

Request to rename 1133B to GRANTHA SIGN ONE-DOT NUKTA

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Refs:

| | | |
|-----------|---------|---|
| L2/15-256 | Hosken | Proposal to encode 0BBC TAMIL SIGN NUKTA |
| L2/16-058 | Sharma | Recommendation to use 093C DEVANAGARI SIGN NUKTA |
| L2/16-084 | Ganesan | Proposal to move to 1133B GRANTHA SIGN VINDU |
| L2/16-115 | Sharma | Feedback on above, reiterating earlier recommendation |
| L2/16-120 | UTC | Agenda of May 2016 meeting |
| L2/16-121 | UTC | Minutes of May 2016 meeting moving to 1133B COMBINING BINDU |
| L2/16-211 | Ganesan | Request to change name from BINDU to VINDU |

In the last meeting the UTC decided to move the character from 0BBC TAMIL SIGN NUKTA to 1133B COMBINING BINDU BELOW as per Ganesan's request (except for the name). While the agenda of last meeting did mention my feedback on Ganesan's document, the minutes do not. Nevertheless, the word BINDU is however as per my feedback so I assume my input was taken into account.

BINDU vs VINDU

Now again Ganesan requests to change BINDU to VINDU saying that it is this spelling which "fits with South Indian scripts' character naming tradition". AFAIK there is only one character naming tradition for *Indian* Indic scripts and not a separate *South Indian* one. The character names for South Indian Indic scripts carry the same spelling CANDRABINDU as those of North Indian ones. The Indic syllabic category data files also use the word "bindu" consistently. Thus changing the spelling in this case alone is unjustified and would only cause confusion and questions on the Unicode mailing lists as to why this is so. As I said in my earlier reply, the spelling WINDU is from an Indic script outside India and thus is not a close precedent. In any case, WINDU ≠ VINDU.

Necessary to newly encode?

Furthermore, it is still unclear to me as to why the character is being encoded newly at all. IMO sufficient justification has not been provided as to why the Devanagari nukta cannot be used. I am informed that during the meeting "it was mentioned that Grantha fonts would, generally, be able to support Tamil as well as Grantha, and hence was one point in favor of encoding the nukta in the Grantha block (instead of Devanagari)".

In this connection I should point out the following. To my knowledge there are no Grantha fonts actually using the Grantha encoding right now. The work that a Grantha font would entail is

significantly higher than that a Tamil font would due to the higher number of glyphs and combining behaviour. Thus asking intended audience of this character (Badaga and co natives) to wait for one is impractical. Furthermore, they use the Tamil script for their common daily use, so they would look for the desired behaviour as part of Tamil fonts and not Grantha fonts, especially since the expected usage context of Grantha fonts is quite different and quite limited.

The fact that Grantha fonts rather than Devanagari ones would generally be able to support Tamil is irrelevant. The question is *which character is it easier to include in a Tamil font* since that is what the target audience is going to use. While technically there is no difference between supporting in a font a character from one block vs another, the fact remains that Tamil fonts already support generic Indic characters like the danda-s 0964 and 0965 from the Devanagari block (for instance Lohit Tamil, <https://fedorahosted.org/lohit/>). The Devanagari nukta character already exists and is able to cater to immediate needs of the target audience whereas a new character would have to go through the two-year-plus ISO process. Thus encoding a new character seems not very helpful to immediately cater to the need of the user community.

If however you wish to encode...

On the other hand, the only reasons I can think of in favour of encoding the character in the Grantha block are that: 1) a Tamil font intending to support these minority orthographies would *anyhow* have to use 1133C from the Grantha block for the two-dot nukta required for some of these orthographies. 2) both the names list and script extensions data have to *anyhow* mark that two-dot character as used for both. Thus it makes “sense” for the one-dot character to be placed nearby so the changes to the font, names list and script extensions data can be “consolidated”.

The cost of the above “convenience” is however the delay of the encoding process. If the target audience and/or the UTC deems that acceptable, then the only request I have is to rename the proposed 1133B to the most eminently suited and simple “GRANTHA SIGN ONE-DOT NUKTA” thereby avoiding this whole BINDU/VINDU/WINDU business and maintaining naming consistency in the Grantha block.

Furthermore, please make both 1133B and 1133C usable with both scripts Tamil and Grantha so the same flexibility of using either is available to both sets of users and annotate them as “not historically used in Grantha; for use with Tamil and Grantha to extend the character set” or similar words to that effect.