1. Calendar of Events-Year 2002-03

- Association for Machine Translation in America-2002
  Conference, Tiburon, California, Oct. 8-12, 2002.
  Web: www.amtaweb.org
- National Seminar on 21st Century Reality: Language, Culture &
  Web: www.hindivishwa.nic.in
- LRC-2002: 7th Annual Localization Conference-event
  Web: www.localization.ie
- International Conference on Universal Knowledge & Language,
  Web: http://www.cflit.itb.ac.in
- 5th Asia Forum on Terminology (EAFTerm 2002), Hanoi,
  Hanoi Province, China, 8-11 Dec. 2002.
- Language Engineering Conference (LEC-2002), at University
  Web: http://www.languageTechnologies.ac.in/lec2002.html
- International Conference on online learning, N.CST, Mumbai,
  15-17 December, 2002.
  Web: www.ncst.ernet.in/vidyakash2002
- ICON (International Conference on NLP) 2002, &
  International Conference on Knowledge Based Computer
  Web: http://www.ncst.org
- A Workshop on NLP and Applications, Anna University,
  Web: http://annauni.edu
- Workshop on Spoken Language Processing, Tata Institute of
  Web: http://speech.tifr.res.in
  Web: http://www.cii.org
- Second International Workshop on Development in Indian
  Web: www.isical.ac.in/-cvpr/events
- 13th International workshop on Research issues on Data
  Engineering: Multilingual Information Management (RIDE-
  Web: http://www.aitex.com
- JHU Summer Workshop on Language Engineering, Baltimore,
  Maryland, USA, from July 14 to Aug. 22, 2003.
  Web: http://www.clsp.jhu.edu/workshops

2. Reader’s Feedback

"Global digital divide among scripts"

Thanks for including me in your mailing list.
Attached is my short commentary on the theme of Vishwa Bharat.
I hope we are sharing the same interest.
Recently I visited a website of the United Nations. The site
(http://www.unhchr.ch/udhr/) introduces more than three
hundred different language versions—from Akha to Zulu—of
the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”. The site
claims that this text is the most widely translated text in the
world, and has been awarded the Guinness World Record
for having done this great job. I trust the Universal Declaration
is indeed “the most universal text” in the world.
Try now! and you can find all eighteen Indian official
language versions of the 1,778 words text, with only two
exceptions—Konkani and Manipuri. But really disappointing
for you would be the fact that all-Indian language versions
are just posted as “gif” files, not in the form of encoded texts.
And actually many other non-Latin scripts users in the world
have to feel the same kind of sadness after visiting. Please
note that I am not blaming staff of the United Nations at all,
rather highly appreciating the great efforts of the staff
and many voluntary supporters involved to create such valuable
web resources. What I again recognized is the most urgent
need of creating “equal opportunities for every language
and script users around the globe”.

My recent study based on statistical data provided by the
International Telecommunication Union and UNESCO
gives a rough sketch of global digital-divide “among script”.
Latin alphabet users, 39% of global population, consume
72% of world total writing/printing paper consumption and
enjoy 84% of access to the internet. Hanzi–Chinese
ideograph users, 22% in global population consumes 23% of paper
and have 13% of Internet access. Arabic script users, 9% in population
consume 0.5% of paper and have 1.2% of Internet access.
Cyril script users, 5% in population, consume 1.1% of paper
and have 1.6% of Internet access. Then how about Indic script
users? If all Brahmi-origin scripts widely used in southeast
Asia—Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Khmer, etc.—were included, Indic
scripts users occupy 22% of world population, consume 2.2% of
internet access. Arabic script users, 9% in population
consume 0.5% of paper and have 1.2% of Internet access.
Cyril script users, 5% in population, consume 1.1% of paper
and have 1.6% of Internet access. Then how about Indic script
users? If all Brahmi-origin scripts widely used in southeast
Asia—Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Khmer, etc.—were included, Indic
scripts users occupy 22% of world population, consume 2.2% of
paper, and have just 0.3 of Internet access.

The University Declaration of Human Rights Article 2 says:
“Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth
in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as
race, colour, sex, language (underline), religion, political or
other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or
other status. TDIL is really needed!”

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