To whomsoever it may concern

I welcome the initiatives of ICANN to include Oriya domain names. Oriya script is a common script used for writing Oriya language as well as many other languages of different communities living in Orissa for centuries. ICANN's work will be impartial and noble only when it is helpful not only to Oriya Hindus but also to Oriya Muslims, Oriya Christians and the 62 tribes, who have been solely using Oriya script for writing their respective mother tongues.

Orissa has a sizable population of Muslims and Christians, whose mother tongue is Oriya. But, unfortunately many of their religious terms cannot be correctly written using Oriya script without nukta. For example Quran (sacred book), Namaz (religious prayer) Fajar (morning prayer), Kafir (unbeliever), Mazhab (religion), Qurban (religious sacrifice) etc. can be easily and correctly be written using nukta in Oriya script viz. କ୍ୱରାନ୍, ନମାଜ୍, ଫ଼ଜର୍, କାଫ଼ିର୍, ମଜ଼ହବ, କ଼ୁରବାନ etc. (similar to क़ोरान, नमाज़, फ़जर, काफ़िर, मज़हब, क़ुरबान in Devanagari script and ক়োরান, নমাজ়, ফ়জর়, কাফ়ির, মজ়হব, ক়ুরবান in Bengali script). Without use of nukta in Oriya script these religious words become distorted and sound like Koran, Namaj, Phajar, Kaphir, Majhab, Kurbani etc.

There is not a single valid point to deny the use of nukta in Oriya because of the following reasons :

1) Nukta is accepted in Brahmibased scripts like Bengali and Devanagari but its nonacceptance in another Brahmibased script like Oriya is baseless and illogical.

2) In due course of time, Oriya script has adopted punctuation marks (e.g. comma, semicolon, colon, hyphen, brackets, apostrophe, quotation and question marks etc.) from English and nukta for ଡ ଢ ଯ. Use of all these punctuation marks and nukta did not tarnish the essence of Oriya. Thus claims that use of nukta for କ, ଜ, ଫ would tarnish Oriya script are groundless.

3) Devanagari script originally used for writing Sanskrit, when later used for writing Hindustani (Urdu and Hindi), and tribal languages employed free use of nukta. But, the use of nukta in Devanagari, never hampered the classicism of Sanskrit. So, it is absurd to say that use of Nukta would hamper the classicism of Oriya.

There are some self-centered people who support use of nukta for ଡ ଢ and ଯ, just because they need it, but oppose the same nukta for କ, ଜ, ଫ letters because it is essential for us. When they need, it becomes a 'treasure strove' and when others require, it becomes laughable to them. This is an uttered hypocritical conspiracy and no one should get biased with it.

This partiality attitude of some people to use nukta for ଯ, ଡ, ଢ but not for କ, ଜ, ଫ in Oriya, may be a reason why Muslims of Orissa are compelled to use Arabic script for religious texts leading to their hesitation to embrace Oriya but Bengali Muslims freely make use of Bengali script that uses nukta.

I am an Oriya Muslim and my mother tongue is Oriya. But pitiably, if nukta is not permitted in Oriya then I won't be able to write my own name 'Sharif' in my own mother tongue using Oriya script. Everybody knows 'f' is a voiced dentolabial which can be written in Oriya script as 'ଫ' with a nukta. But without nukta it becomes distorted as bilabial aspirated 'Pha' or 'ଫ' which is incorrect. Similar problems arise with our relative's names like Firoz, Afroz, Iqbal etc. for which ଫିରୋଜ, ଏଫ୍ରୋଜ, ଇକବାଲ are wrong transliteration and can be correctly transliterated using nukta as ଫିରୋଜ, ଏଫ୍ରୋଜ, ଇକବାଲ. If we are born in Orissa, if our mother tongue is Oriya, if the script we are most familiar with is Oriya then why should we be barred from writing the most common names of our community correctly in Oriya script?

Gone are the days of letterpress printing, when the nukta was not available for many desired characters in type letters. Now situation has changed and in this age of computer digital printing, nukta can be put below the required characters.

I had read in Oriya medium schools, and I had been working as a teacher in Oriya medium from 1972 to 2010. From my 12 years of experience as an Oriya student and 38 years of experience as an Oriya teacher, I feel the use of nukta in Oriya will not create confusion but rather it will remove the confusion of transliteration.

Let the domain name have provisions to use nukta; those people who really need it will use it; whereas, those who do not need it, may not use. This is a simple impartial way to make ICANN's domain useful to all categories of people using Oriya script.

I am an Oriya poet and writer also. ICANN should take care and accept nukta so that tomorrow I won't be disappointed in finding a domain in my name e.g. sharifsahitya / ଶରିଫସାହିତ୍ୟ . This is possible only when use of nukta is accepted by ICANN.

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M.A. IN ORIYA WITH
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