This document provides a specimen showing a method of writing murmured consonants of the Newar language in the so-called ‘Newa’ or ‘Newar’ script. The specimen appears in a document published electronically in 2009 (http://nepal-lipi-online.com/, 1130th Nepal New Year Supplement, p. 4). The text is in the Newar language and the representation of murmured consonants in this specimen occurs in several other sources.

The specimen shows murmured consonants displayed using conjunct glyphs whose underlying representations would be <consonant, virama, ha>, eg. the consonant /nʱ/ is written as nha. The words in which they occur are boxed in red. Words boxed in blue are conjuncts of murmured consonants with final ya, whose underlying representations would be <consonant, virama, ha, virama, ya>, eg. /nʱya/ is written as nhya, which is rendered using half-na + hya-ligature. The word boxed in green shows a single instance of the murmured consonant /nʱ/ represented using a conventional hna conjunct; the underlying representation of which would be <ha, virama, na>. The occurrence of this hna conjunct is unclear; it may be a typographical error.

The specimen illustrates that murmured consonant sounds continue to be represented using ha-final conjuncts, at least as recently as five years ago. Any suggestion that murmured consonants are written using only ha-initial conjuncts or that there is an accepted orthographic convention for these consonants should be properly investigated.

At this time, no decision should be made regarding the encoding of independent letters for Newar murmured consonants in the script, especially the encoding of conventional ha-initial conjunct glyphs as atomic letters. The sensible way forward is for the Newar language community to determine which orthography they prefer and to begin using it uniformly. A decision can be made after there is evidence that the orthography has been widely adopted. Until then, the murmured consonants may be adequately represented using ha-initial and ha-final conjunct sequences as is currently the practice.
Specimen Showing Representation of Murmured Consonants in the Newar Script

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