

Games and Sports in Ancient Rural Backward Life and Culture

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ABSTRACT:

Health means physical, mental and spiritual health. To keep health well games and sports are essential. From very ancient time there was culture of games and sports in civilised society. Competitions, festivals on physical culture were held in civilised countries. People believe that healthy body is the temple of living god. It was prominent in folk life and backward communities. In West Bengal dance, jump, run were main parts of folk festivals. By these developments of body, mind and spirit were made. So these were very popular. There was no material gain, but there was joy in physical culture. There was no need of costly equipments for such games and sports. In West Bengal, ancient rural games among backward communities are of two types - a) Indoor games b) Outdoor games.

Key Words: Folk, Games and Sports, Backward life and culture, Physical Education.

There is an old saying - 'Health is Wealth.' Health means physical, mental and spiritual. To keep health well, games and sports are essential. Modern time is busy time and has no spare time for physical culture. Especially rural people mostly of labour classes cannot get time for physical culture. So they should be aware of physical education.

From very ancient time there was culture of physical education in civilised society. Competitions, festivals on physical culture were held in civilised countries. People believe that healthy body is the temple of living god. It was prominent in folk-life and backward communities. In West Bengal dance, jump, race were main parts of folk festivals. By these developments of body, mind and spirit were made. Team-spirit and competitive attitude were made. Fellow feelings and obedience were made in such culture. People of upper class could enjoy such games and sports. So these were very popular. There was no material gain, but there was joy in physical culture. There was no need of costly equipments for such games and sports.

In West Bengal, ancient rural games among backward communities are of two types - a) Indoor games b) Outdoor games.

Some outdoor games are -

For male / boy	For female / girl	For both
Tik Dung, Dung Gadagadi, Chaka Chalano, Malla, Gerh Pitapiti, Jhurul Jhanp, Sita Haran etc.	Kitkit, Buri Chhuya, Bou Bosa etc.	Ha-du-du, Kumir Danga, Buri Basanta, Kanamachhi, Khari Khoja, Satar Dewa, Look-lukani, Pithkumri etc.

Others - Digbaji, Kachhim Chala, Nuanphela, Pujoyabosa etc.

1. Tik Dung : The other name of Tik Dung game is Dandaguli. It is very personal game of rural boys. Though it is an Indian game, but it has some specialities in West Bengal. One stick and small Tik or guli are needed to play this game. It is played in a big and open ground. Physical exercise and mental intelligence can be develop in this game. Many boys of different ages can participate this game. Similarity of this game is found with the cricket of the western countries. Tik is thrown to a long distance and it is again got back to a definite place in a particular way.

2. Dung Gadagadi : Several Dung or wooden sticks of a particular size are used to play the very popular rural game Dung Gadagadi. One side of the stick should be sharp. Generally it is played on the bank of the pond or river or a wet muddy place. Boys divided in two parties can play before bathing time. Half naked boys are eager to play this game. Brain and physical culture are develop in this game. The sharp end of the stick is stuck into the soft clay. Power of arm and finger increases in this game.

3. Chaka Chalano : To play Chaka Chalano a hard stick and a chaka or tyre are needed. Generally this chaka is an used-old tyre of bicycle. Boys drive this chaka on kuli of village and get joy. Race competition is attached with this game. Spectators assemble to enjoy this game at kuli and they cheer up the competitors.

4. Malla : Malla is an old Indian game. This game was held as very popular competition in the age of Purans. It has similarity with wrestling or Kusti. In West Bengal it was called Malla Juddha. It is individually played or in a group. The ground on which Malla players play is full of sand or soft clay. No equipment is needed to play this game. Only strong and stout health is needed. Particular rules are followed up to play this game. One judge or referee is needed to judge this game. The kings or landlords were the patrons of this game. The winner was awarded a valuable prize or money.

5. Gerh Pitapiti : Gerh is made of torn cloth, leaves, grass, hay and stitched with a thread and is made like a ball. One player throws it to other player; he may catch it and throw to other. In this way every player tries to hurt other and defeats him. This is played in open field, so that others cannot disturb. Without care this game may injure other. All limbs of the body can be developed in this game. In olden times this game was seen in rural area. But at present it is rare seen.
6. Jhurul Jhanp : Jhurul Jhap is played on a tree by the river side or a tank. Players jump from the branches of the tree and fall on water. If one falls on water the second jumps from the branch into the water. By this game hanging from branches and jumping on water make the participant strong. Generally boys of rural backward class take part in this game.
7. Sita Haran : Sita haran has similarity with the very popular Sita Haran event of the Ramayana. One boy is treated as Sita and he remains within a circle like Sita of the Ramayana. Another boy tries to take him off or snatch him away when other boys resist him. In this way sometimes after Sita, the boy is taken off. This game is played in the open field and no other equipment is needed to play this game.
8. Kit Kit : Two parties with one player in each party can play this game. Round like earthen pot or stone is needed to play this game in a particular table. This table is made in the field on two sides. One player stapes in one table and throws the guthi with the help of her legs. She will try to take it to other ghar while the first player keeping her leg will stand there shouting 'tha'. From that part she will throw the guthi to other part of the table. That part on any side will be her bought. While doing every player will shout 'Kit Kit'. In this way any player of any party can buy all houses and will be winner.
9. Buri Chhuya : Buri Chhuya is very popular game to backward rural girls. One participant makes up her Buri. She remains in a middle of a circle. Other player or opponent party tries to snatch the player by touching when some players oppose her, and try to catch her. If she is caught she cannot play again. In this way every player tries to touch the Buri. At last Buri is not caught the party is called winner. This game indicates that girls of rural Bengal also had the habit of playing games like boys.
10. Bou Bosa : This game is play between two teams with equal players in each teams. Toss will be made - who will start first. One player will sit in a square field. One player will take her away with shouting 'do-uu' and place her in other round circle. Other players of opponent team will scatter round her and will try to take her away. She will do so with single breath. If she fails, the other player will take her place. Chhora or songs are used to play this every interesting game. One player is made. 'Phuri' who will say name of a leaf, other player will bring that leaf and keep it under sand. Some players will try to keep it out. If she succeeds, she will be phuri. This will to for a long time.
11. Ha-du-du : Ha-du-du was once a very popular game in rural Bengal. There will be two parties of equal players. A straight line will be drawn in the middle of the field. One player from one side will shout Ha-du-du and will touch any player of another party. Players of other party will try to catch him or her and through him or her before the middle line. The player who will be able to escape or make him or her free will be winner and the other player will be called defeated. In this way game will go on till one party becomes larger on count and will be called winner. In this game exercise of whole body is made and wit of the player and trick to hold other is cultured. So this game helps physical and mental development.
12. Kumirdanga : Two parties – one kumir and the other danga in an open field. The kumir will try to hold any boy of danga party. One player of danga party will shout – 'Kumir tor jole namachi.' Kumir will try to hold him or her. If he can, that player will not be allowed to come to the ground. In this way all players will try to defeat the kumir. So long kumir is not caught the game will go on. No

equipment is needed to play this rural game. So these types of games are played with very joy and eagerness in rural backward boys and girls. Physical development is made in such game.

13. Buri Basanta : Buri Basanta is played between two parties. It is partly similar with the game Sita Haran. Boys and girls can play this game.

14. Kanamachhi : This game is played without any instrument or equipment and players have no definite number. By any process one player is made phuri and his or her eyes are bound or covered by a rumal. Phuri is kanamachhi. Others players roam round the kanamachhi shouting a chhora – ‘Kanamachhi vo-vo, jakhea pavi take chhow.’ If kanamachi can identify or touch any player, then he or she will be phuri. In this way the game will go on by turn.

15. Khari khoja : A stick called khari is kept in the midst of dust. A player covers another player’s eyes by hands. He or she holds the player to the heap of dust and says the player to collect the khari with dust. Then the khari with dust is kept elsewhere. After some times the player is asked to find out the khari where the player kept. If the player succeeds, he is winner.

16. Satardewa : Satardewa is a type of swimming game. It is held in a river or a big tank. It is treated as a competitive game. Many eager people rush to enjoy the very popular rural game – Satardewa. In rural Bengal boys and girls of all communities generally bathe in river. So they are very familiar with river. From very childhood children of have and have not know how to swim. This habit is now in vogue also. Not only to cross river or for running, swimming are essential to all sects of rural Bengal. Sometimes swimming helps them in many ways not only as a game but also a practice of life-culture.

17. Look lukani : It is a gang game. Boys and girls play this game separately or in the same group. The game takes place in a farmyard, in bushes or in a solitary place of a house. This game is also known as ‘Chore Police.’ All members tries to seek or find out them. The person who is found out first now becomes chore or phuri. If any-body touches the chor, he becomes chore again. This is called ‘Dhappa’. In this game counting of number is used. Intelligence, patience, cleverness are developed in this game.

18. Pithkumri : Pithkumri means one person rides on other person’s back or ‘pith’ and carries to a certain place. In a lottery process the person who will ride and who will carry are decided. In this game the capacity for riding on one's back and carrying the same is learnt. Boys and girls of rural labour class get much fun in this game. More over habit of carrying weight on back is practised.

19. Digbaji : Digbaji is a one kind of Gymnastics. Players sit on ground and revolve their whole body backward or foreword. In this game all parts of the body are moved. So it is also a kind of physical exercise. No equipment is necessary in this game.

20. Kachhimchola : Kachhimchola means to move like a kachhim or tortoise – bending the neck under the knee and to crawl like a tortoise. This slow movement of body is one type of gymnastics.

21. Niyanphela : Nuyanphela is arching, that is after running a short distance the player throws his body bending like an arch. This practice shows the other players to bend the body in the same manner. The game goes on as long as players want to play. So this is very attractive game both to the participants and spectators.

22. Pujaybosa : Pujaybosa is a kind of Asana. Players sit like a worshipper or Pujari, folding his legs or twisting and keeping hands on the knees. Eyes of the player are closed and the player remains silent. In this game development of body and mind grows and the player learns to be attentive.

Such kind of rural games and sports are very useful to keep healthy body and mind. These are related with ancient rural backward culture. As importance was laid on physical education and sports

in ancient rural backward culture, even today such kind of importance should be laid down on physical education and sports for benefit of rural citizens.

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