

EXPH (1948) Department. *Putnam*

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G.O. No.

~~355~~

1761 Edu.

Dated

~~6-6-1942~~

16-7-48

[Despatch Abstract.]

Legislative Assembly Question - Return
of James Smith - Papers recorded

Back papers.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Further papers.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
	20-2-50						
	2082						
	25/8/48						

SECRETARIAT OF THE MADRAS
LEGISLATURE (ASSEMBLY SECTION),
21-2-1948.

STARRED.

SRI N.M.R. SUBBARAMAN, M.L.A.,
EDUCATION & PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

Q.No.448.

Will the Hon. the Minister for
Education be pleased to state:-

- whether the Government have received any representation about the reform of the Tamil Script;
- if so, whether they are considering the matter; and
- if so, what their conclusion is?

Draft answer.

Clauses

(a), (b) and (c). Certain representations were received that the Tamil script may be reformed so that lino-printing may be introduced for Tamil printing. To consider this matter, Government appointed a Committee consisting of:

- (1) Sri T.S.Chockalingam, Editor, "Dinakaran", (Convener).
- (2) Sri R.P. Sethu Pillai, Head of the Tamil Deptt. University of Madras.
- (3) Sri S. Gopalan, All India Radio;
- and (4) " T.N. Subramaniam.

The Committee have submitted their report. That report is under consideration.

To
SRI N.M.R. SUBBARAMAN, M.L.A.
18/3/48

The Secretariat of the Madras
Legislature (Assembly Section)
(5 copies).

" Public (Elections) Dept. (1 copy)

1 spare copy. 19/3/48

E.& P.H. Dept

Approved by
17/3/48
H.N. (S.M.)

Legislative Assembly Question No. 443-Starred.

3
SRI N.H.R. SUBBARAMAN, M.L.A.

240

Will the Hon'ble the Minister for Education be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether the Government have received any representation about the reform of the Tamil Script;
(b) if so, whether they are considering the matter; and
(c) if so, what their conclusion is?

7
3

Education and P.H. Department.

ANSWER.

(a), (b) and (c).

Certain representations were received that the Tamil Script may be reformed so that lino printing may be introduced for Tamil printing. To consider this matter, Government appointed a Committee consisting of:

- (1) Sri T.S. Chockalingam, Editor, "Dinaseeri", (Convenor).
- (2) Sri R.P. Sethu Pillai, Head of the Tamil Department, University of Madras.
- (3) Sri S. Gopalan, All India Radio; and
- (4) Sri T.N. Subramaniam.

The Committee have submitted their report. That report is under consideration.

Secretary to Government.

To
The Secretary, Madras Legislature (Assembly Section).
The Public (Elections) Department.

The above answer has been approved by
The Hon'ble Mr. T.S. Avinashilingam Chettiar.

Edn. & P.H.U.O. No. 14635-B2/43
dated 18th March 1948.

HT/

Answered by Mr. Edn.
on 25.3.48
KPT 25/3
Pt.

Report of the Committee for the Reform OF TAMIL SCRIPT

A Committee consisting of the following four members was appointed by the Hon'ble Minister for Education of the Madras Government (with Sri. T. S. Chockalingam as Convenor) to consider the question of reforming the Tamil script to suit the modern requirements and make recommendations:

1. Sri T. S. Chockalingam,
Editor, "Dinasari" Madras. (Convenor of the Committee)
2. Sri R. P. Sethu Pillai,
Head of the Tamil Department, University of Madras.
3. Sri S. Gopalan,
All-India Radio (then Station Director, Madras)
4. Sri T. N. Subramaniam.

Five meetings of the Committee were held on the 3rd, 4th, 10th, 17th and 24th September, 1947 and all the four members of the Committee attended the meetings. For all the meetings of the Committee excepting the first, Sri K. P. R. Menon, Deputy Superintendent of the Government Press, Madras and Sri M. Sambandam, Proprietor of M/s Nelson & Co., Type foundry, Madras, were also present by special invitation.

It was agreed that the total number of different characters necessary for printing in the Tamil language should be reduced from the present unwieldy figure and also that there should be uniformity in the use of symbols or signs for the different characters. The maximum number of separate characters that could be handled in the Composing machine was taken as the target aimed at. This permits a total of 124 characters (90 on the main magazine and 34 on the side magazine) of which 29 would be needed for the various numerals, punctuation marks and other special signs required for printing, as per details given in

(2)

Appendix I, leaving a balance of 95 for the Tamil alphabets.

It was decided that the most fruitful method of arriving at the desired result was the separation of the vowel symbols of the vowel consonants as distinct ones and adoption of these symbols uniformly for the different characters.

Various suggestions and designs were considered and discussed. The final recommendations of the Committee are given hereunder :

Pure Vowels : a, அ; ā, ஆ; i, இ; u, உ; ū, ஊ;

e, ஏ; ē, ஏ; o, ஒ; ō, ஓ... No change.

i (long) ஈ The present form of this vowel is so different from the form of the short vowel that it involves a strain for the people who are learning the language. So it was agreed that the alternative form of the long vowel (ஐ) which is now dropping out of use may be made the standard form, in place of the existing one.

ai, ஐ; au, ஔ: A certain amount of confusion exists at present in the use of these two diphthong vowels, some persons substituting ay (அய்) and av (அவ்) for these two. But it is necessary to retain these as separate vowels. A consonant character (ஂ) is being used as an additional symbol to denote the diphthong vowel au (ஔ) and this leads to a certain amount of confusion. It was decided to change the character (ஂ) so as to make it distinct (ஃ).

Pure consonants : Even though a considerable reduction in the number of characters could be had by separating the dot on the top of the pure consonants, it was decided that this would be a radical change and it was therefore agreed that separate characters should continue to be used with the dot on top as an integral part.

Vowel symbols of vowel consonants :

a (long) ஈ, This is used for all consonants except n, ன and r (ர) for which separate symbols indicating the vowel consonants as a whole are used. It was decided that the symbol (ஈ) be used for these three also for uniformity.

ai (ஐ) : Similarly the symbol for ai is used for all characters except n, ன, l and l (ல, ல ஈ). The

(3)

same principle to be applied here also and uniformity maintained.

i, ī. (இ, ஈ) : The symbols for denoting the vowels i, short and long, are at present attached as ligatures to the existing consonant forms. These may be separated and this would result in a considerable saving of the characters. Several designs were considered and it was considered that the existing ones after separation are easier for use. These would fit in with all the consonants, except t (ட) which has an opening at the right. But this could not be avoided.

u, ū, (உ, ஊ) : At present separate characters are used for each vowel consonant of these two varieties and there is also no uniformity of the symbols. Various designs were considered and none were found suitable, except those used for the Grantha character (஁, ஂ). If these are adopted, there will be a considerable saving of characters. But it was considered that this would be a radical change that might create difficulties, in the adoption of the recommendations. It is therefore suggested that this change may be introduced at a later stage when it is thought that there would not be any difficulty in the adoption.

e, ē o, ō, au (ஏ, ஏ, ஒ, ஒ, ஔ) : The existing ones, after the adoption of the distinct symbol of au (ஔ) to distinguish it from the consonant form, may be continued.

The five grantha characters ஐ, ஏ, ஸ, ஹ, ஶ which have already come into popular use are to be retained.

The total number of keys that would now be required to accommodate for the above will be as follows:

Vowels	12	அ, ஆ, இ, ஈ, உ, ஊ எ, ஏ, ஐ, ஒ, ஓ, ஔ
அஃதம்	1	
Consonants	18	
Pure consonants	18	
Vowel marks	6	ஈ, ஐ, ஓ, ஔ, ஶ, ஷ
அ, ஈ etc.	18	
ஶ, ஷ etc.	18	
ஐ, ஏ, ஸ, ஹ, ஶ	5	
ஐ, ஏ, ஸ, ஹ, ஶ	5	
஁, ஂ	2	
ஶ, ஷ, ஹ, ஶ, ஷ	5	
	108	

(4)

But the total figure of 108 arrived at above, is already in excess of the total of 95 available.

It is therefore suggested that the following need not be provided in the magazines of the Composing machine but provided separately as *pi*.

ஜ, ஷ, ஸ, ஹ, க்ஷ	5
ஜ், ஷ், ஸ், ஹ் க்ஷ்	5
ங், ஞ்	2
(Which are practically not used)	
அய்தம்	1
	13

We have so far considered only about the existing characters. But the present characters are not sufficient to express other more important sounds which have come into use to meet the growing needs of the language. This very question was discussed some seven years ago by another Committee, representing various interests and in which three members of the present Committee were also members. It was then decided that provision should be made to denote the soft sounds of the hard consonants k, t, th and p (i.e, g, d, dh and b) as also f and z. It was then agreed that instead of creating new characters for these, the following existing ones may be used with the addition of an underline to denote their softness.

க	த	ப	ஈ	ங	ஜ
<u>க</u>	<u>த</u>	<u>ப</u>	<u>ஈ</u>	<u>ங</u>	<u>ஜ</u>
g	d	dh	b	t	z

This suggestion was brought into use by all the Tamil Daily papers immediately. But it slowly fell into disuse due to various reasons.

It was decided by the present committee that the above suggestions may again be adopted now. For this, 12 new characters would be required (six for ordinary consonants and six for pure consonants with dot on top).

No provision is made separately for the characters of vowel-consonants u, long and short, of these six, so that the symbols ு and ூ may be used for these and this will for the present show these as distinct from the ordinary characters, and also pave way for the use of these u symbols uniformly for all the characters at a later stage, by familiarising them from now onwards.

(5)

By adopting the above suggestions, 25 characters would be required to be provided for as '*pi*' over and above the 124 characters provided in the magazines of the composing machine. But when the suggestion of using uniform symbols for the vowel signs of u, short and long, in the vowel consonants instead of retaining the existing forms is given effect to, then all these could be provided in the composing machine itself, even leaving a few keys spare for any other extra sign.

Before concluding the report, we would like to mention the special help rendered by Sri M. Sambandam of M/s. Nelson & Co, Type founders, Madras to the Committee by supplying the members with various designs for discussion, preparing typecasts and furnishing them with passages printed, side by side in the existing and proposed types and by Sri. K. P. R. Menon, Deputy Superintendant, Government Press, Madras in attending all the meetings and giving us technical and expert advice.

(Sd.) T. S. CHOCKALINGAM,
Convenor, 10 2-48.

(6)

APPENDIX I

Total characters required for numerals, punctuation marks and other special signs required for printing.

Numerals: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0	10
Punctuation marks , ; : . ! ? = ' ,	8
Spaces (Em, En, Thin)	3
Leader	1
Paranthesis	2
Bracket	2
"Em" dash	1
Reference marks	2
	29

To those who want to use a machine with main & side magazines we suggest the following arrangement.

Magazines Main & Side	Pi
அ, ஆ, இ, ஐ, உ, ஊ, எ, ஏ, ஐ, ஒ, ஓ, ஏ, ஈ, ி, ீ, ு, ூ, ஓ, ஔ, ை, க், க, கு, கூ, ங், ங, ச், ஃ, ழ, ழு, ஞ், ஞ, ஞு, ஞூ, ட், ட, டு, டூ, ண், ண, ணு, ணூ, த், த, து, தூ, ந், ந, நு, நூ, ப், ப, பு, பூ, ம், ம, மு, மூ, ய், ய, யு, யூ, ர், ர, ரு, ரூ, ல், ல, லு, லூ, வ், வ, வு, வூ, ழ், ழ, ழு, ழூ, ள், ள, ளு, ளூ, ற், ற, று, றூ, ன், ன, னு, னூ, ஸ், ஸ், ஸு, ஸூ, உ,	ஃ, க், க, ங், ங, ட், ட, த், த, ப், ப, வ், வ, ஐ, ஐ, ஐ, ஐ, க், கூ, ஷ், ஷ, ஸ், ஸ, ஹ், ஹ,
Numerals .. 10	
Punctuation Marks .. 8	
Spaces .. 3	
Leader .. 1	
Paranthesis .. 2	
Bracket .. 2	
Em dash .. 1	
Reference Marks .. 2	
	25
	24

To use the machine with main magazine only we suggest the following arrangement.

Main Magazine	Pi
அ, ஆ, இ, இ.	ஏ, ஈ, உ, ஊ,
உ, ஊ, எ, ஏ,	ஒ, ஒ, ஓ, ஔ,
ஐ, ஒ, ஓ,	நா, னா, தா, தா,
ஈ, ஊ, எ,	நா, னா, தா, தா,
க, க, கு, கூ,	க, க, கு, கூ,
ங், ங்,	ங், ங்,
ச, ச, ச, ச,	ச, ச, ச, ச,
ஞ், ஞ்,	ஞ், ஞ்,
ட, ட, ட,	ட, ட, ட,
ண, ண,	ண, ண,
த், த, த,	த், த, த,
ந், ந, ந,	ந், ந, ந,
ப, ப, ப, ப,	ப, ப, ப, ப,
ம, ம, ம, ம,	ம, ம, ம, ம,
ய, ய, ய, ய,	ய, ய, ய, ய,
ர், ர, ர,	ர், ர, ர,
ல், ல, ல,	ல், ல, ல,
வ், வ, வ,	வ், வ, வ,
ழ், ழ, ழ,	ழ், ழ, ழ,
ள், ள, ள,	ள், ள, ள,
ந், ந, ந,	ந், ந, ந,
ன், ன, ன,	ன், ன, ன,
Numerals .. 10	
Punctuation Marks 4	
Spaces .. 3	
Leader .. 1	
Paranthesis .. 2	
Em dash .. 1	
90	

Reference Marks.. 2

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Madras Legis. I-3-1,500-12-0-47.

SECRETARIAT OF THE MADRAS LEGISLATURE,
Chepauk, dated the 26-2-1948.

QUESTION No. 448. for the meeting of the Legislative Assembly to be held on the 1948.

Two copies of this question are forwarded to the E and PH Department.

The question has been admitted.

To

The E and PH Department.

110/1310/48-7116
26.2.48

P.T.O.

Edn. & P.H. Dept. (B2).

There has been no representation from anyone so far on the question of the reform of Tamil script. H.M. had however appointed an informal committee to go into the question and the Committee has since submitted a report which is under examination separately. The answer to the question may perhaps be as follows:-

(a) No.

(b) He does not want to arise. / He may say "The matter is however under the consideration of the Govt."

The case may be circulated to H.M. (Edn) and

H.E. the Minister.

8/3/48.

16/3/48 S

17/3/48

(M. (Edn))

P.H.

I had appointed informally, a Committee consisting of Sri T.S.Chockalingam, Editor, "Dinasari" (Convenor), Sri R.P.Sethu Pillai, Head of the Tamil Deptt., University of Madras, Sri S.Gopalan, All India Radio and Sri, T.N.Subramaniam, to

file with separately for attention of the Govt.

8/3/48



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to go into the matter of the reform of the Tamil Script. The point is that Tamil has so many letters nearly 248 just now today and unless the letters of a language are brought within the operation of a lino, the progress of the language is limited. With this end in view, certain representations were received by me that we must undertake to reform the Tamil Script and that it can be done in an acceptable form to bring it out within the line. To consider the matter, I appointed the Committee consisting of the gentlemen mentioned above and they have submitted the report sent herewith. All the connected papers with reference to the Committee's report and the printed form according to the reformed scheme submitted by the Committee, are sent herewith to be filed.

The answer to the question may be as follows:--

(a), (b) and (c). Certain representations were received that the tamil script may be reformed so that lino printing may be introduced for Tamil printing. To consider this matter, Government appointed a Committee consisting of

- (1) Sri T.S.Chockalingam, Editor, "Dhinasari", (Convenor)
- (2) Sri R.P.Sethu Pillai, Head of the Tamil Deptt., University of Madras.
- (3) Sri S.Gopalan, All India Radio; and
- (4) Sri T.N.Subramaniam.

The Committee have submitted their report. That report is under consideration.

TSA
12.3.48

P.S.G. H.E. has seen, thanks.

13/3/48

A draft answer is submitted on the lines above

16/3/48

17/3/48

Reform of Tamil script.

* 240 Q.—SRI N. M. R. SUBBARAMAN: Will the Hon. the Minister for Education be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Government have received any representation about the reform of the Tamil script;

(b) if so, whether they are considering the matter; and

(c) if so, what their conclusion is?

THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR:—

“(a) to (c) Certain representations were received that the Tamil script may be reformed so that Lino printing may be introduced for Tamil printing. To consider this matter, Government appointed a Committee consisting of (1) Sri T. S. Chockalingam, Editor, ‘Dhinasari’ (Convenor), (2)

Sri R. P. Sethu Pillai, Head of the Tamil Department, University of Madras, (3) Sri S. Gopalan, All-India Radio, and (4) Sri T. N. Subramaniam. The Committee have submitted their report. That report is under consideration.”

SRI N. M. R. SUBBARAMAN:—“Will the Government be pleased to place the report of the Committee on the table of the House?”

THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR:—

“No Sir, not just now. It is just now under consideration. The Government have not decided what to do with it.”

MOHAMED ABDUL SALAM SAHIB BAHADUR:—“Sir, will the Government include one or two Members of this House in the Committee?”

THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR:—

“The report has already been submitted, Sir.”

M. MUHAMMAD ISMAIL SAHIB BAHADUR:—“Sir, may I know whether the Government is convinced that a reform is necessary so far as the Tamil script is concerned?”

THE HON. SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIYAR:—

“The matter is under consideration.”

Above: The question is being examined separately.

The papers may now be

CR/MS 1761 Con 2/167.48

Recorder

14/7

15/7/48

16/7/48

*Abstract
Legislative Assembly
Question - Reform of
Tamil Script - Papers
recorded*

CR/MS Con 2.