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## THE RECORD NEWS

THE JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF INDIAN RECORD COLLECTORS

VOL.3

JULY 1991



READING INDIAN RECORD LABELS - PART 3

THE RECORD NEWS  
THE JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF INDIAN RECORD COLLECTORS

EDITOR-SURESH CHANDVANKAR

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*FROM THE EDITOR*

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I am extremely sorry for the delay. TRN - 3 could not be prepared in time due to unavoidable circumstances. In this issue apart from SIRC news we have a very interesting article on "Canned Concerts" by Prof.R.C.Mehta of Indian Musicological Society ,Baroda. Upon receiving our advanced notice for the listening sessions he sent us the article & permitted us to publish it in TRN. We are very much thankful to him for his co-operation. Mr.Michael Kinnear has presented third article on Beka Records in the series of his articles - Reading Indian Record Labels.

I hope you will like these articles & will send me your comments & suggestions. The next issue of TRN will reach you soon.

SURESH CHANDVANKAR  
EDITOR

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*COVER - A PHOTOCOPY OF AN EIGHT INCH BEKA RECORD FROM THE COLLECTION OF MR. PRABHAKAR DATAR ,KURLA BOMBAY.*

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SIRC NEWS FROM BOMBAY

As in the past, we continued to have the monthly meetings at different places in Bombay. These meetings were attended by about 35 persons on an average. This activity of listening to old gramophone records is becoming very popular amongst the fans of old music. Following programs were presented during April-June 1991.

- APRIL 1991 - RECORDS OF O.P.NAIYYAR & LATE CHITRAGUPTA  
- By Mr.Pradeep Acharya, Acharya bldgs.210/212 Dr.Vigas Road, Bombay-400 002

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Mr.Pradeep Acharya, Girgaon, Bombay presented a programme of Records of O.P.Naiyyar & Late Chitragupta. Both the composers are well known to filmgoers & Mr.Acharya wished to pay his tributes to Late Mr.Chitragupta by playing records from his films. Songs from the following films were played -

O.P.Naiyyar - Howrah Bridge, Mangu, Mujrim, Kabhi Andhera Kabhi Ujala, Do Ustad, Naya Andaz, Koka Kola, Johny Walker, Bara Baje (12 O'Clock), Ustad, Choo Mantar, Hum Sab Chor Hain, Ragini, Mr.Kartoon, Do Ustad, Kaldi, Basant, Farishta Mujrim.

Chitragupta - Barkha, Guest House, Main Shadi Karne Chala, Tel Malish Boot Polish, Aadhi Raat Ke Baad.





*MR.PRADEEP ACHARYA PRESENTING A PROGRAMME ON O.P.NAIYYAR & CHITRAGUPTA*



*THE AUDIENCE PRESENT AT THIS PROGRAMME.*

May 1991 - Peculiar Records - By Suresh Chandvankar, Bombay

-----  
EXPLANATION - RECORD NUMBER/MATRIX NUMBER/SONG DETAILS/PECULIARITY  
-----

- 1) HMV N 8933/OMG 653-1 Orchestra overture- Bangalore Studio Orchestra  
*FAMOUS TUNE OFTEN PLAYED ON ALL INDIA RADIO STATIONS FOR MANY YEARS.*
- 2) HMV N 15624/OMD 884-85 - Hindustani - Dhire Gadi Hak Re pt 1 & 2 Kabir  
Bhajan sung by Mr. Vishupant Pagnis. *THIS SONG IS BASED ON THE ORIGINAL  
TUNE OF "AADHI BEEJ EKALE" FROM PRABHAT FILM 'SANT TUKARAM'.*
- 3) YOUNG INDIA - TM 8782/E-641- CANARESE - PARANARIYAR (Lavni)  
by B. Chandrasekhara Raju. */THIS SONG IS BASED ON THE ORIGINAL SONG IN  
MARATHI "MAN SUDH TUZE" FROM PRABHAT FILM 'KUNKU'.*
- 4) HMV N 91051/OJW 5260 - Kannada Devotional 1962  
by Lakshmi Shankar and Manna Dey - comp. by P.Vatsala. */THIS SONG IS BASED  
ON 'GHANASHYAM SUNDARA 'BHUPALI FROM RAKKAMAL FILM 'AMAR BHUPALI*
- 5) HMV N 53273/OJW 4563-1 - Yeri Maai Aaj Shubh - MAND - from Marathi Film  
PATIVRATA - Alhad Chitra Music: Ram kadam - sung by Bhimsen Joshi and  
Lakshmi Shankar. */A RARE DUET SUNG BY BHIMSEN JOSHI BASED ACTUALLY ON RAGA  
MIYAN KI TODI & NOT ON MAND AS INDICATED ON RECORD LABEL.*
- 6) HMV N 92581/OJW 3225- Instrumental Classical Harmonium Solo Gat: Mishrakafi  
Thumri - by Baby Zarin S. Daruwala (Age 8 years) Disciple of Pt. Bhismadev  
Vedi - Tabla accomp: Ustad Allarakha. */ZARIN DARUWALA IS ONE OF THE FAMOUS  
FEMALE SAROD PLAYER IN THE COUNTRY TODAY.*
- 7) HMV QC 1800/OJW 6639-1 Specially manufactured for All India Congress  
Committee, 1967 - Dekho Na Aanch Aaye - By Mukesh and Chorus - Lyric :By  
Hasrat Jaipuri, Muslc: Shankar Jaikishan. */FAMOUS PERSONALITIES FROM FILMS  
PERFORMING FOR THE POLITICAL PARTIES.*
- 8) HMV QC 1659/OJE 18339 - Specially manufactured for Govt. of Maharashtra  
Dept. of Publicity - Marathi - Daru Pyalas Pelabhar - Lyric:G.D.Madgulkar  
Music: Sudhir Phadke. */ HIGHLY UNUSUAL FORM (LAVNI) FROM MR.PHADKE*
- 9) The Twin FT 15957/OMR 344-46 - Darubandi Kirtan Pt.1 & 2 by Shriyut  
Atmaramboa - written by Dr.Rambhau Bhoge (Amalner). */AN EXAMPLE OF USE OF  
THE KIRTAN (A POPULAR FORM IN MAHARASHTRA)IN MASS EDUCATION.*
- 10) HMV QC 1527/OJW 3980 - Specially mfd. for Director of Publicity, Govt. of  
Bombay - Gujerati - Panchavarshiya Yojana Geet - Bhoomidan Do - by Talat  
Mahamood, Geet: Deenanath Vyas, Sangeet: Shreenivas Dave. */UNUSUAL TO  
HAVE TALAT SINGING PROPAGANDA SONG IN GUJERATI*
- 11) YOUNG INDIA DA 6031/NG 3939-40 - Marathi Skit - Daun Bayakancha Dadla  
Pt.1 and 2 - by Dinkar (Kamanna), Balabai & Keshar Wadkar - written by  
Mr.M.G. Rangnekar. */A RARE PIECE BY MR.KAMANNA - FAMOUS PERSONALITY FROM  
MARATHI STAGE IN EARLY THIRTIES.*

- 12) HMV QC 1796/OJW 6593-94 - White Label - specially mfd. for Prasad Productions Ltd., Bombay-12 - for Hindi film MILAN - Lata, Mukesh and Nutan - Music: Lakshmikant Pyarelal - Lyric: Anand Bakshi./RECORD MADE FOR ALL INDIA RADIO STATIONS FOR FILM ADVERTISEMENT.
- 13) Hindustan Record H.137/HSB 127 - Bengali song - Kumar Sachindra Dev Burman / ORIGINAL TUNE OF SONG 'PAVAN DIWANI'FROM HINDI FILM DR. VIDYA.
- 14) HMV N 82984/OJE 19379 - Blue label with red star - Bengali modern song By Mr.Shyamal Mitra./ ORIGINAL TUNE OF HINDI FILM SONG 'AAHA RIMZIM KE YE TARE SARE GEET LIYE.'
- 15) COLUMBIA 78.60002/DR 9952 - Chico Chico - from film COME BACK TO ME by Edmund Ros & his Rumba Band./ ORIGINAL TUNE OF 'GORE GORE O BANKE CHORE ' FROM HINDI FILM SAMADHI - COMPOSED BY C. RAMCHANDRA.
- 15a) GRAMOPHONE MONARCH RECORD - Made in Germany - 12" Single sided around (1905) - English Orchestra - Donauwellen Waltz - played by IFF's Orchestra (personally conducted by Herrn Iff) London./ORIGINAL MUSIC PIECES OF THEME SONG OF HINDI FILM 'MERA NAAM JOKER '
- 16) HMV N 6109/OEB 2706 - Instrumental - Musical Submarine - by Master Manohar Barve./ AN UNUSUAL MODE OF PLAYING MUSIC AT EXTREMELY HIGH SPEED
- 17) ODEON A245030a/Ke 111 Sej Chadhat Dar Lage - Kalingda - by G.P.Nagarkar / A FAMOUS RAGA IN WHICH MANY STAGE & FILM SONGS ARE COMPOSED.
- 18) HMV P 13379/BD 8527 - Hindustani Female songs - Dil Bekarar Tune - Gazal by Bai Sundara Bai./ AN ORIGINAL TUNE ON WHICH FAMOUS MARATHI STAGE SONG - 'KASHI YA TYAJU PADALA 'IS BASED.
- 19) HMV P 13447/BX 8378-79 - Hindustani Male song - Ye Man Hameer Pt.1 & 2 Raga Sagar - by Prof.Narayanrao Vyas./ A NOVEL EXPERIMENT TO PRESENT FOUR RAGAS IN JUST SIX MINUTES PLAY TIME.
- 20) COLUMBIA GE 3143/CEI 13252-1 - Raja Tara Dungariyaman (Gujerati Lok Geet) Khas Gujerati Lokagrahathi - by Pujya Pt. Omkarnathji Thakur./ AN UNUSUAL PIECE IN GUJERATI BY PANDITJI.
- 21) KOHINOOR RECORDS KLM 134/HSB 2519K - Marwari song - Bhanwar Balam Holl Aai - Holl - by Anandi Bai Rajgarh (Bikaner)./ VERY SWEET FOLK SONG.
- 22) HMV N 5283/OMD 1702-1 Marathi - Jara Halu Japun Chal Bai Ga - by Ms.Leela Limaye - Comp. by S.A.Shukla alias Kumud-Bandhav./ ARTIST DIED AT VERY YOUNG AGE. SHE HAS CUT FEW BUT MEMORABLE SONGS IN MARATHI.
- 23) HMV N 35473/OMR 637-38 Hindustani Film - THE LAST MESSAGE - Aakhari Paigam - Jhoom Jhoom Laharaye TeerangaPt.1 & 2 - Chorus led by Umadevi and Shallesh Mukherji - Music: Abid Hussein Khan & Sasanto Banerji./ LESS KNOWN PATRIOTIC SONG.

24) ODEON CA 711/MD 1380 - Blue label with twin elephants Jana Gana Mana  
(Amirkalyani) By K.Ashwathama./ NATIONAL ANTHEM IN SOUTH INDIAN STYLE.

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JUNE 1991 - OLD MARATHI BHAVGEETE - BY MR.A.G.THAKURDESAI,CHEMBUR,BOMBAY

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SONG / VOICE / LYRIC / MUSIC / RECORD NUMBER  
-----

- 1) Rajhans Maza Nijala/Bapurao Pendharakar/R.G.Gadkarl/-/HMV P 7366.
- 2) Ranaranat Geli Bai Sheel/G.N.Joshi/N.G.Deshpande/-/HMV N 5019.
- 3) Ghananeela Yadulala/Susheela Tembe/V.V.Joglekar/G.N.Purohit/Jay Bharat SJ 4018.
- 4) Mazya Mani Tuzya Mani/Saraswati Mane/M.G.Ranganekar/-/Columbia GE 3198.
- 5) Chhotasa Sansar/Shanta Apte/Prabhakar Gupte/-/HMV N 15206.
- 6) Tujha Majha Prem Julala/Shanta Apte/Prabhakar Gupte/-/HMV N 25096.
- 7) Shanta Sagarl Kashas/Kanchanmala Badhe/Sanjeevani Marathe/-/HMV N 15138.
- 8) Amrut Ghat Bharale Tuzya Gharl/Meenakshi/B.B.Borkar/-/HMV N 15207.
- 9) Pahli Ga Dari/Sopandeo Chowdhary/-/-/Columbia GE 3018.
- 10) Ka Nahi Hasala Nusate/Baburao Gokhale/-/HMV N 25197.
- 11) Haluch Dharna Haat Sajana/R.N.Paradkar/N.L.Vatkar/Gajanan Watve HMV N 25185.
- 12) Ghanashyam Nayani Aala/Saraswati Rane/G.D.Madgulkar/-/Columbia GE 3308.
- 13) Chanchal Kiti Bai Kanha/Lalita Parulkar/M.G.Ranganekar/-/Odeon SB 2398.
- 14) Chal Chandnyat Sajna/Mohantara Talpade/Sanjeev/Shreedhar Parsekar HMV N 25073.
- 15) Gaganicha Chandrama Laje/Pandurang Dixit/D.S.Dixit/-/Columbia GE 3204.
- 16) Zimzim Paus Padato/Vasanti/Sanjeev/-/HMV N 15135.
- 17) Aabhalicha Chand Majha/Manik Varma/Shantabal Joshi/Gajanan Watve Columbia GE 23221.
- 18) Chal Chal Chandra Pasar Chandane/Kumudini Pednekar/-/-/Columbia GE 8162.
- 19) Chatura Me Chandrika/Suman Banavlikar/Raja Badhe/-/ HMV N 25270.
- 20) Maherche Nav Rahude Patldeva/Saroj Vellingkar/Manmohan Natu Columbia GE 8469.

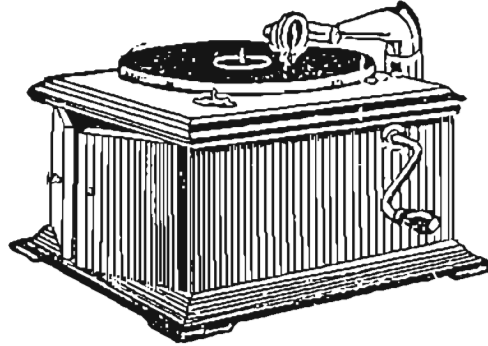
- 21) Lajashi Ka Aashi Bol/Vinodini Desai/S.A.Shukla/Annasaheb Mainkar  
Columbia GE 3214.
- 22) Vedi Jhale Tujhyasathi/Snehal Bhatkar/Raja Badhe/-/HMV N 89018.
- 23) Krishna Milali Koynela/Lata Mangeshkar/P.Savalaram/Vasant Prabhu  
Columbia GE 8615.
- 24) Mukya Manache Bol/Geeta Dutt/Vasant Bapat/G.N.Joshi/MV N 89028.
- 25) Aajun Tya Zudupanchya Mage/Dasharath Pujari/Vasant Bapat/Madhukar Pathak  
HMV N 89273.
- 26) Galat Chandra Hasala/Sudha Malhotra/Anil Bharati/-/HMV N 89105.
- 27) Painjan Pal Chumchumti/Vithhal Shinde/Anil Bharati/-/ HMV N 89068.
- 28) Sur Julale Shabdahi Julale/Arun Date/Madhukar Joshi/Vasant Prabhu  
HMV N 89339.
- 29) Phirate Rupaya Bhavati Duniya/Govind Powale/Madhukar Joshi/Govind  
Powale/HMV N 89185.
- 30) Otita Ghatali Mulagi/Asha Bhosale/G.D.Madgulkar/Arun Paudwal  
Columbia GE 40104.
- 31) Aas Aahe Aantari Ya/Suman Kalyanpur/Madhukar Joshi/Dashrath Pujari  
HMV N 89202.
- 32) Aasech Mook Rahu Ya/Usha Mangeshkar/Shanta Shelke/Prabhakar Pandit  
MV N 89376.

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## READING INDIAN RECORD LABELS

By

MICHAEL S. KINNEAR

### Part Three - BEKA RECORD

The name BEKA - is derived from the surname initial of the founders of the Beka Record G.M.b.H., namely - Heinrich Bumb and Max Koenig, who had started in business in Berlin in about 1900 as merchants of Edison Phonographs and cylinder records.

By 1902, Bumb and Koenig had established a business to market the 'Zonophone' talking machines and disc records, but with the acquisition of the International Zonophone Company by The Gramophone & Typewriter, Ltd., Bumb and Koenig set about carving their own niche in the disc record industry in the name of Bumb & Koenig G.M.b.H.

In the later months of 1904, Bumb and Koenig - themselves - set out with a recording machine and travelled across Europe and down to Egypt and Turkey, - recording repertoires for their own disc record label.

In March 1905, the BEKA RECORD was introduced with a catalogue of over one thousand recordings taken on the recording tour by Bumb and Koenig. The first BEKA RECORD releases were 8" inch, 10" inch and 11" inch size discs with white and navy coloured labels, and used as it's trade mark - a flamingo - depicted listening to a talking machine - in parody of the dog listening to the gramophone.

On 5th October 1905, Heinrich Bumb accompanied by Wilhelm Hadert set out on a recording tour that was to circle the globe and produce hundreds of recordings to add to their catalogue. Bumb and Koenig had converted their company name to Beka Record G.M.b.H., based at 75-76 Heidelbergerstrasse, Berlin in early 1905, and were already achieving some success in the marketing of their disc records, despite the fact that this two man operation was competing against such large corporate structures as The Gramophone & Typewriter, Ltd.: the International Talking Machine Co.M.b.H. (ODEON RECORD): The Nicole Record Co. Ltd., (NICOLE RECORD) and other minor disc record companies.

This 'journey around the world' took in stops for recording in Istanbul, Cairo, Bombay, Calcutta, Rangoon, Bangkok, Singapore, Hong Kong, Tokyo, and then to the United States, returning to Berlin on 17th June 1906, having taken over one thousand recordings on the tour.

To focus on Bumb and Hadert's activities in India: the Beka recording team arrived in Bombay on 17th November 1905, and settled into Watson's Esplanade Hotel, Bombay. Valabhdas Runchordas and Lakhmidas R. Tairsee were engaged as 'brokers' for the Beka Record G.M.b.H. Runchordas and Tairsee had established The Talking Machine & Indian Record Co., at the corner of Churchgate Street and Tamarind Lane, Fort, Bombay, in December 1902, to market Edison, Pathe and Columbia phonographs, and by late 1905 had become what has been referred to as "the largest talking machine business in the far East".

Some recording were taken in Bombay, after which the Beka recording team travelled by train to Calcutta where more recordings were taken with the assistance of their 'broker' Abdul Hamid Ghaznavi, a prominent Muslim leader and business-man. From Calcutta, Bumb and Hadert travelled onto Rangoon, then to Bangkok, and onto Singapore, Hong Kong and Tokyo, recording all the while - eventually returning to Berlin by mid-June 1906.

As a result of the Beka Record G.M.b.H. recording tour, some three hundred and thirty single-side disc records were issued of Indian repertoire. The release of the 'BEKA RECORD' (8") and BEKA GRAND RECORD (10") discs - represents only the fourth such venture into disc record marketing in India - following The Gramophone & Typewriter, Ltd. - in December 1903, and again from December 1904 to April 1905, and The Nicole Record Co., Ltd., November 1904 to March 1905.



## 2. Reading Indian record labels - BEKA REORD

In December 1906, a further Beka recording tour of India was begun at Bombay under the leadership of Ernest Lowe, a director of the company. Recordings were taken at Bombay, Lucknow, Benares and Calcutta, before moving onto Rangoon, Bangkok and Singapore as was the usual practice of recording companies at the time.

With a catalogue of several hundred recordings in their Indian repertoire, the 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' offered great competition to the "Gramophone" catalogue - so much so that The Talking Machine & Indian Record Co., of Bombay with branch offices in Calcutta, Delhi, Madras and Rangoon, had become the paramount disc record distributors in the major cities of India and were - for a time - appointed the wholesale agents of The Gramophone & Typewriter, Ltd., in Bombay, before that company had set up their own branch office in that city.

The opening of The Gramophone Co's record factory at Sealdah, Calcutta, in mid-1908, might well have discouraged the Beka Record G.M.b.H., from attempting to continue with the Indian disc record market, being based in Berlin, the supply of disc records to India was dependent on ready availability of product, and although The Gramophone Co., certainly had the advantage of being able to manufacture the disc records locally, the aggressive marketing policies and network of dealers engaged by The Talking Machine & Indian Record Co., ensured a steady supply of the 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' for the record buying public.

In June 1910, another recording tour of India was undertaken by the Beka Record G.M.b.H., which continued through to early 1911. By this time the 'BEKA RECORD' (8"), and 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' (10") were represented by a catalogue of some three thousand recordings on the market in India. In July 1910, Beka Record G.M.b.H., was merged with Fritz Puppel G.M.b.H., of Berlin, to form Beka Record A.G., and a month later the Beka/Puppel merger was amalgamated with Carl Lindstroem A.G., controllers of the 'ODEON RECORD'. This action might have spelt an end to the activities of the Beka Record Co's representation in India, but instead, The Talking Machine and Indian Record Co., became stronger by the representation of the BEKA RECORD, ODEON RECORD, and JUMBO labels, trading with the sub-name of "The Beka Record Agency".

In October 1910, the SUN DISC RECORD was placed on the market in India at the low price of 2 rupees per double-sided disc, to which The Gramophone Co., responded with the release of the 'ZONOPHONE RECORD' at the same price. Not to be left out The Talking Machine and Indian Record Co., joined the low-price record market with the 'PHON-O-PHONE' record, - manufactured in Germany - which essentially was little more than a re-release of previously issued 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' titles that had fallen off in sales. Unfortunately no comprehensive 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' or 'PHON-O-PHONE' record catalogues have been found to verify the releases and re-issues on each of these labels.

Although the 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' maintained a high profile in the Indian disc record market, it was displaced in priority with The Talking Machine & Indian Record Co., by the 'ODEON RECORD', which had become this company's leading label, as a result of the amalgamation mentioned above. From 1913 onwards, although the 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' continued to be marketed in India, until the outbreak of World War One, the label had seen better days. By early 1914, the number of 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' releases still in the catalogue numbered less than one hundred out of the three thousand plus titles that had been recorded since October 1905.

The re-percussions of the outbreak of World War One were particularly severe on The Talking Machine & Indian Record Co., for Valabhdas Runchordas had been tied to German recording companies since 1906, and as the labels that he represented were all made in Germany - his source of

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 21864 খেমন আছ তেমনি থাক  
 21884 এসেছি তোমের পাড়তে  
 21906 ছুঁড়ার হাতে ছেলা চুড়ি

Sj. M. N. Ghosh. ( Laughing Song )

- 21772 ছি ছি ছি ছি পাগল হলে কি  
 21773 ভাগ বাসি বলে

Sangitacharyya Vishwanath Rao.

- 21739 ওঁকার বাজি জোর হ'লো  
 21743 শ্রাম না এলো  
 21740 কানী কানী বল রসনা  
 21747 হুবহু রাগ মন্দিরে  
 21737 ক্রান্ খা খা খা  
 21739 দেব সখা ভুল ক'রে ভাগ বেশ না।  
 21744 মুই অধমের অধম  
 21738 কালিচানের সঙ্গ করতে



### 3. Reading Indian record labels - BEKA RECORD

supply was cut off during the war years. India, then being a part of the British Empire, had banned any trade between Germany and India, and left Valabhdas Runchdas no other alternative than to set up his own disc record factory - if he wished to continue in the trade. In 1914 Runchordas went on a world tour seeking to acquire product and equipment with which to continue his activities in the record industry of India. Runchordas was successful in acquiring some matrices from German sources, including the matrix stocks of the 'SINGER RECORD' that had been on the market in India during 1910 and 1911, and may have acquired some Beka matrices also.

Although Runchordas had strong business ties with English, German and Swiss companies, he had to turn to Japanese suppliers for his disc pressing machinery.

By early 1915, Valabhdas Runchordas had broken off his business partnership with Lakhmidas Tairsee and set up another company in the name of The Viel-o-phone Co., Ltd., in the compound of his residence, complete with a record pressing plant, at "Infinite", Mogul Lane, Mahim, Bombay.

From his record pressing plant at Mahim, Valabhdas Runchordas went into manufacturing disc records with the 'VIEL-O-PHONE' and the cheaper priced 'PHON-O-PHONE' labels - of which the later may have contained some 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' titles. He also manufactured the 5" violet BABY RECORD.

#### Catalogue and Matrix numbers

The 'BEKA RECORD' (8"), and 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' (10") disc records have catalogue and matrix numbers which are identical. From the printed label the number given is the same as the matrix number, but with further inspection of the markings on the disc surface it may be seen that the matrix numbers on several of these 'BEKA RECORD' and 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' discs have a suffix letter - such as -M, or -A, appended to the number.

The significance of this suffix letter is not known, as are some of the "squiggly" markings on the disc beneath the paper label. Whether the matrix numbers are in sequence or not is also not known, but it may be safe to assume that the matrix numbers - at least as far as the 1905 recordings are concerned - are in sequence.

The early Beka recordings of the Indian repertoire are numbered between 1425 through to about 1750, at which number some Burmese recordings are known, which ties in with the report by Heinrich Bumb that some three hundred and thirty recordings were taken at either Bombay or Calcutta during the 1905 recording tour.

The first releases of the Indian repertoire on 'BEKA RECORD' and 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' were single-side recorded discs with white or navy coloured labels. These white labelled 'BEKA RECORD' (8") and 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' (10") discs are quite rare - and the same titles may also be found with navy coloured labels with gold printing, but there is little doubt that the white labelled discs were manufactured prior to the navy coloured labels as the pressings are also of a 'cruder' quality than the navy coloured labels of the same titles.

In 1908, those titles which had remained popular with the record buying public were re-issued as Double-sided discs - without any change to the label style.

There is some confusion created by a 1914 'ODEON RECORD' catalogue - which contains not only Odeon recordings but also Beka recordings, in the 2500 numerical range. These numbers may refer to 7½ inch or even 12 inch 'ODEON RECORD' releases - or may be numbers that fit into the 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' sequence of numbering. The catalogue does not define whether these are 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' 10" discs or 12", 10¼" or 7½" discs which could be 'ODEON RECORD' releases - either way these number could fit into the known numerical sequence of both labels.

Mr. Amulya Chandra Mitra.

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21748 दा. ६३३ आर्षात्र ६३३ ३३३

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रा. वि. वि. वि. वि.

को. वि. वि. वि. वि.

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phones & Records promptly sent  
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#### 4. Reading Indian record labels - BEKA RECORD

With the recordings from the 1907 recording tour the 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' numerical system for the Indian repertoire moves directly to 20000 right through to 22000 plus - indicating the release of some two thousand titles on the 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' label. The highest known number being 22028 - a recording by Mr. Amalya Chandra Mittra - in Bengali - presumed to have been recorded at Calcutta in 1911. It is not known if this numerical block was filled - but it is known that the 23000 and 24000 series were used for other "Oriental" series. There are also some 'early' BEKA RECORD issues of Cantonese recordings numbered in the 20900 range of numbers - which suggests that this 'block' was not reserved - exclusively - for the Indian repertoire.

An unusual Beka recording which was not issued as a 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' - but on a special "NATIONAL" GRAND RECORD features Babu Surendranath Banerjee, the then editor of "The Bengalee" - reciting two "nationalist" songs

20290	20290	BABU SURANDRANATH BANERJEA	
c/w		Bande Mataram/Swadeshism	[BENGALI]
20291	20291	Partition of Bengal	

Sometimes records in the 20000 and 21000 series are found with a G-prefix to the catalogue number - but not always. From late 1908 onwards, new releases and the earlier releases which were still popular were given a double-face series number - some have D-, others E- or O-, which signified the selling prices. These double-face series numbers may be found on several discs, but there have also been examples found - issued late in the series which do not have the double-face number. Thus it is possible to find a 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' issued as a single-side recorded disc, double-sided and also with a double-face series prefix letter and number.

In early 1906, Beka Record, G.m.b.H., published an "International Catalogue" of 224 pages which was available "gratis" to their dealers, and included all of the Beka records issued to date including those in several European languages along with releases in Arabic, Chinese, Turkish, Malay, Tamil and 'Hindustanee' (Urdu, Marathi, Gujarathi, Hindi and Tarsi). No copy of this catalogue has yet been found to verify it's contents, other wise we might well have a lot more data about the 'early' releases of the Beka records.

The final releases of the Indian repertoire appear to have taken place in about November 1912, listing new releases and reissues under their Double-face series numbers of which D-870 appears to be the highest number known. To further complicate matters, it is known that the Double-face numerical system also includes the ODEON RECORD labelled discs that were still on the market and that the Double-face numerical series runs to 3300 plus. Considering this aspect of numbering the BEKA GRAND RECORD and ODEON RECORD issues in the same series, and the fact that very few BEKA GRAND RECORD's have been found with a Double-face number, it seems more logical to annotate the 'Beka Record' issues by their single-side number along with the coupling number for the reverse side of the Double-sided discs.

Collectors of GRAMOPHONE CONCERT RECORD and HIS MASTER'S VOICE records may be interested to search out BEKA GRAND RECORD's by the same artists performing the same songs or instrumental pieces. In this regard, Malka Jna, Bedana Dassi, Ushabala Dassi, Talim Hussain (Sanai) and Mohammed Yakub (Yakub Khan - Harmonium)) amongst many others provided similar recordings for both the 'Gramophone' and 'Beka' companies, and possibly other record companies as well.



ALL THE ILLUSTRATIONS ON BEKA RECORDS ARE FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF MR.DATAR,MR.MERCHANT & MR.KINNEAR.

The 8" and 11" or 12" size Beka labelled discs also shared the same numerical sequence of numbering with the 10" size, although the number of releases on these other sizes are comparatively few.

Apart from some of the earliest releases in the Indian repertoire that had white coloured labels, all other releases in the repertoire had navy coloured labels with the 'flamingo' trade mark. For other Asian releases such as the Burmese repertoire, the labels have various colours and a 'peacock' trade mark, while releases in the Siamese repertoire have also been traced to the KATZ BROTHERS, LTD., (Sole Agents) with a red coloured label featuring an 'elephant' as it's 'trade mark', and titles in other Asian repertoires have been found with the label as 'TJAP BINTANG SAPOE' (collected stars record) later modified to PENDAPATAN BAROE (hidden mask). The use of this label appears to have been utilized by the European exporter, L.S. Solomonfon of Rotterdam, Holland, for the Dutch East Indies, and South East Asian territories.

Any 'BEKA RECORD' (8") or 'BEKA GRAND RECORD' (10") or 12" record is collectable - particularly the earliest single-side recorded discs in the 1425 to 1750 numerical range and the 8" size discs. Their value is added to by the fact that the pressings of these disc are usually of a high standard for the time, and more so in that they contain recordings of artists - such as by Bal Gandharva, Purshottam, Miss Malka Jan, Murad Ali, Sohrabji R. Dhondi and others - which were amongst the first disc recordings of these performers.

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Summary of BEKA RECORD label series - for India

- |    |                              |                                       |
|----|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A. | Numerical Series             | about 1425 to 1725                    |
|    | Mixed 8" and 10" inch        | WHITE or NAVY - Single-side discs.    |
|    | reissued as                  | NAVY - Double-sided discs.            |
|    | later reissued as            | NAVY - Double-face letter series.     |
| B. | Numerical Series             | 20000 to 22028 (plus)                 |
|    | Mixed 8", 10", 11", 12" inch | NAVY - Single-side & Double-sided.    |
|    | later reissued as            | NAVY - Double-face letter series.     |
| C. | G- Series - Reissues on the  | PHON-O-PHONE - ORANGE - Double-sided. |
| D. | Numerical Special Series     | "NATIONAL" GRAND RECORD (one only)    |
- 

AN APPEAL FOR INFORMATION

If any member or record collector reading this article has any BEKA RECORD (8") or BEKA GRAND RECORD (10") or 11" and 12" inch size 'Beka Record' - I would be most grateful to receive the information - for although the details of several hundred releases in the Indian repertoire are known there are still a large number of 'blank entries' - about which we do not have the data - so any contribution - direct to the Secretary of the Society of Indian Record Collectors would be most appreciated - with a view to eventually publishing a listing of the Indian repertoire of the 'Beka Record' - so that all might share in the 'treasure of this label'

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 opportunity of  
 hearing them.  
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 don't make  
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- Bedana**  
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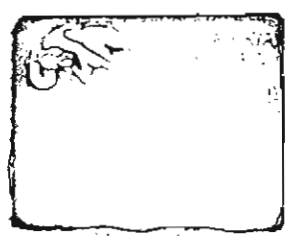
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**Babo Bhola Nath Banerjee**  
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**Babo Rudra Govind Goswami**  
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**Talim Hossain**  
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FROM THE BENGALIEE WEEKLY WEDNESDAY JANUARY 1, 1908.

## CANNED CONCERTS

By Prof.R.C.Mehta Hon.Secretary,Indian Musicological Society,Baroda

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This article first appeared in the Journal of the Indian Musicological Society, JIMS Vol.1 Jan. - Mar.1974 as an editorial.

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During the last few years we lost Omkar Nath, Bade Gulam Ali, Vilayat Hussain, Hafiz Ali Khan, Allauddin Khan and now Amir Khan - all in the age of electronics, L.P.s and tape recordings.

True, we have tit-bits of small three minutes discs and also a few LPs of many of our prominent musicians. All India Radio also have a small holding of discs and tape recordings. It requires to be reminded that art, *object d'art* is greater than the artist, and while artist can not live beyond a certain span of life, art can. This is true not only of literature, painting and sculpture, but now, in the age of tape-recordings and LPs of music also. In literature, in 'cold' print, we miss the sound of words and the utterance and in painting, we have to satisfy ourselves with the copies - the originals hang, in silence, in museums or private collections. The great sculptures have also a similar life, but they remain for connoisseurs to enjoy, for the upcoming to derive inspiration from and as legacy to the future.

Then, I ask, why are we so lethargic about 'perpetuating' our music? There appears to be no dearth of praise about our great musical traditions. We believe our classical music as second to none in the musical cultures of the world. But then what are we doing about its preservation? Preserving, (not in the manner folk songs are preserved in the fast changing social conditions, but) as *ART - OBJECT*.

This could be done by extensive recording of our first rate artists. The scope of such recording is unlimited. Complete 'concerts' from 100 minutes to 200 minutes. should be made available as *CANNED CONCERTS*.

We have a prejudice against 'Canned Music'. We want live music, live concerts, artist on stage, with all his stage personality, gimmicks, mask and stratagems, and advertised or announced greatness of his music. We enter a concert hall already in a spell or ready to fall for it. We want to listen to the original sound of music, but most of the time, and at most of the places, we get the sound through the boxes, even in small auditoriums. Of course, the sensitive listener always would care for the original sound and sits as near the artist as possible - if he can afford to do so!

In live Indian concerts, one finds, not infrequently, a musician inclined to adjust his presentation to fancied demands. Special records will have no such pressures on the artist. This is an advantage of no small merit. Through unabridged renderings of Ragas on tapes, we will have a much more reliable aesthetic story of the artist (better than the story of Dipak of Tansen), and a real experience of the art, not wordy descriptions. Canned music of an artist recorded in the artist's best creative period,

could be much better than his 'live' music presented in his declining days of lost or eroded creative vitality.

It could also be suggested to those conscientious artists, who would care to leave their music for posterity, to have their music tape-recorded in the best possible manner, for durations they prefer for their music for each individual item. An artist, may have thus, his 'works', like books of an author, in any number. Indian music has traditions, but no real past; there is no reference back, no record of music, no music history. It is possible to remedy this situation. Conceded that there is no substitute to live music, it must be realized that we cannot afford to lose the music with the loss of the artist. The two are apart and have different destinies. Let us have a foresight. Several full concerts, of our first rate artists, should be recorded, either by Government, Academics, Trusts or Societies or individuals or Patrons, and made available to listeners for community listening as '*CANNED CONCERTS*'. The strength of this proposal lies in my belief that we just cannot afford to see our music buried along with the musician; that, though the best way to enjoy music is the live concert, the second best way is to enjoy its true sound-print. Eulogies, lamentations and speeches at the artist's birth or death anniversary functions is the least satisfactory way to pay tributes to the departed soul; the artist is endearingly remembered, his art unethically forgotten.

In the short space of this editorial, it is not possible to deal with questions of copyright over the recorded music, Canned Concert fees, etc. These are minor questions. The main question is to realize the cultural, the musical and the historical importance of conserving our music in the best possible way.

Today we have better means to preserve and recreate our music than the never-so-dependable method of oral transmission. Suppose we had the tapes of concerts of Falyaz Khan, Abdul Karim Khan, Omkar Nath, Hafiz Ali, Alladin Khan..., (Oh, so many others of only the last 25 year), - a fantasy of course - but then a richer musical life for all of us would have been possible!

Let us not, then lose time. Let us make a better promise to the next generation of our artists, and the consumers: the lovers of art and music, the society, and the cultures of the world.

Prof.R.C.Mehta, Hon. Secretary, Indian Musicological Society, Jambu Bet,  
Dandia Bazar, Baroda 390 001, INDIA.

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Prof.R.C.Mehta's concept of Canned Concerts seems to be well accepted in last fifteen & odd years. This is evidenced by large number of records, audio & video pre recorded cassettes & the markets flooded with ultra modern HI-FI equipments. Due to lack of time concerts are becoming less & less popular & music lovers prefer to have Canned Concerts at a time & place convenient to them. Also it is a good sign that artists of topmost rank have no hesitations in canning their concerts.

*EDITOR.*

*"CANNED CONCERTS" - COMMENTS ON THE SUBJECT*

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These comments first appeared in JIMS April - June 1974. Comments are edited.

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1) Abdul Halim Jaffer Khan; (Bombay):Famous Sitar Player

To have "Canned Concerts" of top class artists is a top class idea, but, suppose after some years you find that the "Cans" are filled up with just a few favored artists, that would kill the spirit of Art and Art only.

My important suggestion is, that the artists of the later half of the 20th century have already been extensively recorded, even for a long duration, and they are available in many parts of the world. But the artists of the early period of the century whose music was fortunately recorded, but is rare to find now, should be preserved first. This could be done by issuing appeals and advertisements to people who have them. The Gramophone Company may be requested to issue a fresh discs of our master musicians of glorious past, for the benefit of the Society and the general public as also it would help the new realization of maintaining the posterity in Indian music.

The Gramophone Company, in the beginning had introduced Chudiwale-Chudi records on which some of the very early time artists were recorded. If we miss to re-record them with the better facilities available today, we would miss them for ever. The later discs are also in the same obsolete condition. Such discs, and the AIR recordings of old master musicians like Ashaq Ali Khan, Behre Wahid Khan, Mohammed Khan Faridi Desai, Waze Buwa, Shankar Rao Pandit, Rajab Ali Khan, Amanat Khan, Master Krishnarao Phulambrikar, Bal Gandharva, Omkarnath Thakur, etc. are there. Most of them, even younger generation of today has missed, deserve priority to be preserved.

When such a scheme is under study to have full length concerts recorded, then, in my opinion, the use of Video-Tape is inevitable.

2. S. Balachander (Madras):Top Most Veena Player

As regards taping and canning of concerts, we know that very few organizations have the mechanical means, technical expertise plus of course the financial-resource to practically fulfill this project....& they are also already at it....But, the other fact also remains that the above are 'arranged' concerts FOR TAPING purposes....which, in all fairness, could only be thus.

When the question arises of taping and canning Live concerts, a flood of practical problems shoot up: Who are the artistes to be thus recorded? Who, primarily will do the selection of such artistes for such recordings?? Who is to okay finally the musically, acoustically and technically balanced

product for Preservation purposes??? Who is to undertake such recordings? Who should actually do the recordings? Who pays Whom? And.... more than anything else How much???? and Who "Preserves??

3. B.C. Deva:(Delhi):A musicologist known for his insights In Psychoacoustics.

The type of music that has to be so preserved need not be only classical music. The right heritage of our tribal and folk music which are fast undergoing change, traditional regional music, and I would say some of the fine melodic creations in films and outside should also be so recorded..... It is not only a question of preservation for posterity but also of making such music available to interested listeners, now where live music is not always possible....

Obviously taped music is not only the way of preserving our music for the present and for posterity. Discs and tapes are there of course, but very important channels are the audio-visual recordings; video and films. The latter is perhaps less expensive. These two have the advantage of making concerts visible as well as audible. The physical presence of musicians and the concert atmosphere can thus be caught, even though not fully. Of course there is the technical advantage of seeing how an instrument is actually played, for instance..... And there is always the very obvious satisfaction of looking at the musician while hearing his or her music.

4. V.H.Deshpande : Bombay - Musician & Critic

Music can and must be preserved for posterity in other ways also such as T.V. and film devices. A Reference Library of Canned Music at each important centre would go a long way in improving the quality of musical criticism in our country & would consequently also contribute to the improvement in the quality of musical performance and its understanding by the public.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

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Almost all the suggestions & the comments made by the experts & the veterans in the field have been accepted by now & several of them have been put into practice. Live concerts on video / audio cassettes & on compact discs is the new development in the last decade of this century. Already conscious efforts for the preservation of our musical treasures are being taken by several individuals & institutions. Over last two decades institutions like Sangeet Natak Academy, National Centre of Performing Arts (N.C.P.A.), Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya, Sangeet Mahabharati, Sangeet Research Academy are actively engaged in research & the preservations. Private record collectors have large collections. At Miraj in



Maharashtra Gandharva Mahavidyalaya branch is engaged in building a library / an archives of live concerts recordings & they have a vast collection on spool tapes & on cassettes.

Mr. Harminder Singh Hamraz, Honorary Member of SIRC has brought out five volumes of Hindi Film Geet Kosh. Several other solo efforts & projects are on going/complete in which documentation/discographical aspects of a singer, musician etc. are undertaken. Very soon large number of discographical & reference books will be available for the researchers & music lovers. Mr. Michael Kinnear, Australia has already published A Discography of North & South Indian Classical Music (Greenwood Press) which gives information about the recordings on Long Playing Records & audio cassettes.

SIRC is also trying in a small way to bring together the record collectors & music lovers. We have identified large number of record collectors having valuable treasures with them. Mr. V.A.K. Ranga Rao, Madras has a personal collection of over 30,000 gramophone records.

Taking the idea of the Canned Concerts little further we all must work together to form National Sound Archives like National Film Archives of Poona with branches at four major cities viz. Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay & Madras. In this Archives EVERYTHING that is recorded will be PRESERVED for the music lovers of this generation & for the several generations to come. So let us all work in unison to fulfill this wonderful dream.



A PHOTO FRAME OF OLD RECORD LABELS & COVERS FROM MR. B. SOBHRAJ

VASVANI'S HOUSE AT ULHASNAGAR NEAR BOMBAY, INDIA