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අංක 17, වික්ටෝරියා පෙදෙස, ඇල්විටිල මාවත, කොළඹ 8.
இல. 17, விக்கடொர்யா படுகைஸ், எல்விட்டிகை மாவத்தை, கொழும்பு 8.
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2010-09-10

Mr. Michael Y. Ksar
ISO/IEC JTC1/SC2/WG2 Secretariat
22680 Alcalde Rd
Cupertino, CA 95014
USA

Dear Sir,

**Sri Lanka's proposal on Sinhala Numerals for inclusion in Information Technology –
Universal Multiple Octet Coded Character Set, ISO/IEC 10646 : 2003.**

The Government of Sri Lanka was made aware that a paper has been submitted by Mr. Michael Everson from Ireland, to propose the inclusion of old Sinhala numerals used in Sri Lanka in the Sinhala code page of ISO/IEC 10646. Sinhala is an official language of Sri Lanka, used by over 70% of the population.

We wish to place on record that the Information and Communication Technology Council of Sri Lanka (ICTA), the apex government policy institution on IT, which functions under the President's office, initiated extensive research into Sinhala numerals, with the support of the Sri Lanka Standards Institution (SLSI), in 2007.

This research into Sinhala Numerals was conducted by Mr. Harsha Wijayawardhana, of the University of Colombo School of Computing (UCSC). Mr. Wijayawardhana is a member of ICTA's Local Language's Working Group (LLWG) which is responsible for policy and direction on the area of standards conformant IT in local languages, viz. Sinhala and Tamil.

The research yielded the fact that out of five types of numerals found, two types of Sinhala Numerals had been extensively used :

- Sinhala Archaic numbers (Sinhala Illakkam) had been used until the early part of the nineteenth century,
- Sinhala Astrological numbers(Lith Illakkam) had been used well into the twentieth century. This set includes a zero and a zero place holder.

ICTA's Local Language Working Group, after reviewing the results of the above research and after further extensive discussions and consultations with experts and stakeholders agreed that Sinhala Astrological numbers (which include the zero concept) be included in the main Sinhala code page – Basic Multilingual Plane (BMP) - of the Unicode standard, and that Sinhala Archaic numbers be included in the supplementary area of the Unicode standard.

Further, the results of this extensive research carried out by Mr Harsha Wijayawardhana, copyrights for which is jointly owned by ICTA and Mr Wijayawardhana, was published by ICTA in October 2009 (Vide "**Numerations in the Sinhala Language**" – October 2009 – ISBN-978-955-1199-05-0)

The proposals for encoding were presented to the newly constituted Sectoral Committee on IT of the Sri Lanka Standards Institution (SLSI), in May 2010. This is the Committee which recommends Sri Lanka Standards to SLSI's Council (Board). The Sectoral Committee on IT approved in principle that the numerals be added to the Sinhala character encoding in the *Sri Lanka Standard Sinhala Character Code for Information Interchange, SLS 1134 : 2004*.

Consequently, the Sri Lankan proposal was forwarded to the Unicode Consortium. It was discussed at the Unicode Technical Committee (UTC) meeting which was held on 11th August 2010.

Furthermore, the proposal for encoding the Sinhala character set as given in the Sri Lanka Standard Sinhala Character Code for Information Interchange SLS 1134, and the second revision thereof, SLS 1134: 2004, to be included in the ISO/IEC 10646: 2003, Information Technology – Universal Multiple Octet Coded Character Set was forwarded to ISO in the year 1997.

I wish to state that the national initiative to encode Sinhala numerals in the ISO/IEC 10646 has always been taken by the Sri Lanka Standards Institution.

Therefore it would be appreciated if the **Sinhala Lith Illakkam** or Sinhala Astrological numbers are included in the area reserved for Sinhala (in the **Basic Multilingual Plane**) in the standard *Information Technology – Universal Multiple Octet Coded Character Set ISO/IEC 10646: 2003*, and the Sinhala Illakkam or Sinhala Archaic numbers are included in the supplementary area.

Sincerely,



Dr. L N Senaweera

Director General

SRI LANKA STANDARDS INSTITUTION