

RABINDRA BHARATI UNIVERSITY
VOCAL MUSIC DEPARTMENT

COURSE - B.A. (General Elective) (CBCS) 2020
Semester - II , Paper - I
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B) Ten principles of Tala (Dasa Prana)

The term “Pran” is a sanskrit word and it has different meanings according to its applications. Basically the word is used in two meanings i.e, Air and Elements(principles). In Indian Music the second meaning has been accepted to discuss about Tala. According to the ancient musicological texts there are ten elements or principles that comprises the concept of Tala. These are Kal, Marga, Kriya, Anga, Graha, Jati, Kala, Laya, Joti, Prastar.

1. **Kal** – The term “Kal” means time. In music, rhythm is the regulation of time (Kal) for producing an impression of order and balance on the mind.
2. **Marga** – “Marga” reveals the character of a tala. It indicates the beat count (matra), tempo (Laya), beat(Tali), offbeat(khali), divisional bar (bibhag) etc. Ancient texts mentions about four types of Marga i.e Dhruba marga, Chitra Marga, Vartik Marga and Dakshin Marga.
3. **Kriya** – The impersonation of Tala is specified by different hand and finger movements. It is called “Kriya”. It is of two

types i.e, 'Sasabda kriya' (with sound) and 'Nihsabda Kriya' (without sound).At the time of showing divisions of tala, the divisions in which the stroke is given, are said to be Tali (Sasabda Kriya).The divisions in which stroke is not given are said to be Khali or Fak(Nihsabda Kriya).In ancient India there were different types of Sasabda and Nihsabda Kriyas in use.Sarangdev in his text "Sangeet Ratnakar" mentions about four types of Sasabda kriya (Dhruba,Tal,Samya,Sannipat) and four types of Nihsabda Kriya(Abap,Niskam,Bikshep,Prabeshak). In the ancient Desi music, there was only one sasabda kriya(Dhrubaka) and seven nihsabda kriyas (Sarpini, Krishna, Padmini, Bikshipta, Bisarjita, Pataka, Patita).

4. **Anga** – The basic features of the fundamental parts of any tala may be comprise of either a single keystone beat or a combination of a keystone beat stroke with a few 'nihsabda' beats. This feature is called "Anga". It is of two types – Guru and Laghu. When Anga is of a single keystone beat it is Laghu Anga. When Anga is a combination of a keystone beat stroke with a few 'nihsabda' beats, it is Guru Anga. In modern days it is applicable only in Kirtananga Tala.
5. **Graha** – In the theoritical area of Tala, the subject matter of "Graha" is a relative issue. In the avartan of a tala 'Som ' is the starting position or the first matra of the tala. In

ancient days the application of it was different. When any music starts from the first matra of the particular tala it is called 'Somgraha' ; when the music starts from other matra position of the tala it is called 'Bisamgraha'. Bisamgraha is of two types – Atit and Anagata. When a music starts before the tala it is called 'Atit graha'. When the music starts from any tal beat other than the first beat or 'som' it is called 'Anagata graha'.

6. **Jati** – The combination matra or beat counting makes the "Jati" of a tala. It is of five types – Tisra, Chatusra, Khanda, Mishra and Sankirna.

a) Tisra – When the matra combination is of multiples of three in arithmetic progression, i.e 3,6,12,24 etc.

b) Chatusra - When the matra combination is of multiples of four in arithmetic progression, i.e 4,8,16,32 etc.

c) Khanda - When the matra combination is of multiples of five in arithmetic progression,i.e 5,10,20,40 etc.

d) Mishra - When the matra combination is of multiples of seven in arithmetic progression,i.e 7,14,28,56 etc.

e) Sankirna - When the matra combination is of multiples of nine in arithmetic progression, i.e 9,18,36,72 etc.

7. **Kala** – The nihsabda kriya of tala is called "Kala".In the ancient musicological texts there are mentions of four types of Kala – Dhruva, Chitra, Bartik and Dakshin. But Sarangdev in his text Sangeet Ratnaker mentions about

seven types of Kala – Sarpini, Krishna, Padmini, Bikshipta, Bisarjita, Pataka and Patita.

- 8. Laya** – The harmonious movement of the time in music and its continuity in equal form is known as “Laya”. It is of three types – Vilambit, Madhya and Druta.
- 9. Joti** – “Joti” means pause in the harmonious movement of tala. It does not indicate the end of the tala. It is of five types – Sama, Srotoboha, Mridanga, Pipilika and Gopuccha.
- 10. Prastar** – “Prastar” means elaboration of a tala. It was expressed with talanga.

In modern times all these elements are present in the tala application not by the same name but by its mode of use.