

CHAPTER - 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 What is metre? Necessity of metres, two categories of metres

The word "Chhandah" or Metre has been defined by different grammarians and rhetoricians in different ways.

The various anecdotes connected with the meaning and the derivation of the word "Chhandah" serve to bring out the fact that it was at first used as a convenient means for concealing derogatory ideas or as a means for affording protection from incriminating vices. Thus it has been said in the Aitereya Āraṇyaka that the Chhandahs are so designated because they protect human beings from being contaminated by vices.¹ "The other anecdote states that Chhandah is so called because it afforded protection to the deities who could not originally approach the blazing fire kindled by Brahmā."² It is also said that Chhanda is so designated because it prevents men from meeting with untimely death.³

Yaska, the celebrated author of the Nirukta also contended that the metres are intended to shield something.⁴ In the Vedas, the "Chhandah" is derived from the root "Chhand" meaning intention or desire. The great grammarian Pāṇini, however opines that the word "Chhandas" has come from the root "Chand" meaning "that which pleases."⁵

Importance of Metre

Whatever might be the origin of the word (Chhandah), it is clear that the importance of the use of metre for concealing unpleasant ideas and expressions,

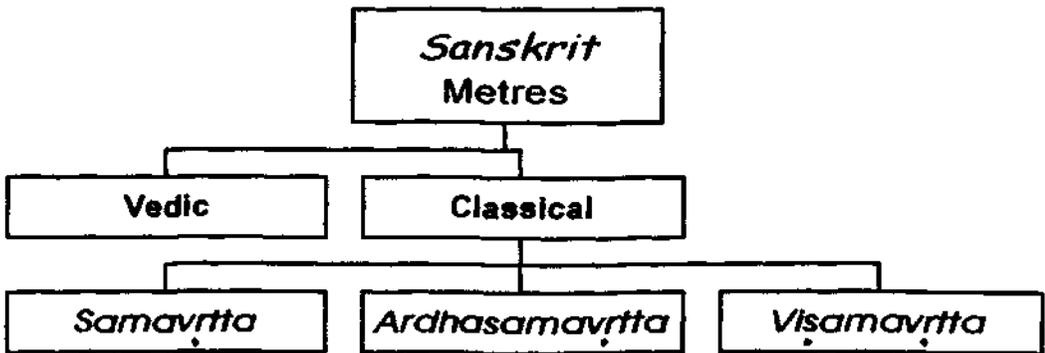
and for imparting grace and charm to the composition was felt so much that the utterance of any versified composition without mentioning the seer and the deity was deemed to constitute a culpable offence.⁶

The concept of metre is co-eval, nay, inextricably entwined with the origin of prose and verse. Metre was at first a convenient medium for adding charms to poetry and to ensure easy memorizing for the readers. Later on, Sanskrit metres came to be regulated by the equal distribution of the words, syllables and the numbers, cf. "Yadakṣarapānimāṇam tachchandaḥ. Mātrākṣarasamkhyāniyatā vāk chandaḥ."

The importance of the study of metres has been brought out in the Pāṇinīya-Sikṣā thus – "Chandaḥ pādau tu Vedasya" – Pāṇinīya-Sikṣā.

Two categories of metres

Sanskrit metres have been primarily divided into two categories – Vedic and Classical. Metres in the Vedas are called superhuman (aloukik), while those of the classical are called human (loukik).⁷ Classification of Sanskrit metres can be shown as follows:



In this connection it should be noted that Sanskrit prosody is regulated by

quantity and not by accent as in English.

It should be kept in mind that Bhanubhakta used Samavṛtta type of metres only. He used nine such metres. So I have dealt with these nine metres only in my project along with their definitions and characterizations with suitable examples.

4.2 Definition and division of Vṛtta,
characteristics of Jāti, knowledge of Mātrā,
classification of vowels (Laghu and Guru i.e., short and
long),
Definition of Gaṇas with examples, definition and
placing of Yati.

In order to find out any metre from a verse we should have a thorough knowledge of Vṛtta, Jāti, Mātrā, short and long vowels, Gaṇas and Yati. Because these are the determining factors of metres. Without the knowledge of these terms, we will not be able to find out the metres from a verse.

A stanza in Sanskrit poetry usually consists of four quarters (pāda). It is of two varieties – Vṛtta and Jāti.

Vṛtta is that in which the letters are counted and a Jāti is measured by measures (Mātrā). These are defined in Chhandomañjarī as –

*“Padyam̐ chatuṣpadi trachch vṛttam̐ Jātinti dvidhā,
Vṛttamksharasankhyātam̐ Jātimātrākṛita bhabet.”*

The quantity of any syllable is counted by vowels, either long or short. In a Vṛtta, a letter is counted as one while in Jāti a short vowel (laghu) is counted as one unit and a long vowel (guru) is counted as two.

A pāda is regulated by the number of syllables (aksharas) or by syllabic instants (Mātrā).

The term Vṛtta is divided into three classes – Samavṛtta, Ardhasamavṛtta and Viṣamavṛtta. These are defined in Chhandomanjari as “Samamardhasamaṁ vṛttaṁ viṣamañcheti tattridhā.”

When the four pādas are all similar, it is called Samavṛtta. The Vamśastha and Vasantatilakā metres are examples of this. In the Ardhasamavṛtta, the third foot is similar to the first and the fourth, to the second. The Puṣpitaḡṛvṛtta is an example of this.

The Viṣamavṛtta constitutes the third class where all the four feet are dissimilar e.g., the Udgatā metre in Bhāravi. Some varieties of the Upajāti come under this group.

Classification of vowels – short and long

Classification of vowels is based on the following rule of Chhandomanjari:

**“Sānusvāraścha dīrghaścha visargī cha gururbhabet,
Varnaḥ Samyogapūrvāścha tathā pādāntagoapi, vā.”**

A letter followed by an anusvāra, a long vowel and a letter followed by a visarga are heavy. Any letter immediately preceding a conjunct consonant is also considered long. A letter at the end of a foot is also considered sometimes optionally as heavy (guru).

Definition of eight Gaṇas

Each foot in a Vṛtta comprises of a number of letters, but they are arranged as short or long in each case. The rule laid down in the treatises on chhandah make it clear that certain letters represent a particular technical combination of the long and short varieties. This is laid down in Chhandomañjarī thus –

*Mastrigunustrilaghuścha nakāro bhādiguruḥ punarādilaghuryah,
Jo gurumadhyagato rala-madhyah soantaguruḥ kathitoanto laghustah,
Gurureko gakāroastu lakāro laghurekakah.*

A set of three successive syllables short or long is called a gaṇa (foot). If a short syllable is marked as U and a long as – the 8 (eight) gaṇas referred to above may be exhibited as follows or, in other words, the followings are the syllables of gaṇas:

Ma = – – –

Ja = U – U

Na = U U U

Ra = – U –

Bha = – U U

Sa = U U –

Ya = U – –

Ta = – – U

Ga = – (Guru)

La = U (Laghu)

In this connection, it should be kept in mind that a single short syllable is indicated by the letter (la) and a single long one by the letter (ga).

Definition and placing of yati (caesura or pause):

Yati (in the metre) is the caesura or pause in a part of verse wherein the reader finds it convenient to stop breath and proceed thereafter. Or, in other words, the point of relief mostly sought at the time of reading a metrical foot is termed a Yati. It is alternately designated by the terms Vichheda, Virāma etc.

With reference to his preceptor's work known as **Chhando-Govinda**, the author says that in some metres only the former metricians have prescribed the placing of a pause (Yati). It adds to charm only when it is placed at the end of a word (padānte).

***“Yatirjihveshtavishrāmasthāna kavibhiruchyate
Sā vichhedavirāmādyai padairvāchyā nījēchchayā
Kvachichhandasyānte yatirbhīhitā pūrva-kritibhiḥ
Padānte sā shovām vrajati padamādhye tyajati cha.”***

Yati is usually indicated by a straight line. It is usually placed at the end of a verse, at the end of a foot after 7, 14 or 16 letters and sometimes even within a word.

4.3 Definition and Antiquity of Metres according to Nepali Prosodists. Importance and the present position of Metres in Nepali Literature.

Definition of the Metres used by Bhaṅubhakta alongwith Notes and Critical Comments on them. Ten Gaṇas (used by the Nepali Prosodists) with examples.

As regards the employment of metres, the Nepali prosodists have followed the tradition left by Piṅgala and his followers from the 3rd century A.D. The modern Nepali poets and critics who have worked with the Sanskrit metres and their employment have followed the classical Sanskrit tradition as regards the origin of the word Chhanda with reference to the various anecdotes and literary usages. And, in this respect, the metres used in the Nepali language can be designated as the real up-keepers of the classical Sanskrit tradition in Nepal.

Therefore, regarding the definition of Chhandas, the prosodists in Nepali literature depended on Sanskrit metres. The only difference lies in the manner of presenting the definition with examples. In a word, the Nepali prosody was based completely on the concept of Sanskrit metres. Several Nepali writers who have dealt with Chhandas have defined it in different ways. Thus Prof. Mahānanda Poudyāl (author of several books), Sri Ḍillirām Timsinā, Dr. Pārasmani Pradhan, Dr. Himānshu Thapa, Sri Bhaichand Pradhan and many others have defined the word Chhanda after following Piṅgala, the author of *Chhanda-Shāstra*.

In this connection it is to be noted that the Nepali poets and writers have borrowed the definitions of some of the Sanskrit metres from the *Chhaandomanjari* of *Gaṅgādāsa* and have translated them into Nepali language. They have also used all the determining factors of metres as prescribed by the Sanskrit prosodists.

Thus, Prof. Mahānanda Poudyāl in his book "Chhanda Ra Alamkāra" writes that "Chhanda shabda Chhad dhātubāta banieko chha, yasko artha hunchhha āchchhādan garnu athavā dāknū."⁸ That means the word chhanda is formulated from the root "Chhad" which means to cover or to conceal.

Dr. Parasmani Pradhan opines that the poem which follows the rules of Varna, Mātrā, Gati and Yati is called Chhanda. To quote him, "Jun kavitamā Varna, Mātrā, Gati ra Yatika niyam lagu bhaeko hunchhha tyaslāi Chhanda bhandachchan."⁹

While discussing the meaning of chhanda, Dr. Himānshu Thāpā opines that the word "Chhanda" has been formulated from the Sanskrit root chhad. According to him, the word chhanda is derived from the root chhad and after adding the suffix "asun" we get the word "Chhand". The meaning of chhad is to please, to conceal and to protect (from incriminating vices). To quote him, "Chhanda shabda Sanskritako 'Chhad' dhātubāta banieko ho. 'Chhad' dhātumā 'asun, pratyaya lāgnāle 'Chhanda' shabda bandachha. Chhadko artha prasanna garnu, bādhnū ra rakshā garnu ho."¹⁰

Sri Bhaichand Pradhan in his book "Sugam Nepali Vyākaraṇa Ra

Rachana" in page no. 190 is of the opinion that when the poetry follows a particular pattern of Mātrā and Varna, then we may designate that poetry as Chhanda. To quote him, "Padya jahile pani eutā niyammā bādhiēko hunchha. Tyasmā sandhi mātṛā vā varṇako hisāv rahanchha. Padyalāi 'chhanda' pani bhaninchha." According to Sri Pradhan, there are two varieties of Chhanda viz. Mātrik and Vāmik.

Prof. Poudyāl further adds that there is a hearsay that in ancient times the gods used to cover themselves by the chanting of Mantras like Gāyatrī etc. being afraid of death. Afterwards, these mantras were termed as "chhandas". In his own words, "Janashruti chha ki prāchinkālmā devatā harū mrityubhayle gardā Gāyatrī ādi mantrale āphulāi dhākerā rākhthe. Tyasaile yasta mantraharū pachhi 'Chhanda' kahālāina thāle."¹¹

Antiquity of Metres

Regarding the antiquity of metres, Prof. Mahānanda Poudyāl is of the opinion that it is as old as the Vedas. For this reason ancient Āchāryas of Sanskrit literature have regarded the Chhanda-Shāstra as one of the six Vedāṅgas. If Pānini can be regarded as the author of Sanskrit Vyākaraṇa, the sage Piṅgala should be regarded as the author of Chhanda-Shāstra. To quote him, "Sanskrita sāhityamā chhandako prāchinatā vedko barābari chha. Yasaile Sanskrita Sāhityamā prāchin ācharyaharūle Chhanda-Shāstralāi Vedko chhay angamadhye ek mānekā chhan. Sanskrita vyākaraṇ shāstrakā pranētā Pānini hun bhane chhanda shstrakā pranētā Piṅgal rishi hun."¹²

Importance: Regarding the importance of chhanda, Prof. Mahānanda Poudyāl opines that chhanda is the ornament of poetry. In his language, "Chhanda padya sāhityako ghanā ho."¹³ According to him, Rāmcharitmānasa of Tulsidāsa and the Rāmāyana of Bhānubhakta obtained great popularity due to the aesthetic beauty contained in those epics.

Dr. Himānshu Thāpā is of the opinion that verses contribute pleasure through chhanda. Because chhanda controls the expression (bhāva) to a certain limit. In his language, "Chhandako mādhyaṃdvārā kavitaḷe prasannatā pradān garcha. Chhandale bhāvlāi nishchit simāmā bādḥchha."¹⁴

Dr. Himañshu Thāpā gives an account of the importance of chhanda in his book Sāhitya Parichay, pp. 276 – 277. According to him, chhanda provides an external beauty. In other words, it increases the overall beauty of the verses (Kavitāko bāhya soundaryako vridḍhi hunchha). As varṇa and mātrā are countable for finding out chhanda in a verse, the musical profundity is increased due to extra Gati and Yati. In this way, actual beauty of the verses is preserved and increased – "Yasari gati ra laybāta kavitāko āntarik soundaryako samrakshan ra sambardhan hunchha."¹⁵ As a result, sweetness is produced.

Dr. Thāpā also opines that the application of chhanda also plays a great role in promoting Rasa in a verse (Chhanda prayogbāta kavitāko rasāsvādanmā mahattvapūrṇa bhūmikā nirvāha gardachha). As a result, we get pleasure also (Yasbāta ānandako prāpti hunchha). Dr. Thāpā concludes his section on

Derivation and Nature (Vyutpatti ra Svarūp) on the chapter viz. Chhanda, saying that – that is why the great poets of Sanskrit literature have composed different verses after regarding chhandas as the great energy (power) of verses, and after employing them according to their own necessity. In the language of Dr. Thapa, "Sanskrita sahitayakā mahān kaviharūle chhandalāi kavitako saktiko rūpmā mānyatā pradān garer chhandako khāchomā āfnā vibhinna kavitāharūko rachanā gardai āekā chhan."¹⁶

While praising the merits of chhanda, Sri Dillirām Timsinā in his book "Chhanda ra Alamkāra" mentions that the versified poems, ornamented and beautified by the employment of chhanda, make an easy influence into the heart of the common people whereas the common composition (i.e. a verse without Chhanda and Alamkāra) fails to attract the people. Therefore, importance of chhanda has been recognised by all the prosodists in Nepali literature also.

Present positions of chhandas: Now let us discuss the present position of Chhandas in Nepali literature. We get a clear conception regarding this portion from the writings of Sri Dillirām Timsinā, Dr. Himānshu Thapa and Prof. Mahānanda Poudyal. First of all, we want to discuss the opinion of Sri Timsinā. Sri Timsinā opines that modern poets (that means Nepali poets) are in favour of discarding the Sanskrit chhandas. It is natural because, generally, many of the Sanskrit chhandas are very difficult and are not easily accessible to the common people, adds Sri Timsinā. To quote him, "Katipay ādhunik sāhityakāharū Sanskritakā chhandalāi purai bahishkar game pakshamā chhan, yo svāvhāvik pani chha kinabhane Sanskritakā chhandaharū prayah sabai kathin chhan; sādharan pratibhāko nimti durgam chhan."¹⁷

Though there is an important and meaningful place of the metres in

Sanskrit literature, Chhanda has not received a proper importance in the kāvyas of the poets in Nepali literature. Accordingly, Dr. Himānshu Thapa opines that in Nepali literature during primitive and middle age, Chhanda was considered as an essential element but in modern age it is found that the application of chhandas is gradually declining. Hence, the present position of Metres in Nepali literature is not satisfactory. Because, some of the modern poets of Nepali literature do not apply metres at all in their kāvyas. So, to them, the application of metre does not seem to be an essential element in composing a verse. Hence, now-a-days it is found that Shāstriya chhandas have been fully discarded in modern poems. Instead of that, prose style has been accepted as the new style of composing the modern poems, added Dr. Himānshu Thapa. To quote him – "Sanskrita kāvyavidhāmā chhandako vishiṣṭha ra mahattvapūrṇa sthān chha. Sanskrita kāvyā-shāstramā chhandalāi mahattvapūrṇa aṅgako rūpmā lieko chha. Nepali Sāhityako prāthamik kāl ra mādhyaṃik kālmā chhandalāi kāvyako anivārya aṅgako rūpmā liieko pāinchha. Ādhunik kāl mā chhandako prayog kramikrūple kam hudaki āekodekhinchha ājko ādhunik kavītāmā shāstriya chhandako punnarūpmā bahishkār bhaeko pāinchha. Yasari ājko ādhunik kavītalē gadyalāi nayā shilpavidhiko rūpmā grahan gareko chha."¹⁸

Prof. Mahānanda Poudyāl also opines that fifty years ago from today, nobody could imagine composing verses without employing metres just as we cannot imagine the world of animal to exist without air. Chhanda was an essential element of poetic composition during that period. In his language, "Āja bhhandā ardha-shatābdī pahile binā chhanda kavītā huna-sakchha bhannu vāyubinā prāṇijagat sambhav chha ~~vayubina~~ bhannu barābar thiyo. Chhanda kavītako ek anivārya aṅga thiyo."¹⁹

Definitions of the nine metres used by Bhanubhakta along with notes and critical comments:

Sārdulavikrīditam: This metre is defined as follows:- "Masjastat ani dirgha antim hune Sārdulavikrīditam."

Notes: This metre consists of 19 letters. It consists of the triads ma, sa, ja, sa, ta, ta and ga with caesural pauses after the 12th and the 7th letters respectively.

Critical Comments: This metre has been widely used by many poets in Sanskrit as well as in Nepali literature. Adīkavi Bhanubhakta was also in favour of this metre. He used this metre in his Rāmāyana in large number of. Deokota who had a command over Sanskrit metres also used this metre in great number in his Shākuntalā Mahākāvya.

Vasantatilakā: The metre is defined as under:- "Tabhāj, dui guru hune Tilakā Vasanta."

Note: In Nepali literature the metre Vasantatilaka (consisting of 14 letters) is recognised as Vasantatilakā. In this metre the 3rd, 5th, 6th, 7th, 9th, 10th and 12th letters are short and the 12th letters are short and the rest are long. The pause stands at the end of a foot.

Critical Comments: This metre was also very favourite to Bhanubhakta. He has used this metre in his Rāmāyana. Badhūshikshā and in many couplets

and stanzas. Other poets like Deokota, Lekhnāth and Dharanīdhar Sharma also have used this metre in their compositions. Modern poets like Dr. Tulsī Bahādur Chhetri (Tulsī Apatan) and many others also have composed many verses in this metre.

Mālinī: It is defined as under:- "Na na ma ya ya bhaeko Mālinī chhanda hunchha."

Notes: The metre Mālinī comprises of 15 letters. In other words, a metre having its first six syllables as well as the 10th and the 13th syllables short and having the metrical pause at the 8th and at the 7th syllables is called Mālinī.

Critical comments: Bhanubhakta has used this metre in his Rāmāyana and Badhūshikshā. Deokota used this metre in many places of his Shākuntalā Mahākāvya.

Sragdharā: The metre, Sragdharā is defined as:- "Jasmā hunchhan śādhai nai marabhanayayaya Sragdharā chhanda Jānu."

Notes: This metre contains 21 letters. In a stanza composed in the Sragdharā metre the first four syllables, then the 6th and 7th syllables, as well as the 14th, 15th, the 17th, 18th, the 20th and the 21st syllables are long.

Critical Comments: Bhanubhakta used this metre 41 times in his Rāmāyana. The poet Lekhnāth used this metre in many of his verses. Actually it is very difficult to compose a verse in this metre. So this metre has not been used widely by the poets of Nepali and Sanskrit literature.

Indravajrā: The metre Indravajrā is defined as under:- "Tatjoanta
dingha dui Indravajrā."

Notes: The metre Indravajrā consists of eleven letters. In this metre the 3rd, the 6th, the 7th and 9th syllables are short. The caesur falls at the end of a foot. This name is one of the widely known metres of both Sanskrit and Nepali prosody.

Critical Comments: Bhānubhakta used this metre in his Rāmāyana, Badhūshikshā and Prashnottarmālā. Deokotā also used this metre in his Shākuntala Mahākāvya. The poet Deokotā had a good command over this metre. The Rāmāyana (Vālmiki and Adhyātma), the Bhāgavata excel in the use of this metre.

Shikharinī: It is defined as follows:- "Rahemā yimātrā yamanasabhalog
ho Shikharinī."

Notes: In a Shikharinī metre consisting of 17 letters there are the triads (ganas) ya, ma, na, sa, bha, la and ga with pauses at 6th and 11th letters respectively.

Critical Comments: Bhānubhakta has composed Bhaktamālā in Shikharinī metre. Prof. Mahānanda Poudyāl and Lekhnāth have used this metre in their writings in large number.

Upendravajrā: It is defined as follows:- "Jataj dui dirgha

Upendravajrā."

Notes: The metre Upendravajrā consists of eleven letters. This metre has one ja, gaṇa, one ta, gaṇa, then one ja followed by two ga. The 2nd, 4th, 5th, 8th, 10th and the 11th letters are long here. In the Indravajra metre the initial is ta, here the initial is ja. The caesura falls here at the end of a foot.

Critical Comments: The metre Upendravajrā which belongs to the category of the Vedic Tristup has been used widely like Indravajrā. It has been recognised by all the metrical treatises. The prefix Upa indicates the close resemblance between Indravajrā and Upendravajrā. The difference is due to change of one triad (gaṇa) only.

Bhānubhakta has used this metre in his Rāmāyana in a single foot of a verse only. He has used this metre in his Prasnottarmālā in large number.

Upajāti: This metre is defined as follows:- "Tyo Indravajrā ra Upendravajrā duvai mileko Upajāti hunchha."

Notes: The metre Upajāti partakes of the characteristics of both the Indravajrā and the Upendravajrā metres. The Upajāti comes under the head of the Vritta type. In Sl. No. 102 of Ayodhyākāṇḍa (i.e. the 2nd Book) Bhānubhakta used this metre. In this verse the first three feet are composed in Indravajrā metre and the fourth i.e. the last foot is composed in Upendravajrā metre. Hence, this verse is an example of the metre Upajāti.

Critical Comments: The metre Upajāti is a Upendravajrā and hence it has no rigid marks of its own. There may be numerous varieties of this metre – one foot may be composed in Indravajrā and the other in Upendravajrā, or, the opposite of this. Sometimes two feet may be laid down in Indravajrā or two in Upendravajrā.

Deokota also used the metre Upajati in his Shākuntala Mahākāvya.

Svāgata: It is defined as follows:- "Svāgata ra na bha dirgha, duimā."

Notes: This metre consists of eleven letters. In the metre the 9th syllable becomes short and the tenth long. The caesura falls at the end of the foot.

Critical Comments: The term Svāgata means one whose advent is always welcome. Bharata, the author of Nāṭya-Shāstra and Piṅgala, the author of Chhanda-Shāstra have recognised this metre. This metre has also been recognised in all other standard treatises on metrics.

Drutavilambita: The metre Drutavilambita is defined as follows:-

"Drutavilambita ho nabhabhar hune."

Notes: The metre Drutavilambita consists of twelve letters. In this metre the 4th, the 7th, the 10th, and the 12th syllables are long. The metre is termed as Drutavilambita for the varying notes of into-nations because we find Tālas of varying denomination i.e. druta, madhyama and vilambita in a musical note.

Critical Comment: It is to be noted that in the domain of Sanskrit Prosody

this metre enjoys considerable amount of popularity.

The celebrated poet, Deokota used this metre in his Sulochanā Kāvya.

Ten Ganas (used by the Nepali Prosodists) with examples:

The principles of the classification of the ten ganas as laid down in the texts of Sanskrit Metrics in the following couplet:

"Mastrigurustrilaghushcha nakāro bhādiguru punarādīlaghuryah.

Jo gurumadhyagata rala-madhyah soantaguruh kathitoanta-laghustah",

which has been summarized in a single aphorism, so to say, in "Yamaatārājabhanasālagam" by the prosodists of Nepali literature. This sūtra which explains the Ten Ganas can be analysed in the following way:

| No. | Gana | Varna | Example |
|-----|------|-------------|------------------|
| 1. | Ya | Ya, ma ta | √ - - Kumari |
| 2. | Ma | ma, ta, ra | - - - Balaju |
| 3. | Ta | ta, ra, ja | - - √ Nepali |
| 4. | Ra | ra, ja, bha | - √ - Dolkha |
| 5. | Ja | ja, ma, na | √ - √ Vishal |
| 6. | Bha | ma, na, sa | - √ √ Sagara |
| 7. | Na | na, sa, la | √ √ √ Sarala |
| 8. | Sa | sa, la, gam | √ √ - Bichara |
| 9. | La | laghu | √ |
| 10. | Ga | Guru | - |