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August 14, 2010

Rupakara - First font with Indian Rupee Symbol at Unicode agreed code position - Free Download

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Rupakara is a new font created by [Michael Everson](#) to give support to the newly invented Indian Rupee Sign, which has been assigned to U+20B9 by Unicode.

You can download the font for free from

<http://www.evertype.com/fonts/rupakara/>

We are thankful to Michael Everson not only for this font but also for his [proposal to Unicode for assigning a code position to Indian Rupee symbol](#) on emergency basis.

Michael Everson is the world's leading expert in the computer encoding of scripts. He is famous for his constant efforts to add a wide variety of scripts and characters to the Universal Character Set. His proposals have added thousands of characters to ISO/IEC and Unicode standards. He received the Unicode "Bulldog" award in 2000 for his technical contributions to the development and promotion of the Unicode Standard.

You can get more information from his website - [click here](#) and the Wikipedia page - [click here](#)

We can be proud that he designed a font for our rupee symbol and he is trying really hard to get the Rupee Symbol to the ISO standards as soon as possible. Let us give him all support in this struggle.



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Interview with Michael Everson

What you think about India's new Rupee Sign?

I like it. I think that Udaya Kumar Dharmalingam should be commended for his unique design. It is instantly recognizable -- a strong, bold symbol.

Which symbol do you like the most, the Dollar Sign, the Euro Sign, or the Rupee Sign?

I can't say that I have any preference insofar as the shape of any of these symbols is concerned. Since I live in the eurozone, I like euros very much, and would like to have more of them!

You were one of several who submitted proposals for the Indian Rupee Symbol. And your proposal is the one which was selected. When we can expect an official announcement from Unicode?

Actually there were three proposals submitted to the Unicode Technical Committee. Mine was the first, because of two reasons. The first reason is that, I have proposed other currency signs for encoding before, and I knew how important it was that a stable code point was chosen. The second reason I submitted a proposal very quickly is that the UTC meeting was coming up and I did not know if the Government of India would prepare a proposal quickly. As it happens, they did, and the Department of Information Technology of the Ministry of Communications & IT put in a proposal as well. Another person also proposed the character, though he proposed it for encoding in the Devanagari script block, while I and the Government of India both proposed the Currency Symbols block. My proposal differed from the Government of India proposal in that I used a Times-based glyph for the symbol and proposed a specific code point. The Government of India proposal used the "official" glyph. In the end, their glyph and my code point were chosen. It was a good example of standardizers cooperating.

What is special about the code position U+20B9?

Nothing. It was the next available space in the Currency Symbols block.

The people of India are eager to use the symbol in gmail, facebook and twitter. Can we start using it?

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Here is the whole story. "Officially" speaking, it takes time for a character to be encoded. In fact, the INDIAN RUPEE SIGN will not even be sent out for ballot until after the meeting of the ISO Working Group in October. But now that a code point has been chosen, nobody wants to change that. So even though the character is not "official", it makes sense for us to encourage the use of that code point and to avoid the use of other code points which were used in the very first Rupee Sign fonts (such as your own).

In order to use the new symbol you have to have a font (like Rupakara) installed that uses it and your application has to "let" you use the code point even though it is not formally defined. I know it works OK under the Mac OS. Some Windows programs are not very forgiving about unassigned code points.

There are millions of keyboards and thousands of PCs using unlicensed windows. How we can help these people type the new rupee symbol in their existing system so that a lot of e-waste can be avoided and some money can be saved?

Well, I don't know, really, since I use the Mac OS. I know that Microsoft makes a keyboard layout editor (Microsoft Keyboard Layout Creator or MSKLC), and Tavultesoft makes a keyboard layout editor (Keyman). Also in the short term what was called the "Character Map" in Windows XP and Vista can be used. (I don't know what it is called in Windows 7.)

What is the meaning of "Rupakara"?

Rūpakāra or रूपकार is Sanskrit for "maker of images". I understand it is also the Hindi word for a "designer".

What is special in Rupakara for India?

Well, I made Rupakara first and foremost for support of the INDIAN RUPEE SIGN. But I decided it made sense to also include all the letters used by librarians and linguists and indologists for transliterating Indian languages (and Sinhala) into the Latin script. This includes the vowels with the macrons on them, the consonants with dots underneath, and so on.

Have you visited India?

I am sorry to say that I have never yet visited India. The nearest I have been is Kabul to the west and Yangon to the east.

Your message to young technical startups of India like Foradian Technologies?

Keep up the good work!

Your advice/message to budding font designers of India?

Make sure your fonts work under Windows, Linux, and the Mac OS.

We are amazed by your in depth knowledge in many Indian languages.

Although I studied Sanskrit (and a little Hindi) at University, I don't speak Indian languages... but I do know a lot about Indian scripts.

Especially we are amazed to see your script proposal for "Tulu". Foradian Technologies is situated in Tulunad and some of our directors are well versed with Tulu.

Really! I hope very much that your group can help to supply me with more information -- and books? -- about the Tulu script.

How you get time for all these?

It's what I do. It would be easier to do it -- and more -- if I were funded better, but I do what I can. Sometimes it's a struggle, though.



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MacBook displaying a Javanese letter and sitting next to a mechanical Javanese typewriter

What is your motivation?

It's my dharma. I seem to have a real talent for script analysis and encoding -- so I do what I can to ensure that more and more writing systems and minority-language characters are encoded. You see, most of the scripts and characters that make the big corporations money have already been encoded. It's the smaller communities that need support. I try to do that.

What is the most challenging work you completed till date?

Some of the encoding projects I have worked on have been quite challenging. The N'Ko script of West Africa was difficult. Egyptian Hieroglyphs took a long time too.

What are you working on now, and what are your plans for the future?

I've been working on a number of very different projects. Some of them are encoding projects. I'm working on a major Coptic font soon to be released called Antinoou. Recently I released a font called Allatuq, which supports many characters in the style of a child's handwriting.

I'm also a publisher of books inspired by Lewis Carroll. I've published Alice's Adventures in Wonderland in seven languages and have been working on more. And I've published books in the Irish and Cornish languages, and have some been working on some dictionary projects as well. Most recently I've been looking into language support at the Wikimedia Foundation's projects. Perhaps there is some work to be done there.

Our future blog posts will contain information on how you can use Rupakara font in a very simple and easy method without changing your existing keyboard. [Download the Rupakara font](#) and start using the Rupee Symbol.

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 Very informative, waiting for the day
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 No use as case has already been field in Court against "Biased selection process of Indian rupee symbol".
 Corruption had taken place in whole process... very possible that gov. have to Holt this symbol.
 Its better for you guys to stop wasting your company time on this symbol. Keep a Eye on news
- Aug 15, 2010 [Nithin Kumar](#) said...
 Amazing. It feels great to know that people all around the world are working for our rupee symbol standardization
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 Wow.. I am interested to be a font designer. This interview is a motivation for me.
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 It is very gratifying to hear that, Manish!
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 How to actually use the font after installing. I know that some key combination will do it. But which ones, esp on WIndows XP, vista, and 7?
- Aug 16, 2010 [Ravi teja](#) said...
 Thanks and very good job
- Aug 16, 2010 [Ravi teja](#) said...
 thanks
- Aug 17, 2010 [Vikash Jain](#) said...
 I have downloaded the font and also installed it but i am unable to use the rupee symbol. in the character map also Rupee symbol is not seen.
 Please tell me is there any key combination by which we can type the rupee symbol and can really use it in typing
 Please help
- Aug 19, 2010 [john william](#) said...
 hiiiiiiii
 You have put good details for newbies but doesn't Fantastico makes it more easy?
 I use Doreo hosting and I had to just click Wordpress option in cPanel, enter usermame, passwore and after 30 minutes, I could log in to Wordpress and configure my blog. I had full control over it and did not need to mess up with any settings.
 Most of good hosts offer Fantastico for free and I think it is more newbie friendly
 John Willson

 sbi

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