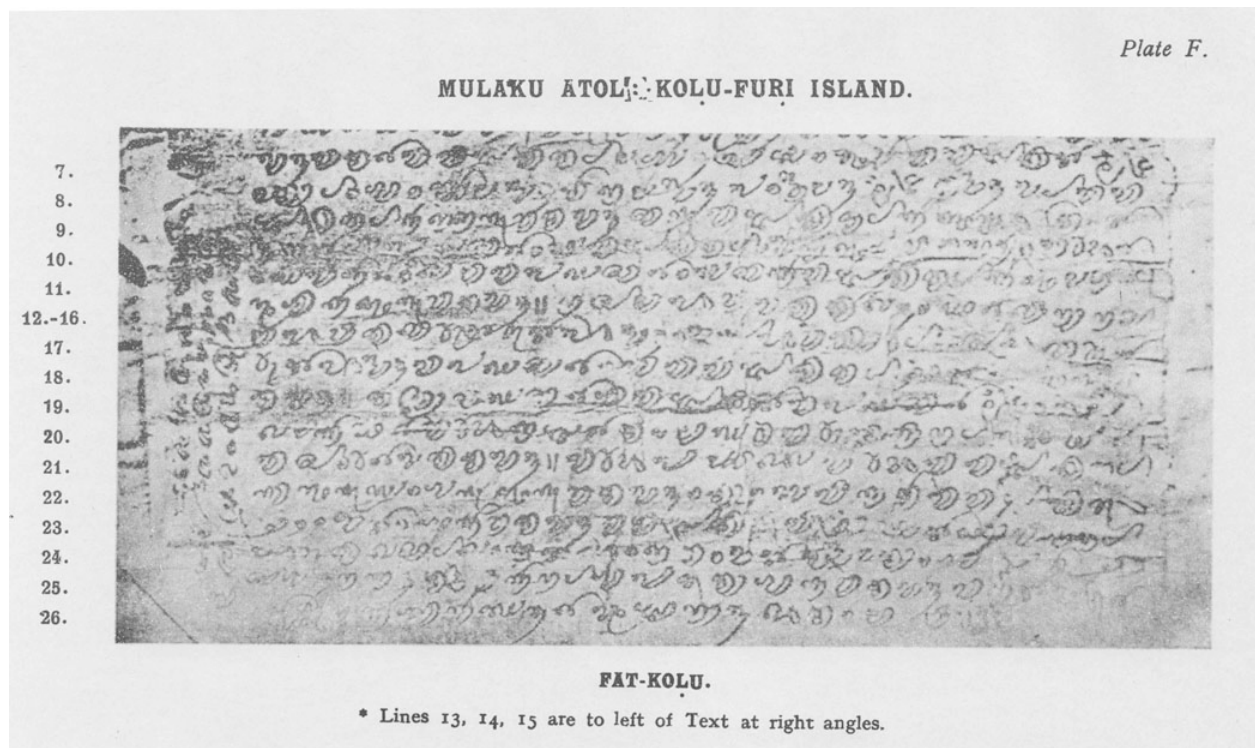
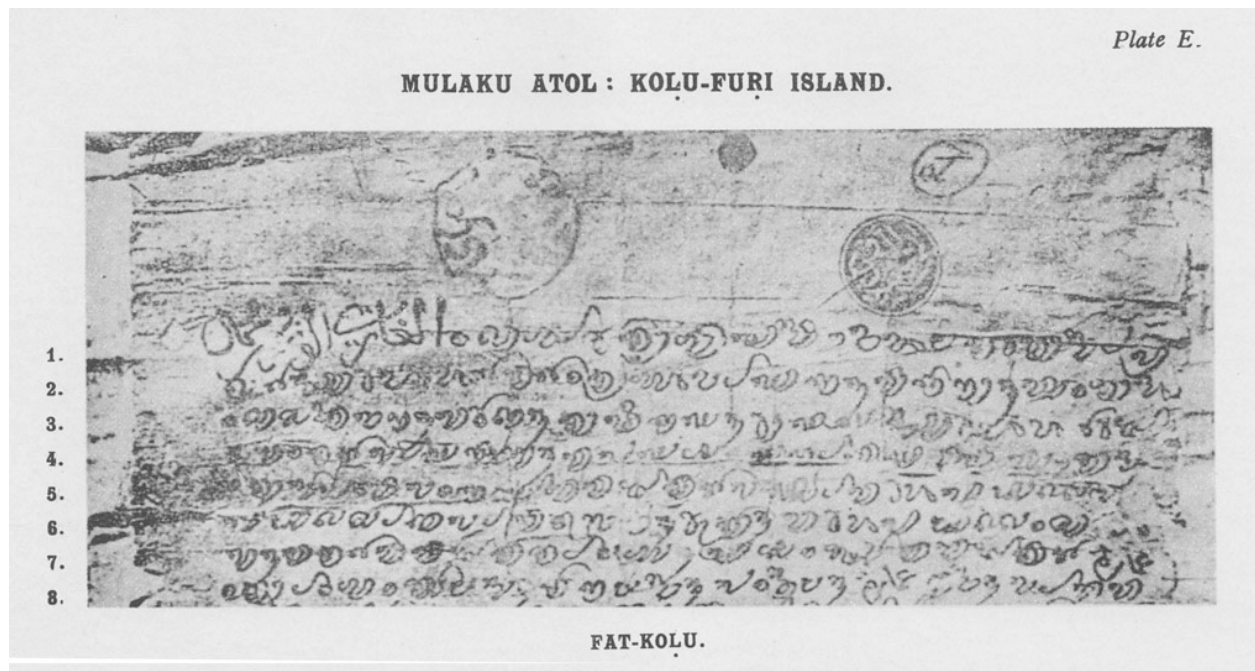


Figure 12: A *fatkoḷu* (from Bell 1929: Plate E and Plate F).

o

2

(ދިވެހިރާއްޖޭގެ) ސަރުކާރުގެ ފަރާތުން

ބުނަ ބުނަ ބުނަ ބުނަ ބުނަ ބުނަ ބުނަ ބުނަ
 ހ ށ ނ ރ ބ ޅ ޅ ޅ

ޅ ބ ބ ބ ޅ ބ ބ ބ
 ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ

ބ ބ ބ ބ ބ ބ ބ ބ
 ބ ބ ބ ބ ބ ބ ބ ބ

Figure 14: Modern *divehi akuru* orthography: Consonant vowel combination with VOWEL SIGN I (from Sidi 1959: 5). The sort order follows that of Thaana.

3

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

42

A

5

(ހަށުގަނޑު ބަނޑު) ހ ށ ނ ރ ބ ޅ

ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު
ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު

ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު
ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު

ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު
ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު

ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު
ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު	ހަށު

Figure 17: Modern *divehi akuru* orthography: Consonant vowel combination with VOWEL SIGN O (from Sidi 1959: 8). The sort order follows that of Thaana.

9

6

(ހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށި) ހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށި

ހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށި
ހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށި

ހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށި
ހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށި

ހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށި
ހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށިހަށި

Figure 18: Modern *divehi akuru* orthography: Consonant vowel combination with VOWEL SIGN AA (from Sidi 1959: 9). The sort order follows that of Thaana.

٧.

7

(٧. ٧. ٧. ٧. ٧. ٧. ٧. ٧.) ٧. ٧. ٧. ٧. ٧. ٧. ٧. ٧.

٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧
٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧

٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧
٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧

٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧
٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧ ٧

Figure 19: Modern *divehi akuru* orthography: Consonant vowel combination with VOWEL SIGN II (from Sidi 1959: 10). The sort order follows that of Thaana.

11

8

(ޖ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ) ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ

ޖ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ
 ޖ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ

ޖ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ
 ޖ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ

ޖ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ
 ޖ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ ޙ

Figure 20: Modern *divehi akuru* orthography: Consonant vowel combination with VOWEL SIGN UU (from Sidi 1959: 11). The sort order follows that of Thaana.

۱۲

9

(ދިވެހިރާއްޖޭގެ) ސަލާމް ސަލާމް ސަލާމް ސަލާމް ސަލާމް

ހ ބ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ
ހ ބ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ

ހ ބ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ
ހ ބ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ

ހ ބ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ
ހ ބ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ

ހ ބ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ
ހ ބ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ ޅ

Figure 21: Modern *divehi akuru* orthography: Consonant vowel combination with VOWEL SIGN AI (from Sidi 1959: 12). The sort order follows that of Thaana.

13

10

(ދިވެހިބަހު) ހަތްވަނަ ބައި

ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ
ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ

ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ
ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ

ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ
ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ

ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ
ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ ހ ޅ

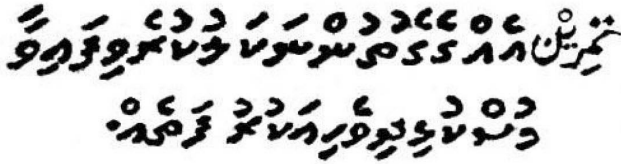
Figure 22: Modern *divehi akuru* orthography: Consonant vowel combination with VOWEL SIGN AU (from Sidi 1959: 13). The sort order follows that of Thaana.

11

(۲-۳) ۸ ۴-۳

50

10



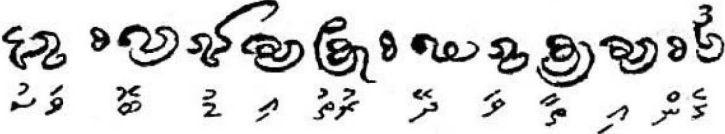
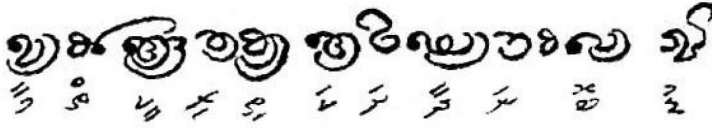
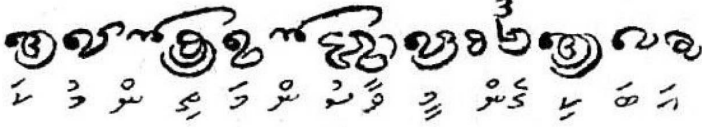
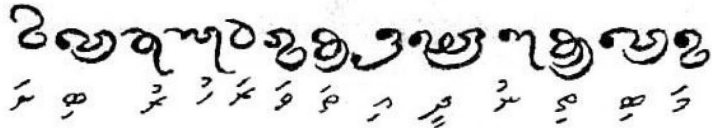
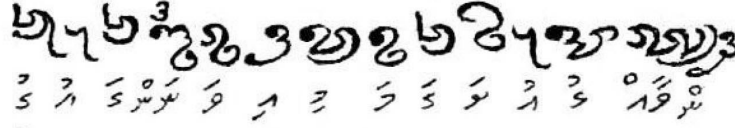
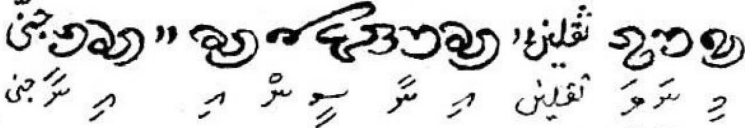
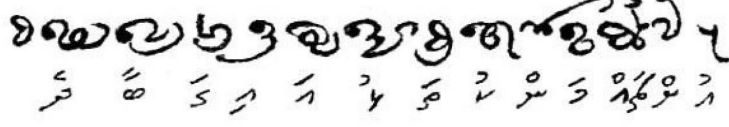








Figure 24: Modern *divehi akuru* text (from Sidi 1959: 15).

17

1. ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ
 2. ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ
 3. ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ
 4. ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ
 5. ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ
 6. ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ
 7. ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ
 8. ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ
 9. ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ
 10. ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ ޞަލާތުލްލިއާ

Figure 25: Modern *divehi akuru* text (from Sidi 1959: 16).

Journ. R.A.S. (Ceylon), Extra No., 1919.

PLATE VII.

1. — Vowels and Vowel Signs —										
a	ā	i	ī	u	ū	e	ē	o	ō	
අ	ආ	ඌ	ඬ	ඹ	භූ	ඈ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ
ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ
*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

2.										
	a	ā	i	ī	u	ū	e	ē	o	ō
ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ
ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ	ආ

Compound Letters. (specimens)							
KĀA	ආ	YAI	ආ	DI	ආ	SRI	ආ

3.	4.
ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ	ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ
ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ	ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ
ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ	ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ
ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ	ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ ආ

Apothecaries' Co., photo.

"DIVES AKURU," OR LD MALDIVE, ALPHABET.

1

Surrey Office half-tone block.

Figure 26: Wilhelm Geiger's table showing vowel letters, 2) consonant-vowel combinations for *ha*, 3) and 4) specimens of 'dives akuru' (1919: Plate VII).

Journ. R.A.S. (Ceylon), Extra No., 1919.

PLATE VI.

H	ဟ
R	ရ
N	န
R	ဝ
B	ပ
L	လ
K	က
A	အ
W	ဃ
V	ဗ

M	မ
F	ဖ
D	ဃ
T	တ
L	လ
G	ဂ
N	န
S	ဃ
D	ဃ

Y	ယ
T	တ
C	ဇ
Y	ဇ
Z	ဇ
J	ဇ
P	ပ
Sukun	◌်

Variant Vowels and Consonants.	
A	အ
I	ဇ
U	ဇ
U	ဇ
E	ဇ
O	ဇ
K	ဇ
V	ဇ

Stanza

ဒုတိယသံသယံ
 နဒုတိယသံသယံ
 နဒုတိယသံသယံ

Apothecaries' Co., photo.

"DIVES AKURU," OR OLD MÁLDIVE, ALPHABET.

Surrey Office half-tone block.

Figure 27: Wilhelm Geiger's chart comparing 'dives akuru' and 'evēla akuru' (1919: Plate VI).

Eveyla Akuru

'Eveyla Akuru' is the system of writing used in Maldives in the 12th century AD and possibly some centuries earlier. Early 'Eveyla Akuru' writing has been found on madrepora stelae, tentatively dated to *circa* 9th - 10th century AD. The later 'Eveyla Akuru' is found in copperplate writings of the late 12th century, i.e. 1194/1195, called *loamaafaanu*, official records of land grants awarded to mosques built by ruling sultans after the conversion to Islam. These later scripts have been deciphered and their transliteration gives us a guide to ancient Divehi writing and language.

All ancient scripts were called 'Dives Akuru' or 'Divehi Akuru', literally meaning 'scripts of island people', by Maldivians. When H. C. P. Bell visited Maldives in 1922, he styled this particular ancient script, 'Eveyla Akuru' for convenient distinguishment from its' later variant called Dives Akuru (Bell, 1922). *Eveyla* means 'ancient' in the Divehi language. (The word *e* means 'that' and *veyla* is time or period; thus together *eveyla* means 'that time', or 'ancient'). Eveyla Akuru, therefore simply means 'ancient letters' and the name has remained until the present time.

The Eveyla script in this book dates back to 1194/1195 AD, and is taken from copperplate grants of the twelfth century as well as from the work done by the late Divehi scholar, Ali Najeeb. The script in general bears a strong resemblance to the old Grantha, Vatteluttu and Sinhala Elu scripts and the present day Malayalam script. This leads to the conjecture that the old Eveyla script could be a direct descendent from the Southern scripts of the Indian sub-continent.

The close resemblance of this script to the Sinhala Elu script of the 10th to the 12th century AD, has been remarked by many writers. According to M. W. Sugathapala de Silva, Wilhelm Geiger, who studied Eveyla Akuru, said that the affinity was 'not so much with Medieval Sinhalese as to the Tulu of the Malabar District of Southern India, which lie opposite the Laccadive and Maldive Islands, or doubtless, even more nearly to an older Grantha type of Tulu-Malayalam, or *Arya Eluttu*'.

The system of writing in Eveyla Akuru is syllabic in structure. Letters are written from left to right, spacing of words is not observed and the writing is broken off at the end of a line. As a result, the line may end or begin in the middle of a word.

The letters represent two categories of sounds, vowels and consonants. In the initial position vowels are represented in general by separate letters. Non-initially, they are shown by vowel-strokes or *fili*. A fili may occur in front of, after, above or below a consonant. When a consonant is written separately,

without a fili and unattached to another letter, it symbolizes the consonant sound with the inherent vowel sound *a*.

e.g.: 𑌀 ka, 𑌁 ga, 𑌂 ma.

The vowel symbols used in Eveylla Akuru are listed with their corresponding phonological values in TABLE NO 1. (Maniku, Wijewardene, 1986) These symbols were generally used in the initial position of words, and fili (vowel strokes) were used in non-initial positions.

TABLE NO.1. VOWEL SYMBOLS

Symbol	Sound
𑌀	a
𑌁	a
𑌂	ā
𑌃	ā
𑌄	i
𑌅	i
𑌆	u
𑌇	e or ē
𑌈	o or ō

The following ‘fili’ (vowel strokes) are used to represent vowel sounds (Najeeb, Shafeeq, 1993).

TABLE NO.2. FILI (VOWEL STROKES)

Fili	Sound	Example	Transliteration
ㄅ	ā	ㄅㄅ	kā
ㄆ	i	ㄆㄅ	ki
ㄇ	ī	ㄇㄅ	kī
ㄏ	u	ㄏㄅ	ku
ㄏ	u	ㄏㄅ	ku
ㄏ	u	ㄏㄅ	fū, pū
ㄏ	u	ㄏㄅ	ru
ㄏ	ū	ㄏㄅ	fū, pū
ㄏ	e	ㄏㄅ	ke
ㄏ	ē	ㄏㄅ	kē
ㄏㄏ	ai	ㄏㄏㄅ	kai
ㄏ ㄅ	o	ㄏㄅ	ko
ㄏ ㄅ	ō	ㄏㄅ	kō

Figure 30: Description of *evēla akuru* (from Mohamed 1999: 13).

The consonant symbols in Eveyla Akuru along with their phonological values are listed below (Maniku, Wijewardene 1986, Najeeb, Shafeeq 1993).

TABLE NO.3. CONSONANT SYMBOLS.

Letter	Sound
ㄣ	h
ㄥ	ś or t
ㄨ	n
ㄩ	ṇ
ㄲ	r
ㄴ	b
ㄷ	!
ㄸ	k
ㄹ	kh (aspirate)
ㄺ	a
ㄻ	a
ㄼ	v
ㄽ	m
ㄾ	f, p
ㄿ	ḍ

14

Figure 31: Description of *evēla akuru* (from Mohamed 1999: 14).

TABLE NO. 3 CONTINUED

Letter	Sound
ދ	d
ޅ	d
ތ	t
ލ	l
ގ	g
ސ	s
ޕ	sh or s'
ޖ	sh or s'
ޝ	sh
ޞ	dh (aspirate)
ޟ	ɖ or ɖɖ
ޞ	y

In the transliteration and translation work done by the Maldivian scholars, the late Ali Najeeb and Ahmed Shafeeq, the letter ލ was given the phonological value *s'* and the letter ސ the value *t*.

In the transliteration and the translation of the *Isdhoo* and *Dhambidhoo Loamaafaanus* by Maldivian scholar Hassan Ahmed Maniku and Sri Lankan Professors C. D. Wijewardana and J. B. Dissanayeke, the letter ލ was given the phonological value of *t* and ސ was transliterated as *tt*.

Figure 32: Description of *evēla akuru* (from Mohamed 1999: 5).

The phonological value *s'* in Divehi is said by linguists to have evolved from the *t* of earlier times (Cain, 1996). In modern Divehi, the words incorporating the symbol ʘ in the copperplate writings of the 12th century are used with the phonological value *s'* and not with the *t* value.

The team of scholars who deciphered the *Isdhoo Loamaafaanu* in 1986 concluded that there were the following aspirate letters in the document (TABLE NO. 4).

TABLE NO.4

ʘ	kh
ʘ	dh

They also concluded that the symbol ʘ was used for both *a* and *y*.

Three sibilants corresponding to palatal *s'*, cerebral *sh* and dental *s* in Sanskrit were also found in the document, but it is likely that they were pronounced alike. These are given in TABLE NO. 5

TABLE NO.5

ʘ	sh or <i>s'</i>
ʘ	sh
ʘ	s

In their work, Ali Najeeb and Ahmed Shafeeq gave both ʘ and ʘ the phonological value *sh*.

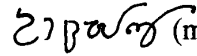
Dental and cerebral *n* existed in Divehi until the 20th century and different letters were used for these sounds. The Southern atolls still differentiate between these sounds, but standard Divehi only has the symbol for dental *n*.

The symbol ʘ was used for *f* and *p* although in latter centuries, *p* was represented in Dives Akuru by ʘ, the same symbol with a dot below the letter.

Since research on the Eveyila Akuru writing system in the *loamaafaanus* is continuing, it is likely that more symbols which are not included here may be discovered. The symbols represented here are those included in published works.

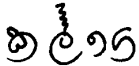
In the writing system, the following consonantal strokes are used: -

- 1-  This stroke indicates that the inherent vowel in the letter is deleted.

e.g.:  (maarasun)

It corresponds to the sukun 'o' in the Tāna script.

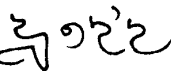
- 2-  This is used to indicate that the consonant to which it is attached is doubled.

e.g.:  (kallage)

- 3-  This stroke shows that the consonant to which it is attached is preceded by a nasal consonant.

e.g.:  (vansá)

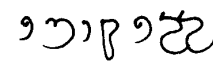
- 4-  This sign placed above the letters, indicates that the consonant cluster to which it is attached has the consonant 'r' as its first sound.

e.g.:  (purbbe).

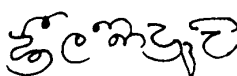
Doubling of the consonant  (t) is usually by attaching the symbol  to the bottom of the letter.

e.g.:  (uttara).

The most frequent way of writing a double consonant is by writing them close together so that they touch one another.

e.g.:  (noramme).

In the case of  (n) one letter is placed slightly higher than the other.

e.g.:  (srilannaduvi).

When two consonants are written touching one another, the fili denoting the vowel ʔ (*e*) is placed in front of the cluster.

e.g.: ʔ ʔ ʔ ʔ (komme).

Similarly, in the case of the vowel *o*, two components of the fili, ʔ and ʔ , are placed on either side of the cluster.

e.g.: ʔ ʔ ʔ ʔ (duppoli).

Dissimilar consonant clusters are also written in the same way, placing the two consonant symbols together, touching one another.

e.g.: ʔ ʔ ʔ (sintha)
ʔ ʔ ʔ (fange).

In such clusters, the fili for the vowels *e* and *o* are attached in the same way as for two consonant clusters. The symbol ʔ is used to denote the final *ya* in a consonant cluster.

e.g.: ʔ ʔ (vyana).

Similarly the symbol ʔ attached to the lower part of the letter is used to mark the final *ra* of a letter.

e.g.: ʔ ʔ (krana)
ʔ ʔ (driti).

In some instances, conjoint symbols comprising the components of the two letters are employed to write dissimilar consonant clusters.

e.g.: ʔ ʔ (laksha),
ʔ ʔ (fansha),
ʔ ʔ ʔ (kandorāi)

After the conversion of Maldives to Islam, it became clear that Eveylla Akuru had shortcomings when Arabic words had to be written in official documentation. This probably led to the formation of new symbols and modifications in the writing system, which eventually led to the gradual evolution of its successor, *Dives Akuru*.

Dives Akuru

The ancient Eveyla Akuru found in the twelfth century copperplates and on the coral-stone relics, evolved into the more advanced *Dives Akuru* over a period of about two hundred years.

A copperplate grant of 1357 AD, called '*Bodugalu Miskit Loamaafaanu*' and written in the sixteenth year of Sultana Rehendi Khadeeja's reign, is the earliest example of this script. This copper-plate grant showed distinct changes in the characters seen in the earlier copperplates, indicating the beginning of the Eveyla script's evolution into the later style called '*Dives Akuru*' (Bell. 1922).

The examples of Dives Akuru found in this book date back to the late eighteenth century. They are taken mainly from the book '*Divehi Akuru*' written by As-sayyid Hussain ibn Mohamed Al-Husaini, known to Maldivians as Bodufenvalhuge Seedi, a celebrated Maldivian scholar, poet and author of the mid-twentieth century. His book, '*Divehi Akuru*', revived interest in this script among Maldivian scholars and paved the way for the transliteration of existing old documents written in Dives Akuru.

Some of the other materials used in this book are taken from a booklet called '*Dives Akuru*', compiled by the late Ali Najeeb and Ahmed Shafeeq for Maldivian students of this script.

The best examples of Dives Akuru can be seen in the inscriptions in the beautiful Hukuru Miskit (Friday Mosque) in Male', on tombstones, and in some finely written official land grants inscribed on parchment. This script was extensively used for official documentation until the beginning of the eighteenth century. From 1705 A.D onwards, official documents were written in Tāna and Dives Akuru, but after 1780 the Dives Akuru script fell into disuse, it's place taken by the Tāna script.

Some features of Eveyla Akuru have been retained in the Dives script. As in the earlier Eveyla Akuru, Dives Akuru also represents two categories of sounds, vowels and consonants. It is also written from left to right and consonant characters standing on their own have the inherent *a* sound. However, many modifications have been made to the shape of letters and new symbols have been incorporated into the alphabet, to represent new sounds. These are the symbols for *z*, *j*, and *c* : In Dives Akuru *p* is represented by ڤ and *f* is shown by ڤ, the same letter, but without the dot below. A new symbol was also formed to express the palatal *n*.

Vowel symbols and diacritics on consonants are used to represent vowels and new symbols have been formed to represent doubling and joining of consonants.

The Alphabet

Given below are the vowel symbols. (TABLE NO. 6)

TABLE NO.6

Vowel	Sound
އ	a
އަ	$\bar{a}$
ި	i
ީ	i
ިއ	$\bar{i}$
ު	u
ޅ	$\bar{u}$
އެ	e
ެ	e
އެއ	$\bar{e}$
ޅެ	$\bar{e}$
ޅި	o
ޅ	o
ޅަ	$\bar{o}$
ޅިއ	$\bar{o}$

In Dives Akuru, the following *fili* (vowel strokes) are used to represent vowel sounds. (TABLE NO. 7).

TABLE NO.7. FILI (VOWEL STROKES).

Fili	Sound	Example	Transliteration
)	ā	ކް)	kā
)	i	ކް)	ki
3	ī	ކް3	kī
ㄣ	u	ކްㄣ	ku
ㄣ	u	ކްㄣ	du
ㄣ	ū	ކްㄣ	kū
ㄣ	e	ކްㄣ	ke
ㄣ	ē	ކްㄣ	kē
ㄣ	ē	ކްㄣ	kē
ㄣ)	o	ކްㄣ)	ko
ㄣ)	ō	ކްㄣ)	kō

The consonant symbols of Dives Akuru, along with their phonological values are listed in TABLE NO. 8 . Here the existing consonant symbols from Eveyla Akuru have been modified and new symbols to represent sound values for *z*, *j* and *c* have been introduced. Also, the symbol which stood for both *p* and *f* sounds,

was given to *f* and the same symbol with a dot added below was given to the value *p*. A new symbol for the palatal $\tilde{n}$ was also introduced.

TABLE NO.8. CONSONANT SYMBOLS.

Letter	Sound
ހ	h
ށ	s'
ނ	n
ރ	n
ބ	r
ޅ	r
ކ	b
އ	b
ވ	l
މ	k
ފ	k
ދ	k

Figure 39: Description of *dives akuru* (from Mohamed 1999: 24).

TABLE NO. 8 CONTINUED

Letter	Sound
މ	kh (aspirate k)
އ	a
ާ	a
ވ	v
ވ	v
މ	m
ފ	f
ޅ	d
ޅ	d
ޅ	d
ތ	t
ލ	l
ލ	l
ގ	g

25

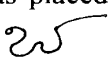
Figure 40: Description of *dives akuru* (from Mohamed 1999: 25).

TABLE NO. 8 CONTINUED

Letter	Sound
ހ	g
ށ	g
ނ	ñ
ރ	s
ބ	sh
ޅ	sh
ޖ	ḍ
ޗ	ḍ
ޙ	z
ޚ	ṭ
ޛ	y
ޞ	p
ޟ	j
ޠ	c
ޡ	c

Figure 41: Description of *dives akuru* (from Mohamed 1999: 26).

‘Sukun’ or deleting the inherent vowel sound in the word.

Sukun was used in Dives Akuru with a special diacritic symbol, to indicate deletion of the inherent *a* vowel sound of the letter in the written word. In these instances the symbol  was placed on the upper right hand side of the letter. e.g. , , 

In Dives Akuru as well as in the Tāna script there are five letters which became special ‘sukun letters’. These had different symbols. They are the following:

TABLE NO. 9. SUKUN.

Letter	Sukun symbol
 (a)	
 (ś)	
 (n)	
 (s)	
 (t)	

The  sukun  and the  sukun  show glottal stops. The  sukun  represents a double nasal sound and the  sukun  is pronounced as a vowel-less *s* sibilant. The  sukun  represents a *y* off-glide on the vowel preceding the sukun.

Doubling letters.

In the later Dives script, doubling of letters was represented not by two symbols written together, but by writing three different diacritics.

These were changeable and any one of the three could be used in a given situation. (TABLE NO. 10)

TABLE NO. 10. DOUBLING LETTERS.

Sign	Example	Transliteration	Meaning
2	22	bappa	father
3	2 ³ 2	bappa	father
2	22	bappa	father

In Dives Akuru, as also in the earlier Eveylla Akuru, we find that in many instances more than one symbol is used to represent the same consonant sound.

TABLE NO. 11.

Sound	Symbols
d	2, 3, 3
l	0, 6
g	4, 5, 6
sh	8, 4
c	2, 4
k	2, 3, 2
d	2, 2

It may be that the same phonological value was given to more than one consonant symbol. It could also mean that the phonological values of some of these symbols had earlier variations. Over time, sound changes having taken place, aspirate sounds were lost and dental and cerebral sounds began to be pronounced alike, but the different symbols were retained.

When the consonants ڨ (r) and ڨ (v) are written in a word where the consonants have to be joined to the consonant before them, (when the fili for the first consonant is *u*, or when the inherent *a* vowel sound of the consonant is deleted), the shape of both consonant letters undergo modification: -

e.g.: If ڨ (v) is the consonant to be joined for example, to ڨ (s), then the modification is ڨ.

ڨڨڨ swasti.

If ڨ (r) is the second consonant to be joined, the shape of the ڨ (r) changes to ڨ as in: -

ڨڨڨ (kureegai)

ڨڨڨ (shukuru)

ڨڨڨ (umuru)

In Dives Akuru, diphthongs are represented by the addition of an *i* or *u* at the end of the vowel glide.

These symbols are written as independent vowels.

e.g. ڨڨڨڨ (koilu)

ڨڨڨڨڨ (audāna)

ڨڨڨڨڨ (kuravvai)

From the early years of the eighteenth century until about 1870 AD, Dives Akuru and Tāna Akuru were used together for official documentation. But at the end of this period, Dives Akuru was superseded by Tāna.

TABLE NO.12 (THE TĀNA ALPHABET)

No.	Arabic numeral	Letter	Transliteration	Modern name	Old name*
1	١	ހ	h	hā	haviyani
2	٢	ށ	ś	śaviyani	śaviyani
3	٣	ނ	n	nūnu	naviyani
4	٤	ރ	r	rā	raviyani
5	٥	ބ	b	bā	baviyani
6	٦	ޅ	ḷ	ḷaviyani	ḷaviyani
7	٧	ކ	k	kāfu	kaviyani
8	٨	އ	a	alifu	aviyani
9	٩	ވ	v	vāvu	vaviyani
No.	Divehi numeral	Letter	Transliteration	Modern name	Old name
1	މ	މ	m	meemu	maviyani
2	ފ	ފ	f	fāfu	faviyani
3	ދ	ދ	d	dālu	daviyani
4	ޖ	ޖ	t	tā	taviyani
5	ޗ	ޗ	l	lāmu	laviyani**
6	ޟ	ޟ	g	gāfu	gaviyani
7	ޢ	ޢ	ñ	ñaviyani	ñaviyani

* Old names are taken from W.Geiger's Maldivian Linguistic Studies (1919).

** Not included by Geiger.

Figure 45: Comparison of Divehi and Arabic digits and Thaana letters (from Mohamed 1999: 32).

TABLE NO. 12 CONTINUED

No.	Divehi numeral	Letter	Transliteration	Modern name	Old name
8	ސ	ސ	s	seenu	saviyani
9	ނ	ނ	ḍ	ḍaviyani	ḍaviyani
		ޒ	z	zaviyani	zaviyani
		ޓ	ṭ	ṭaviyani	ṭaviyani
		ޕ	y	yā	yaviyani
		ޖ	p	paviyani	paviyani
		ޗ	j	javiyani	javiyani
		ޝ	c	chaviyani	chaviyani

Figure 46: Comparison of Divehi and Arabic digits and Thaana letters (from Mohamed 1999: 33).

MALDIVE ALPHABET.

Ancient form.	Modern form.	Name.	Value.	REMARKS.
		havieni...	h	The ordinary aspirate.
		rhavieni..	rh	Like <i>Rh</i> in <i>Rhine</i> . With the sokun (°), it takes the sound of the following consonant. When final, it is silent. Its ancient sound was shri.
		navieni...	n	As in English. When final, sometimes like <i>ng</i> .
		ravieni...	r	As in English.
		bavieni..	b	As in English. All vowels except <i>o</i> , coming before <i>b</i> , take the sound of <i>m</i> . (?)
		lavieni...	l	L with the tongue reverting to the palate.
		kavieni...	k	As in English.
		avieni....	a	Takes the sound of the vowel joined to it. With the sokun it is sounded like <i>g</i> .
		wavieni..	w	Like the English <i>w</i> or <i>v</i> .
		mavieni..	m	As in English.
		favieni...	f	Like the English <i>f</i> ; but sometimes interchanged with the aspirate <i>h</i> .
		davieni...	d	The dental <i>d</i> , as in <i>dew</i> .
		tavieni...	t	The dental <i>t</i> . The sokun gives this letter the short sound of <i>i</i> .
		lāmu.....	l	As in English; sometimes it is liquid, as in <i>million</i> .
		gavieni...	g	As in <i>guard</i> . It is always hard.
		navieni...	n	As in English. Sometimes it is liquid, as in <i>minion</i> .
		savieni...	s	As in English; never like <i>z</i> .
		davieni...	d	With the tongue reverted to the palate; like the Sanskrit cerebral <i>d</i> .

Figure 47: Willmott Christopher's chart of Maldivian scripts showing Divehi (left) and Thaana (right) letters (Wilson 1841: 44).

Journ. R.A.S. (Ceylon), Extra No., 1919.

PLATE II.

THE MALDIVE ALPHABET (1) COMPARED WITH THE ANCIENT SINHALESE (2)					
	Name.	Value.	Maldive modern	Maldive ancient	Sinhalese 12th cent
1	mavieni	m	މ	ම	ම
2	fayieni	f	ފ	ෆ	ෆ
3	davienj	d	ދ	ද	ද
4	tavieni	t	ޓ	ත	ත
5	lāmu	l	ލ	ල	ල
6	gavieni	g	ގ	ග	ග
7	navieni	n	ނ	න	න
8	savieni	s	ސ	ස	ස
9	ɖavieni	ɖ	ޞ	ඳ	ඳ
10	havieni	h	ހ	හ	හ
11	rhavieni	rh	ރ	ර	ර
12	navieni	n	ෆ	න	න
13	ravieni	r	ރ	ර	ර
14	bavieni	b	ބ	බ	බ
15	lavieni	l	ލ	ල	ල
16	kavieni	k	ކ	ක	ක
17	avieni	a	އ	අ	අ
18	wavieni	w	ވ	ව	ව

Persian.

Borrowed

Consonants

Arabic.

Consonants

(3) Vowel signs

ga gã gā ga̅ gă gȧ gä gả gå ga̋ gǎ ga̍ ga̎ gȁ ga̐ gȃ ga̒ ga̓ ga̔ ga̕ ga̖ ga̗ ga̘ ga̙ ga̚ ga̛ ga̜ ga̝ ga̞ ga̟ ga̠ ga̡ ga̢ gạ ga̤ gḁ ga̦ ga̧ gą ga̩ ga̪ ga̫ ga̬ ga̭ ga̮ ga̯ ga̰ ga̱ ga̲ ga̳ ga̴ ga̵ ga̶ ga̷ ga̸ ga̹ ga̺ ga̻ ga̼ ga̽ ga̾ ga̿ ga̺ ga̻ ga̼ ga̽ ga̾ ga̿

NOTE. (1) The Maldive alphabet is taken from Christopher's list, carefully compared with his facsimile of a Maldive letter. (J. R. A. S. Vol. VI.)

NOTE. (2) The Sinhalese letters are taken from a photograph of the inscription of Nissanka Malla (A. D. 1191.) discovered at Anurādhapura in 1874.

NOTE. (3) The vowel signs are called *fili*, or severally, *aba*, *ābā*, *ibi*, *ibā*, *ebe*, *ēbē*, *ubu*, *ūbū*, *obo* and *ōbō*, *fili*.

"Only six consonants can take the *sokun* (◌◌) over them, and consequently these only can terminate a syllable; they are a, ɳ, n, rh, s, & t. and in this case with the exception of s, their sounds receive some modification: a becomes ɳ; ɳ or n sometimes take the sound of ng; t is sounded like a very short i; and rh merely takes the sound of the following consonant, giving an emphasis to the syllable it terminates: but when rh terminates the word it is silent, and appears wholly unnecessary, except for the division it causes, but the natives cannot understand writing without it." Christopher in J. R. A. S. VI. 45. There is no inherent vowel 'a'; accordingly every consonant has either a vowel sign or the *sokun*: in the latter case, if the consonant cannot take the *sokun*, it is changed to one which can. The initial vowels are formed by the quasi-consonant 'a' with the appropriate vowel sign, and the second of two vowels following a consonant is expressed in the same way, thus 'gai' is written 'g' with the vowel sign 'a' followed by the quasi-consonant 'a' with the sign 'i'.

Apothecaries' Co., photo.

Survey Office half-tone block.

Figure 48: Wilhelm Geiger's charts of Maldivian scripts (1919: Plate II).

MALEDIVISCH.

Alt	Neu	Wert	Alt	Neu	Wert	Alt	Neu	Wert	Alt	Neu	Wert
3	1	h	2	7	l	2	1	m	5	3	g
2	2	th	3	μ	k	2	3	ph	3	2	n
1	3	n	2	n	a	3	2	dh	2	1	s
0	4	r	3	9	w	3	2	t	2	2	d
2	5	b				3	3	l			

Fremde Zeichen:

ڪ ڪو ڪ, ڙ ڙ, ڇ ڇو ڇو, ڄ ڄ, ڙ ڙ, ڙ ڙ.

Vokale:

' a, " ā, ' e, " ē, ' i, " i, ' o, " ō, ' u, " ū, ° vokallok.

Malediven, oder richtiger *Malayadiba* sind die Inseln von Malabar (*Malaya*). Die Bewohner derselben besitzen zwei Schriften, deren eine, von J. PRINSEP im Journal of the Asiatic Society of

Bengal Vol. V veröffentlichte, aus den arabischen Zahlzeichen besteht, auch die Vokalzeichen sind den arabischen nachgebildet; die Schrift wird von links nach rechts geschrieben.

Figure 49: Chart showing some characters from ‘old’ and ‘new’ forms of Maldivian writing (from Faulmann 1880: 155). The ‘old’ forms are *evēla akuru* and the ‘new’ are *dives akuru* proper.

	Divehi	Sinhala
A	ඒ	අ
AA	ඒඬ	ආ
I	ඒ	ඉ
II	ඒ	ඊ
U	ඒ	උ
UU	ඒ	ඌ
E	ඒ	එ
AI	ඒ	ඒ
O	ඒ	ඔ
AU	ඒ	ඔ

Figure 50: Comparison of Divehi and Sinhala vowel letters.

	Divehi	Sinhala		Divehi	Sinhala
KA	ක	ක	DHA	ඳ	ධ
KHA	ඳ	ඳ	NA	න	න
GA	ග	ග	PA	ප	ප
GHA	භ	භ	PHA	භ	භ
NGA	ඟ	ඟ	BA	බ	බ
CA	ච	ච	BHA	භ	භ
CHA	ඡ	ඡ	MA	ම	ම
JA	ජ	ජ	YA	ය	ය
JHA	—	ඤ	RA	ර	ර
NYA	ඤ	ඤ	LA	ල	ල
TTA	ට	ට	VA	ව	ව
TTHA	ඨ	ඨ	SHA	ශ	ශ
DDA	ඳ	ඩ	SSA	ඞ	ඞ
DDHA	ඳ	ඳ	SA	ස	ස
NNA	ඟ	ඟ	HA	හ	හ
TA	ත	ත	LLA	ල	ල
THA	ඟ	ඟ	FA	—	ඟ
DA	ද	ද	ZA	න	—

Figure 51: Comparison of Divehi and Sinhala consonants.

Transliteration	Tāna modern	Asoka Brahmi 3rd C. BC	Vatteluttu 8th C. AD	Vatteluttu 10th C. AD	Pala 10th C. AD	Grantha 8th C. AD	Eveyla 12th C. AD	Sinhala Elu 10th C. AD	Dives 18th C. AD	Malayalam modern	Devanagari modern
ha	ሀ	𑀧			𑀓	𑀕	𑀓	𑀓	𑀓	𑀓	ह
śa	ሀ	𑀧			𑀓	𑀕	𑀓, 𑀕		𑀓	𑀓	श
na	ሀ	𑀧	𑀕	𑀕		𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	न
ṇa	ሀ	𑀧	𑀕	𑀕		𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	ण
ra	ሀ	𑀧	𑀕	𑀕		𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	र
ba	ሀ	𑀧				𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	ब
ḷa	ሀ		𑀕	𑀕		𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	ळ
ka	ሀ	𑀧	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	क
kha	ሀ	𑀧					𑀕		𑀕	𑀕	ख
a	ሀ	𑀧	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕, 𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	अ
va	ሀ	𑀧	𑀕	𑀕		𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	व
ma	ሀ	𑀧	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	म
fa	ሀ						𑀕		𑀕		
da	ሀ	𑀧				𑀕	𑀕, 𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	द
dha	ሀ	𑀧				𑀕	𑀕			𑀕	ध
ta	ሀ	𑀧	𑀕	𑀕		𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	त
la	ሀ	𑀧	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕, 𑀕	𑀕	ल
ga	ሀ	𑀧				𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕, 𑀕	𑀕	ग
ṅa	ሀ	𑀧	𑀕	𑀕					𑀕	𑀕	अ
sa	ሀ	𑀧			𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	स
ḍa	ሀ	𑀧				𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	ड
za	ሀ								𑀕		
ṭa	ሀ	𑀧	𑀕	𑀕		𑀕	𑀕, 𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	ट
ya	ሀ	𑀧	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	य
pa	ሀ	𑀧	𑀕	𑀕		𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	𑀕	प
ja	ሀ	𑀧				𑀕			𑀕	𑀕	ज
c	ሀ	𑀧	𑀕	𑀕		𑀕			𑀕, 𑀕	𑀕	च
sha	ሀ	𑀧				𑀕	𑀕		𑀕	𑀕	ष

Figure 52: Comparison of ‘Evela Akuru’ and ‘Dives Akuru’ with other southern Brahmi-based scripts (from Mohamed 1999: Table no. 16).



Coat of arms of Maldives (from Wikimedia Commons). The Arabic text on the scroll reads: *al-dawlat al-maḥaldībiyat* “State of the Mahal Dībiyat”.



A version of the coat of arms of Maldives in which the Arabic text *al-dawlat al-maḥaldībiyat* “State of the Mahal Dībiyat” is replaced with *divehi rāḷje* “Republic of Maldives” in the Divehi script. According to Xavier Romero-Frias (personal communication, 2011), the modified coat of arms was proposed by a Member of the Parliament in Māle in 1997–1998 with the rationale that the Divehi version would better represent Maldivian culture. The proposal was rejected on the grounds that Arabic reflects the Muslim character of the country.

Figure 53: A proposed coat of arms of Maldives with Divehi text. Image courtesy of Xavier Romero-Frias.