



From the Editor's desk...

Dear colleagues,

As much as storytelling has played an important part in one's growing years, games and sports have possibly played an even bigger part. Hence, from the last issue of Scribbles which displayed the power of storytelling, we decided to show case and celebrate the traditional sports of India. Partly, the idea was triggered by the Commonwealth Games 2022 held in July / August. India won a number of gold medals, finished 4th in the medals tally and made a big mark in many sports. Archery, Boxing, Shooting, Wrestling, all traditional games, were popular.

My mind flashed back in time to my growing years. The extended family was together, especially in the evenings after school. Many of my cousins were around my age, though most were boys. Therefore, I learnt to play many games – considered more for boys – kabaddi, marbles, spinning top, Gilli danda, badminton, seven stones and so on. Of course, during summer holidays at the village and home, I learnt to play pallankuzhi, nondi, hopscotch, parama padam etc.

All the games required a few players and we had to go around and convince people to play our game. There were always views on which game should be played on that day! A test for our negotiation skills. Collaboration and teamwork were always tested and the one who was a poor loser needed coaching and mentoring. Of course, anger management had to be done. I still remember that in a fit of anger a person took a huge stone and broke the spinning top of another and the crying boy went and complained to his mother and it became a big issue between two families. So we were given lessons on values and fair play! We did not have a TV or mobile phone to play with. So forcibly one had to spend time with people, thereby developing inter-personal skills. Of course, some games were a test of strategy and memory. Thus, there was food for brain development too!

I could go on and on about the competencies that these games helped us develop. I am so glad that in this respect I belong to a generation that had an opportunity to play a variety of games to hone different skills.

Based on research we have put together a brief on traditional games from different parts of the country. I'm sure this would be useful and interesting to read, especially for those who have not heard of some of them. There are contributions from colleagues sharing their experience in playing some of these games during their childhood.

For those with young children / siblings, please pass on this knowledge and create an opportunity for them to play some of these games. I'm sure it will contribute to their personality development.

I hope you enjoy this issue as much as we did in putting it together.

Aaneda Jagan



TRADITIONAL INDIAN GAMES

An introduction to traditional sports and games of India

India is an ancient civilisation. Each part of this country has different cultures and traditions. The same is true for sports and games. Several of these sports whose origin lies in ancient India are famous in the modern world too and are played in international platforms too.

Meaning of traditional games

Traditional games are leisure activities played collectively to pass the time. Traditional games are passed down through generations and promote the tradition and culture of the land.

Importance of these games

Indian traditional games help promote social interactions and teamwork. They improve physical development, brain stimulation, concentration, and problem-solving skills. More importantly, these games help uphold India's rich tradition and enlighten children about it.

History of traditional sports in India

The history of traditional sports in India dates back to the ancient times. It was traced from the times of Vedas and Indus Valley Civilisation. It was revealed after the excavations done by the Archaeological Survey of India at Mohenjodaro and Harappa that people of that time indulged in some physical activity.

Ancient India

The people from Ramayana, Mahabharata, Harappa and Indus Valley Civilisation used to play a variety of games using marbles, balls and dice. Hunting, swimming, boating and boxing were

some of the most common sports during that period. All those sports were played and nurtured quite extensively in India in ancient times.

In Vedas

The main anthem in the history of traditional sports in India was a mantra depicted in the Atharva Veda. The mantra says that, "Duty is in my right hand and the fruits of victory in my left". There is a common notion that many of modern Olympic disciplines are actually the sophisticated versions of the traditional games of strength and speed that flourished in ancient India.

Some of the popular sports of today, like chess, wrestling, polo, archery, hockey, ludo, playing cards, Indian martial arts, judo and karate are believed to have originated in India and hence, can be called Indian traditional sports. Apart from these sports, yoga is another form of sport that has a huge presence in the history of traditional sports in India. Yoga was an integral part of ancient Indian culture and it was practised by almost every school of thought to achieve spiritual and mental peace.

In Indian epics

The history of traditional sports in India mentions that they were even common during the epic era. These epics state about a number of Indian traditional sports like dicing, gymnastics, and Gilli danda. In the Manas Olhas (1135 AD.), Someshwar described sports like bharashram (weight-lifting) and bharamanshram (walking), both of which are established Olympic disciplines at present. He also mentioned mall-stambha, which was a peculiar form of wrestling.



In Indian Puranas

The Indian Puranas also mention the game of rope fighting. Most of these Indian traditional sports were also an integral part of military practise in the ancient Indian empires.

In medieval era

The medieval history of traditional sports in India witnessed the introduction of a number of new sports. The sports like thoda, kalaripayattu, chaupar, pallanguli, gilli danda, asol aap, vallam kali or boat race in Kerala, gella - chutt, hiyang tannaba, inbuan, insuknawr, kang shanaba, kabaddi, kho-kho, lamjei, mallakhamb, mizo inchai, mukna, yubee - lakpee, sagol kangjei etc., came into existence during this period.

In modern era

The present-day concept of coaches is also considered to have had its presence in the history of traditional sports in India. The guru-shishya trend or the teacher-pupil relationship in the ancient India is believed to be the initiator of contemporary coaching concept. The gurus in ancient India used to teach their shishyas about various Indian traditional sports like archery, chariot racing, wrestling, hunting, horse riding, weight lifting, hammer-throwing, swimming, javelin throw (toran) or the discus throw (chakra). Another Indian traditional sport, sword fighting is also believed to be the ancestor of modern fencing. These traditional sports were played quite extensively in different parts of India and they are being played in India in present days, as well.

Some of these games have also made their way to the regional and international tournaments

like Olympic games, Commonwealth games, Asian games, SAF games, etc. These sports are considered among the most notable ones in the history of traditional sports in India, as they have already paved a long way towards the road of success. They have made themselves a hallmark in the world of sports, as well.



Traditional Indian games and their origin

S.No	Games	Traditional Indian games originated/popular in which state
1	Gilli Danda /Lippa	Gujarat
2	Satoliya/Pithoo/Lagori	Karnataka
3	Kancha or Lakhoti	Bihar
4	Kho-Kho	Tamil Nadu
5	Gutte	Tamil Nadu
6	Hopscotch or Nondi	Tamil Nadu
7	Lattoo	Several Indian Villages
8	Antakshari	The earlier start of Antakshari was from Sri Lankan's Tamil Radio, further, it was adopted by Bombay-based Radio channels and TV anchors. Gradually, it started as a family pastime.
9	Hide and Seek/Aankh Micholi	Played Pan India by kids
10	Chaupar/Pachisi	Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan
11	Kabaddi	Tamil Nadu
12	Pallankuzi	South India
13	Maram Pitti/Picchi Banti	Originated in TN, is an Indian version of dodgeball. It is played with a rubber ball or tennis ball.
14	Anchankal/Kallankal/5 Stones	Ancient Asia
15	Ashtapada (8 squares)	It is an Indian board game that predates chess and was mentioned on the list of games that Gautama Buddha use to play.
16	Chaturanga	Unknown (Somewhat like chess and Ashtapada)
17	Snakes and Ladders	Ancient India
18	Vish amrit	Many parts of India
19	Kokla chapaki/ Ghoda badam chai	Punjab
20	Posham pa	Rural India
21	Dhopkhel	Assam
22	Carrom	Punjab
23	Raja-Mantri-Chor-Sipahi	Pan India



Devdutt Pattanaik: Even the Gods played sport

Sport, as we know it today, comes from ancient Greece where games were part of the funeral rituals to honour dead heroes and leaders. India also has a long history of the sport. In Harappa, seals suggest that the people were familiar with bullfighting or bull leaping, a common agricultural sport, similar to Jallikattu in Tamil Nadu. Amongst Harappan toys, we find dice. In the Vedas, we find references to chariot racing and gambling with dice, popular outdoor and indoor sports respectively. In Ramayana and Mahabharata, the warrior princes are shown as being proficient in archery, mace-warfare, fencing, wrestling, and similar military sports. Thus, we can safely say that sport in India began in both agricultural and martial communities.

In early Buddhist art, we find images of Surya on a chariot flanked by female archers, indicating that women, like men, enjoyed archery and often took part in hunting expeditions. In the Mahabharata, we hear the story of Renuka who could run so fast that she could catch hold of her husband's arrow before it struck the target. In Tamil folk Mahabharata, a sphinx-like creature with lion or deer feet, known as Purusha-mriga, challenges Bhima to a race. Also in folktales, all competitive games involving sticks (gilli-danda), body (kabaddi), balls (lagori) and rope (rassa-kassi) are said to be invented by eternal rivals, Pandavas and Kauravas.

India is known as the land of board games. Games like snakes and ladders were invented by Jain monks to teach people karma. Ganjifa cards were popular with Indian kings and queens. On temple floors, we see carvings of various games like ludo and chaturanga, which eventually gave rise to the game of chess as we know it. In mythology, Shiva and Parvati continuously play dice games, as do Vishnu and Lakshmi. This is why board games and cards are a popular part of rituals, especially during Diwali. Wrestling scenes are carved on temple walls. Krishna loved wrestling, though Ram was never shown wrestling, differentiating the avatar that was raised in a cowherd family from one born in a royal family. Bhima and Duryodhana are linked



to swimming and holding their breath under water for long durations. In Jain literature, the brothers Bharata and Bahubali compete in several competitive games like staring until one blinks or striking each other with water in a pond till one loses balance, as a way to establish a victor while avoiding war.

In Kerala, the Mohiniattam dance involves a segment where women play with balls on the sea-shore. Is that reference to jugglery, catch or volleyball? We can only speculate. Just as we can speculate if Ravana carrying the Kailasa mountain or Krishna carrying Govardhana is a metaphor for weight-lifting and if Hanuman jumping over the sea is a metaphor for long-jump.

Historians have pointed out that polo was played in Manipur nearly 2,000 years ago. It was called sagol (horse) kangjei (hockey). It was also brought to India by Turkish warlords and Mughal soldiers who used dead sheep as balls and sometimes, elephants instead of horses. Legend has it that Bodhidharma took martial arts from Kerala to Shaolin temple in China almost 1,500 years ago. This sport history has been eclipsed by India's intellectual past, perhaps because Indians tend to value the mind over the body, rather than seeing mind as a continuum of the body.

* Extracted from *Mid-Day*

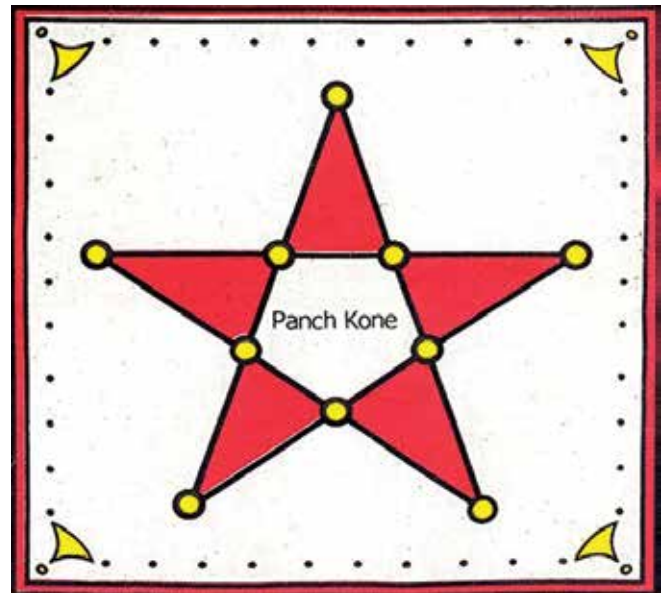


Archery

Archery is the skill of using a bow and arrow. Archery in India dates back to the Vedic period. In the beginning, man used archery to hunt animals. As the years went by, it soon became a sport. The earliest mentions of archery in India is in the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. In these two epics, many of the characters were said to be great archers. Archery was a basic necessity for survival and hunting food. Later, the bow and arrow became a weapon for war. Now archery is a sporting event for pleasure. Moreover, it is now one of the events of the Olympic Games.

Panch kone

Panch kone is a popular Indian traditional game. You can find this game board engraved on ancient temples and monuments all over India. Panch kone means five corners or five cones. It is played on a board with five-point stars painted on it. This is a strategy game that requires the player to move around the board and finally with a single piece. Chinese checkers is based on this game.



Kushti

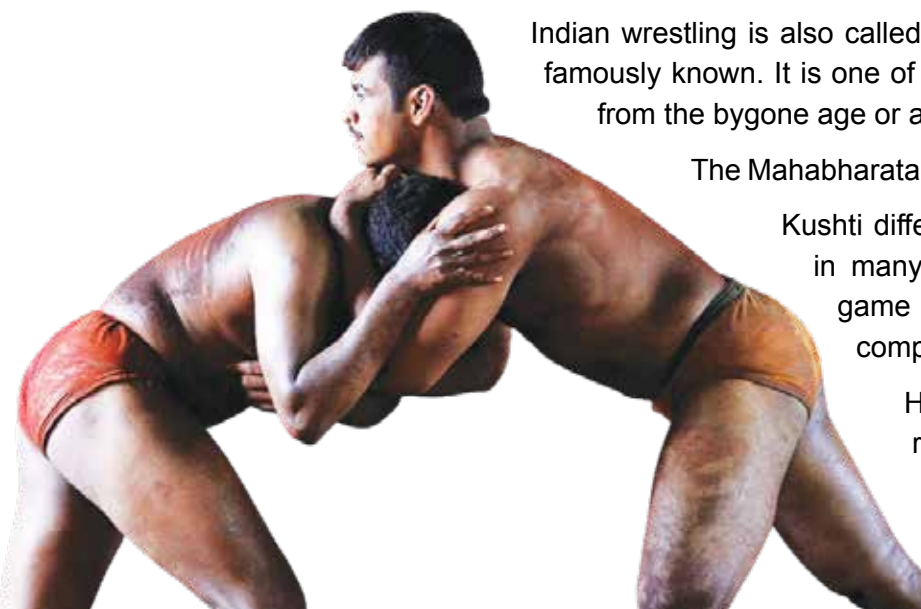
Indian wrestling is also called kushti or pehlwani. This sport too is very famously known. It is one of the oldest sports in India and it originated from the bygone age or about 4000 BC.

The Mahabharata epic has one of the first mentions of Kushti.

Kushti differs from free-style wrestling, that happens in many different parts of the world. Earlier, the game of kushti would end only when one of the competitors signalled defeat.

However, matches today do have separate rounds and also have a referee who intervenes.

This sport has also come to find itself as one of the events in the Olympic Games.



Mallakhamb

The ancient Indian sport of Mallakhamb (a type of Indian gymnastics on a vertical pole) first gained widespread international attention on the sidelines of the Berlin 1936 Olympics.

At first glance, Mallakhamb may come across as a form of aerial yoga or gymnastics performed on a vertical pillar (traditionally a sheesham or Indian rosewood pole polished with castor oil).

However, at its core, Mallakhamb is a form of ancient martial arts intended as a training aid for wrestlers and ancient warriors. 'Malla' literally means wrestling and 'khamb' translates to pole. Together, Mallakhamb means wrestling on a pole. Wrestlers and warriors used to use the pole as a training apparatus to perfect martial arts moves which they could later use on opponents in the ring or the battlefield.

Sometimes referred to as the mother of all ancient Indian sports, Mallakhamb's exact origins are almost



impossible to trace. References of some form of Mallakhamb can be found in ancient Indian epics like the Ramayana, ancient Chandraketurah pottery dating back to the second to first century BCE and also accounts of Buddhist Chinese pilgrims to India.

There have been references that historical Maratha Empire figures like Lakshmbai, the Rani of Jhansi, Tantia Tope and Nana Saheb practised mallakhamb. The training methodology which honed balance, dexterity and discipline particularly suited Maratha warriors, who were known to be the pioneers of guerrilla warfare.

Dhopkhel

Dhopkhel is also called 'dhop khel' or 'dhoop khel'. It is a ball game that two teams of eleven players play. This is a traditional game of the state of Assam. It is said that it is closely related with the development of the state.

This sport requires stamina, speed and tactics. This sport is seasonal. People come from various places to play this sport in the spring festival also called Rongali Bihu of this state. This game flourished under the rule of the Ahoms.



Chess

Chess is one of the world’s most popular and beloved games. The United Nations estimates that close to 605 million people around the globe — or about 8% of the world population — play it



regularly. While some games slide into obscurity after spending a few years on store shelves, chess has survived the test of time.

While there is no one person who can be credited as the sole creator of chess, most — though not all — historians think the game originated in India.

The modern word ‘shatranj,’ used in both Farsi and Arabic, derives clearly from the Sanskrit ‘chaturanga’. “And that is ‘chatur,’ the root of Latin ‘quattuor,’ [meaning] four, plus ‘anga,’ meaning limbs.”

The Sanskrit name “chaturanga” roughly translates to four members of an army, with the four members being elephants, horses, chariots and foot soldiers. The first chess iterations, which dates to A.D. 760, contained chariot and elephant pieces. These were eventually replaced by the rook and bishop, respectively. The modern chess pieces include the king, queen, bishop, rook, pawn and knight.

Mukna

Mukna is a sport which is a combination of wrestling and judo. It originated from the state of Manipur in the 15th century. It has become very famous since. It is said that this sport goes back to the Hayachak era.

This sport is always played on the last day of laarei haraoba festival. It defines which of the competitors is stronger. The techniques and styles of Mukna are similar to those of kushti. However, two-sport games do differ from each other.



Gilli danda

An amateur sport, gilli danda is one of the most thrilling traditional Indian games invented in India about 2,500 years ago. People believe that Gilli danda inspired western games like cricket, baseball and soft ball.

Gilli danda is famous, particularly, in rural areas and small towns among children. This sport is mainly famous in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan.

This game requires two sticks. The smaller, oval-shaped wooden piece is called “gilli”, whereas the longer one is termed as “danda”. The player needs to utilise the danda to hit the gilli at the raised end, which flips it into the air. While it is in the air, the player hits the gilli, as far as possible. Then, the player is required to run and touch a point (It is agreed with the players from before) outside the

circle before the gilli is taken by an opponent. The secret of winning this game is all in the technique of raising and hitting gilli.

One of the amazing things about the traditional game is that there are no strict rules about the upper limit of the number of players. It can be played between four players all the way up to 100 or even more players.



Jallikattu

Jallikattu is the sport of taming bulls. A part of the Pongal celebration in Tamil Nadu includes this sport. ‘Jalli’ means gold or silver coins and ‘kattu’ means tied.

Together it means coins that are tied on the horns of the bulls. The person who successfully tames the bull wins this prize.

This is an ancient sport that originates over 2,500 years ago. It is an ancient tradition that is very symbolic of the Tamil culture. Every year this sport takes place on the third day of this festival.

Jallikattu is similar to the Spanish event where the people run from the angry bulls. In this case, they are meant to tame the bulls.



Kite flying

Be it the festival of Makar Sankranti or Uttarayan or a celebration of Indian independence, both are synonymous with kite flying. Even though there is no historical evidence or written account of the kite's association with the festival or the occasion, it is an age-old tradition. During spring, the Indian sky is often dotted with colourful kites of all shapes and sizes, and one can occasionally find a kite runner or two dangerously dashing through the gullies collecting the ones cut.

Some historical sources suggest that the kites could have origins in Melanesia,



Micronesia and Polynesia, but it is widely believed to have been invented in China. The earliest written account of kite flying, from 206 BC, mentions that Hiuen Tsang had flown a kite to overawe the army of Liu Pang.

The earliest written accounts of the kite in ancient Indian literature can be found in the poetry of the thirteenth-century Marathi saint and poet, Namadev. In his poems or gathas, he called it a gudi, and there is a mention that the kites were made from kaagad (paper).

In his epic poem Ramcharitmanas, the seventeenth-century poet Tulsidas also mentioned kites and provided an anecdote of how Hanuman retrieved Rama's kite that had flown to Indralok. In the poem, he calls it a chagg.

Under the Mughals, kite flying was turned into a sport, primarily among the nobility. With growing popularity, the design was also enhanced for better aerodynamics. Mughal paintings and miniatures from the time show both men and women flying kites. It is believed that upon Jahangir's return to Delhi from a three-year exile in Allahabad in 1612, the residents of the city flew kites to celebrate his return while his mother offered a chaadar.

The tradition of kite flying continued even after the decline of the Mughal Empire. It was a seasonal activity that was carried out during festivals such as Uttarayan or Makar Sankranti, and in the Punjab region, on Basant Panchami and Baisakhi.



Aankh micholi

Aankh micholi is just a variation of another popular Indian game - chupan chupai. In this game, the denner is blindfolded, and the other players run around him/her. To make the game more fun kids call out the name of denner or touch him/her slightly. If the denner touches any one of the players, he/she is blindfolded next. This game is very helpful in developing the kid's alertness, sensory skills and exercise their tactical sense.





Vallam kali

Vallam Kali or boat race is one of the most popular and ancient sports in Kerala. This traditional sport is a form of canoe racing, and uses paddled war canoes. The game includes races of many kinds of paddled longboats - the traditional boats of Kerala. The race of chundan vallam or snake boat is the most popular game. Vallam kali is also known as the 'Snake Boat Race'. This sport is a display of extreme team spirit. All the oarsmen have to coordinate and row the boat in order to make sure that it stays steady.

This traditional art originated in Assyria, on a New Year's Day in 300 BC. In Kerala. During an early 14th - century war between the feudal

Kingdoms of Kayamkulam and Chembakassery, King Devanarayana of Chembakassery commissioned the construction of a war boat called 'Chundan Vallam'. He assigned a notable carpenter to create the boat. These snake boats are believed to be around 650 years old. The Vallam Kali or snake boat race in Kerala is mainly held in connection with the harvest festival, Onam, during the month of August or September. More than 30 wonderfully crafted snake boats compete with each other during the event. The distance of the race is 40 km and it is mainly conducted from the hills to the low-lying plains. 'Vanchipattu' is a poetry form in Malayalam language, which is commonly used during Vallam Kali and other related festivals.

Kambala

Kambala is commonly known as buffalo race. This race takes place in coastal Karnataka. This sport takes place between two pairs of buffalos. Each pair has one person riding them. In this sport, the buffalos have to run through paddy fields which are filled with slush and mud.

Initially, the reward for this sport was coconuts. However, nowadays the reward is gold or silver coins or sometimes even a cash prize. This event occurs every year from November right up to March. Many people gather around to watch and cheer this race.



People believe that the festival of kambala originates about 800 years ago. They believe that by celebrating this festival they can please the Gods for a good harvest.

Kalaripayattu

Kalaripayattu is the martial art form of Kerala and one of the oldest art forms in India. It dates back to 15000 BCE. Kalaripayattu's influence can be seen in most of the art forms of Kerala. In the past Kalaris (combat arena or battle field) formed an integral part of the lives of the people. Without any gender discrimination boys and girls in their childhood would be sent to the kalaris for practicing. With social life undergoing changes, the position of kalaris and their influence changed. Today, Kalaripayattu is staged during festivals and other occasions as a showpiece. People are more interested in kalari treatment (as a system of medicine) and marma chikitsa (treatment of vital parts).

This martial art uses swords, daggers, spears, and so on as weapons. It tests the coordination between mind and body. Kalaripayattu has different techniques like meipayattu (physical body exercise), vadi payattu (fight using sticks),



valpayattu (fight using swords) and verumkai prayogam (bare hand fight). Kalari treatment is a part of the curriculum. Kalaripayattu's own system of medicine based on ayurveda and kalari chikitsa (kalari treatment) is very unique.

Training of kalaripayattu includes learning about Ayurveda and also locating the vital points of the body.

The training of this martial arts is very meditative as opposed to being violent.



Camel race

A camel race is held every January in the Thar Desert of Rajasthan. The Bikaner Camel festival is a two-day and night festival that brings people from all around the world.

The camel race is the most famous race of this festival. People gather in large numbers to watch and support this race.

This race is part of the Rajasthani culture. The origins of this race are unknown. But it is said that this race has been taking place every year for the past several years.



Gutte / Anchankal / Kallankal

Gutte is more commonly known as five stones. Anchankal is widely played in Tamil Nadu. Children and adults both can play this game.

This game is very easy to play. Obviously, you are going to need five stones for this game. The objective of the game is to pick up all five stones while spinning one in the air. The game improves hand-eye coordination, concentration, memory, and aiming abilities. This is a very engaging game, and the best part is that you can create your own steps. This game was very famous among women and small girls. It is said that this game originates from Ancient India since 1184 BC.



Kancha

Kancha is played in the rural areas and small towns. The origins of this game go way back to ancient India. Kancha is another interesting, inexpensive traditional game invented in India. A favorite amongst youngsters, it is played using dark green glass marbles colloquially known as 'Kancha'. The game involves a player hitting the selected target marble using one of his own. Traditionally, the winner of the game takes away all Kanchas from the losing players.

The marble is held between the right hand and the forefinger of the left hand. The finger is pulled backward and is released with pressure almost in spring action. In another version, Kancha is almost played like a miniature version of golf where the player has to send his marble into a hole a couple of yards away from him/her. Kancha was a hit amongst youngsters considering that the marbles were inexpensive and the game could be played on any surface and weather.



Lagori / Satoliya

Lagori / Satoliya is also known as seven tiles. This game requires two teams.

Seven stones one smaller than the other are needed. These stones are then placed one on top of the other according to their size, from biggest to smallest. Each team gets nine chances, 3 players getting 3 chances each, to knock down the stones that are stacked vertically, from a distance of about 20ft with a ball (preferably a rubber ball). It is generally played between two teams, with a minimum of 3 players and a maximum of nine on each team.

This game requires extensive running and physical energy. Mainly children are seen playing this game in playgrounds and on roads.



It is said that this game originates from the southern part of India.

The beauty of this traditional Indian game lies in the fact that it can be played with minimal equipment. The simplicity of rules also makes it special. The sport is popular especially among the rural parts of the country.

Pallankuzhi

Pallankuzhi is one of the ancient games mostly played in the South India. It actually originated from Tamil Nadu but was later played in other southern

states like Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka and even in Sri Lanka and Malaysia. The game consists of a rectangular board which consists of 2 horizontal columns and 7 vertical columns in each horizontal column. Hence, there are 14 cup like columns. Cowry shells or tamarind seeds were used to play this game.

The origin of the Pallankuzhi game was during the period of the Chola dynasty in India. This game was played by the players on the premises of the temple and later on became quite famous in Tamil Nadu. The game is still played in some rural parts of India and is called kuzhipara, ali guli mane, or pichala peeta in different languages.



Lattoo

Lattoo is a popular game played in India using a Spinning top. This simple game came into existence in 3500 BC. In the beginning, tops were made of clay. Later, children began to use tops made of wood. Today, a variety of designed and coloured tops are available. There is a string which helps to spin the top and then helps to lift up the spinning top. Usually, two or more players can play this game. The players need to first wrap their tops with the string and then unwind it by pulling the string, making the top to rotate on the ground. The players need to pick their tops with the string as fast as they can. The player whose top spins the longest is declared as the winner.



Nondi

Nondi is a very old game in India. It was a very famous game that all children loved to play in schoolyards. Nondi is a traditional game of South India. It is a hopping game that is played in many rural areas and even small towns. It was said to be a game that only small girls played.

However, this game is now fading away as not many children play it anymore. This game has been around for the past several years. Hopefully, it continues to do so.

Antakshari

Antakshari is an entertaining Indian game which is played by both adults and children. It originated in India but now played all around the world. Many variations are made to the original idea. Variations are made based on the occasion such as family get-together, weddings, parties, etc. Two teams are made to play this game, one team sings a song, typically a bollywood song. Then the other team has to sing a song which begins with the last letter of the song sung by the first team. Both the teams keep taking their turns. The team which can't think of a song loses in the end.



Ashtapada

Ashtapada is the predecessor of chess. Just like a chessboard, the Ashtapada board is also divided into an 8×8 square grids but of one colour. Ashtapada is a dice game. There are markings on the corners and the centre square of the board. These squares are called castles. The pieces on these squares are safe, captured, or removed by the opponents.

Each player starts with an even number of pieces to play the game. The pieces must be moved clockwise around the board to enter the castle on the outer edge. Then they enter the castle in the centre in a clockwise direction. This is a game to reach the castle. Another variation of Ashtapada is Dasapada that is played on a 10×10 board.



Maram pitti

This game is the Indian game equivalent of Dodgeball. There are two teams scattered throughout the field. Players of one team try to hit the players of the opposing team with a sponge ball. Once a player is hit, he is out of the game. The ball can be passed between the players of the same team.

Chaupar / Pachisi

Chaupar is a very old and popular Indian game. It's origin can be traced back to the 14th century. It consists of a cross-shaped board that is either made from cloth or wool. Chaupar requires cowry shells & wooden pawns. Each player has four pawns and six cowry shells. The shells determine players' moves.

Pachisi is said to be the national game of India. Pachisi is a board game which translates to 'twenty-five'. Pachisi is different from Ludo. It was made simpler and then called Ludo. One should avoid confusing the two.

Chaupar is well-known since it was the genesis of the Kurukshetra war in Mahabharata. The Mughals were fond of this game, too. The Mughal emperor Akbar played a life-sized game of Pachisi. Pachisi was traditionally played on a symmetrical cross cloth.



Posham pa

This is an outdoor game played by three or more players. The age group for this game is 4-8 years. Two players join hands to form a “gate”. They sing a song. The other players pass through it in a line. After the song ends, the gatekeepers lower their arms and trap the player inside. The game continues till all the players have been caught in the gate.

The game is played differently in different regions of India. In some places, the trapped player is asked a question secretly, and the answer they give will determine which team they join. Once the two teams are formed, they play a brief game of tug-of-war. The team that manages to pull the opponent team wins.



Chowka bhara

Just like Snakes and Ladders, Chowka originates from the Vedic period of Indian history. It finds its most prominent mention in the Mahabharata, where the Pandavas gamble away their kingdom and wife to the Kauravas as a result of losing the game. Played in the courtly context, the game was primarily designed to enhance mathematical skills of young children.

The objective of this game is to beat the other players and get all their coins in the innermost square. It is as much as a game of chance – the number on the dice determines how many places you move – like a game of strategy. It is known by a variety of names across the Indian subcontinent: Challas Aath in Maharashtra, Kavidi Kali in Madhya Pradesh.



Jhandi munda

This involves dice betting and has been popular since the 18th century. Played mostly in the north-eastern part of India, especially Arunachal Pradesh, Jhandi Munda is an Indian die-based betting game. This six-sided dice game is also played in Nepal, where it is known as Langur Burja. Along with some slight variations the game can also be found worldwide. This may be due to its popularity with sailors in the British Royal Navy when it was better known as the Crown and Anchor.

The game uses six dices which have six sides each (represented by a club, diamond, spade, Heart, flag, face) and a gaming board. The rules involve



betting on the symbol that will appear most after the rolling of the dice. To be the winner, one must rightly predict the number of their chosen symbols which will appear facing-up.



Kalaney belaney

Kalaney belaney literally means “black elephant, white elephant”. It is believed that this Indian game originated in Karnataka. It is a simple game for two players. Each player has a number of pieces that they arrange on their side of the board. The first player rolls the dice. They remove the opponent’s pieces from the board according to the number on the dice. The player whose pieces are standing in the end is the winner.

Kokla chapaki

This is a very popular game among children aged 4-8. It is also called the Drop the Handkerchief game. Children in Punjab often play this game. There can be any number of players. You only need a piece of cloth.

All the players, except one, form a circle. The standing player starts running around the sitting players in a circle carrying a handkerchief. They sing the song “Kokla chapaki jumeraat aayi aye jera agge pichey wekhey odhi shamat aayi aye.”

While running in this way, the player places the handkerchief behind one of the players. The player behind whom the handkerchief is placed, picks it up and starts running behind the tagger. The tagger tries to occupy the vacated place before being caught by the chaser.



One of them sits down, and the other continues the game with a handkerchief. This game requires players to be vigilant at all times to know when the handkerchief falls behind them. This game helps to develop endurance and observation skills.

Kith kith

Kith Kith is a hopping game. Kids have to hop on from one box to another, drawn on the floor. Kith Kith is played in almost all states of India. This game does not require too much space. It can be



played indoors or outdoors. It is simple, yet tricky. It requires good balance and precision.

This game contains 8 blocks. Each player uses an object such as a bottle cap, shell, stone or button. A player has to stand behind the starting line and throw his object in the first block. He has to hop over the first block then to the second block and continue hopping to the eighth block, then turn around, hop back to the second block, pause and pick up the marker, hop in the first block and then come out. Then he has to toss the marker in the second block. This goes on until the player reaches the eighth block and completes the lap successfully. In this game, all hopping is done on one foot, unless there are two lateral blocks, where the player can land his both feet.



Sonsakhli

Sonsakhli is a game in rural Maharashtra. This game resembles the game of tag, where the person with the tag must run and touch another person thereby tagging him. All players who are not tagged try to run and avoid the tagger. In Marathi, this game is called pakda pakdi.

In Sonsakhli, people gather in a circle, play a mini-game to decide which person will be the tagged person.

When the game starts, the tagger must touch other players while other players run away from the tagger. Once tagger tags a player, both of them are taggers. All taggers are supposed to hold hands and try catch remaining players there by forming a chain (sakhli). As players get tagged one after another then they add up in group of taggers and the chain size increases. This continues until one untagged player remains in field which is declared as a winner.

Nowadays, this game is lost with generation Z. Also searching for illustrations on this game is hard on Google as this is rarely mentioned on the Internet. Generations change; Way of entertainment changes; some games are lost in past. This is one of them.



In my experience, this game is fun to play because I do not feel bad even when losing the game, since when we lose in this game; that's where the real game starts, we are in chain of losers. And the teamwork plays an important role in catching remaining players. When I used to play the game it felt like I was playing Kabaddi, but without any boundaries. This game is one of most interesting games I have played that very few talk about, thus it is necessary to mention it. One major learning is be ready to accept people, because, at the end you need to do teamwork and mutually lose but enjoy the game.

Hrushikesh Nilesh Naik,
Flowserve Sanmar Private Limited, Mumbai.

Kite flying

Kite Flying is one of the most enjoyable events of my childhood days. It is now celebrated worldwide and considered the most auspicious in Hindu culture. On this special day people pay homage to the Sun God marking the transition from Winter to Summer.

In Gujarat, kite flying is a much-awaited festival which is celebrated in the month of January. Many cities in Gujarat conduct kite flying competitions among their residents and the celebration is also known as Patang Utsav. These Patangs (Kites) have wooden frame construction with body made of paper, cloth or plastic and they are quite appealing with different shapes and colours.

I recollect my childhood memories of this day, reaching the building's terrace on January 14 early morning with all my friends holding large reels of multicoloured thread and celebrating the Patang Utsav. The day would start with all friends competing against one another and enjoying chikkis and laddoos with loud music being played. During evening hours, we used to organise kathiawadi food like the delicious and mouth-savouring undhiyu for all friends and family members followed by a Candle and Hot Air balloon competition.

When kites of various colours fly, the sky appears attractive, pleasant and colourful. The best part about the Patang Utsav is to see the trees adorned with kites that have dropped over them. This scene brings delight and happiness to the soul. Just as they say, a kite flies even higher with strong adverse wind. So, don't despair. Enjoy flying your kite whilst the wind blows.

Desai Chirag Bharat, *Flowserve Sanmar Private Limited, Mumbai.*



Kumir danga

Any childhood is incomplete without Kumir danga (the crocodile and the bank in Bangla). There would hardly be anyone who did not play Kumir danga in their childhood.

This is an outdoor game. It can be played in a park or where part of the ground is higher. The terms used in the game are danga (land) and kumir (crocodile), the person who has to catch the other players.

The game requires four or more participants, out of whom one is the kumir. All the participants stay on the danga (a designated area) and the kumir remains in the 'water' (the rest of the area). Whereas the members of danga try to roam around in the 'water', the kumir would not let the other players cross or stand in his or her area (water). If any of them is caught by the kumir in 'water', it is their turn to act as the kumir. The game is simple and enjoyable if the participants do not stick to their places for long and keep moving frequently from 'land' to 'water' and vice versa. You can help your mates by diverting the kumir's attention by entering his/her area and teasing him/her while they cross over into each other's area. We loved to run, play, laugh and enjoy ourselves.



We were proactively motivated to go outside and play, instead of being indoors all the time. Such type of game has helped us develop many skills. Moving together, paying attention to one another, and adapting to one another were a few skills developed by playing this type of game.

According to Edgardo Civallero, "a people's intangible heritage is composed by the non-material part of its culture: tales and narratives, games and songs, music and all the knowledge usually transmitted by oral or sound means." This game was a source of moderate physical or mental, or even both exercise for us. On top of this, it developed group and family sense necessary for their social well-being.

Amitava Bandyopadhyay,
Xomox Sanmar Limited, Kolkatta.

Silambattam

Silambattam is a traditional south Indian game. I learned during my 2nd year college and have



participated in various silambam competitions. Bamboo sticks are used to perform silambam.

Why I choose this game is it gives more confidence. I was inspired by people in my village who were skilled in silambam. It helped in weight reduction and also led to a positive change in my life. Silambam improved my body flexibility and increased my patience level. It has a special sports quota. Still, I am practicing it and also taught this art to many students.

I recommend others to learn this art, as it will give a lot of energy and improve their focus and health.

J Prasanth, *Chemplast Sanmar Limited, Karaikal.*



A traditional game having roots as old as Mahabharata

Kho-Kho the Indian traditional game is known to me since childhood. I remember my PET used to select the players based on age /personality and teeth count. When enquired why he was counting our teeth? He replied that there are three groups sub-junior, junior and senior. They will be selected based on their age, if aged below 14 yrs. sub-junior, above 14 and below 18 yrs. juniors and above 18 yrs. seniors. Teeth count below 24 sub junior and those up to 28 junior and 32 seniors if the participant does not know their age, they go by the teeth count. One interesting incident was that one of my friends belonged to the junior team, played for the sub-juniors as he had only 24 teeth, he even won a state level cup.

Our PET used to take a lot of care of every player. Diet control was one major thing, as weight was also one of the factors in getting selected in a team. He used to provide dry fruits/nuts/ peas to control weight. Everyday morning at 4 am our training started - running, drilling etc. It took 1 hr and then Kho-Kho practice for two hours.

Kho-Kho is an interesting game and it has given

me the confidence to achieve anything in my life. It has given me physical and mental strength and fitness.

Kho-Kho keeps the players,

- strong, motivated, enthusiastic, flexible, be better in coordination and helps in staying young
- wade off depression and increases self-esteem, team spirit and leadership skills
- get a good time sense (in real life helps chase sales targets)



- encourage teamwork
- follow the rules and regulations both in game as well as in life

M Rajaiah,

BS& B Safety Systems (India) Limited, Hyderabad.



Goli gundu (marble game)

This is one of my favourite street games. I have been scolded and beaten up badly by my parents for playing this game with my friends in my childhood.

This game would not have any monetary benefits during my childhood only for getting points and maintaining individual guts we used to play this game. But it used to give me energy, patience and concentration power. Whenever I won, my friends used to appreciate me, this cascaded into positive vibes.

Harisha Gopal,

Custom Manufactured Chemicals Divn., Berigai.

Aadu puli aatam

As a child, I used to play this game with my grandmother, and she was the one who taught me how to play. I used to play with my neighbours too. This game can promote logical thinking, develop strategies to win and improve my mathematical skills.

The requirement for this game is very minimal, it needs a board or a chart with pyramid like maze, with exact partitions. Unique coins to differentiate Puli (tiger) and Aadu (goat) are needed. There should be total of 3 tigers and 15 goats.

How to play:

This game requires patience, keen observation and mental calculation to guess what move will block the opponent. The game starts with one tiger in the apex and other two placed in the boxes next to the apex. The important rule is, that the coins should be moved and placed only at the intersection point of the columns and it should move neither inside nor out. The game begins once the goat is placed at a free intersection on the board.

The game becomes more interesting when all the 15 goats are inside the columns and start moving. Tiger can jump onto any goat and capture it by moving to an adjacent free position. The moves should be valid ones. The goats can move only when all the 15 of them are inside the columns, until then they have to stay still.



Tigers can capture the goats anytime, but only moving on the adjacent column. A Tiger can capture one goat at a time, not more than that. A tiger should not jump over another tiger. Goats can encircle the tiger and block it from moving. Each tiger aims is to kill five goats. The victory is based on whether the tiger eats up all the goats or the goats block the tigers from moving.

Objective:

This game is played to sharpen the thinking power and to develop strategy. Through this game, the players are taught the importance of teamwork, how united and well guided goats can pause the movement of powerful tigers. And also how to feed on our prey in an efficient way. In ancient house, we can see the engravings of this game chart in every verandah.

L Kamalesh,

SRSTI, Custom Manufactured Chemicals Divn., Berigai.

Kabaddi my favourite game

It provides excitement and thrill and is therefore rightly called the game of masses. Kabaddi a sport that was once played in the villages only, is winning hearts today with the World league and the much coveted Pro Kabaddi league. The game needs speed, strength, stamina with a healthy body along with agility, breath-



holding capacity, muscular coordination, catching, kicking, quick responses, and significant presence of mind under dangerous situations and tremendous pressure.

Kabaddi might not rank among the popular sports in India, but the skill sets required to play the sport extend well beyond the game. Playing Kabaddi is akin to practising yoga, where players control their mind and body through self-control and concentration.

Kabaddi,

- Increases endurance and concentration
- Helps overcome fear
- Enhances presence of mind
- Helps pay attention to minute things
- Enhances the need to fight with the right spirit

Vikrant Satish Khaparde,

BS&B Safety Systems (India) Limited, Mumbai.



Nadan panthu kali

Nadan Panthu Kali is a team sport native to Kerala, India. It is played in rural areas with a stuffed leather ball between two teams of seven players. The sport originated in Kottayam in the early 1900s.

The game is similar to cricket. It has six innings, known as vara, they are otta, petta, pidiyan, thalam, keezhu, and indan. It is played between two teams of seven players each, barefoot on a 35m x 75m court.

The ball is made of salt-dried leather. In each inning, both the teams are allowed to do vettu where they initiate the scoring and other team prevents the scoring. Scoring points follow the sequence like otta, petta, pidiyan, thalam, keezhu, indan and then it repeats. The team which score the most points from the innings wins. This game is similar to playing test cricket.



As a team we need to find the team's innate strengths which can be used and competitor strength which is studied in course of the game.

The game helped in having a good observation skill both on and off. This game helped me work in a team, use members wisely and study the opponent well.

Jerin Sam,

Flowserve Sanmar Private Limited, Cochin.

Importance of Indian traditional games

- Indian traditional games help promote social interactions and teamwork.
- They improve physical development, brain stimulation, concentration, and problem-solving skills.
- These games help uphold India's rich tradition and enlighten children about it.
- Traditional games help people make the most of their free time while improving physical and mental well-being.
- They also enable social interaction and help make friends.
- They provide people with a dynamic social life, promoting happiness.
- By engaging in sports and physical activities, a kid develops resilience as well as mental and physical strength.

10 benefits of playing Indian games

- 1 Youngsters learn how to amuse themselves with fewer resources by playing traditional Indian games.
- 2 Strengthens the mind
- 3 Encourages a mindset of problem-solving
- 4 Educates the youngster in social interaction
- 5 Makes hand-eye coordination better
- 6 Encourages discipline in children
- 7 Promotes a winning attitude
- 8 Children learn about our culture by participating in traditional Indian games
- 9 Helps meet new people
- 10 Children are kept joyful and upbeat by these games.

Sudoku

			6			1		7
3				1				8
	5		2					
					1			6
	4	5		6	8		1	3
	6		3		5			
8	2	3	5	4				
		7	1			6		
4			8		9	2	3	5

5	3	2	6	7	8	9	1	4
4	8	9	2	3	1	7	6	5
1	9	7	9	4	5	3	2	8
2	7	4	5	9	3	8	6	1
3	1	6	8	9	7	5	4	2
6	5	8	1	2	4	9	3	7
9	4	3	7	8	2	1	5	6
8	6	5	4	1	9	2	7	3
7	2	1	3	5	6	4	8	9

E	M	X	F	F	F	P	B	F	K	O	C	T	B	C	R	D	X
L	E	P	K	U	S	T	I	C	A	R	R	O	M	G	A	R	G
R	W	A	F	L	M	R	B	W	J	P	Z	L	X	P	K	L	Z
N	C	O	T	V	Z	W	E	F	A	A	L	L	K	Y	A	W	V
N	G	N	M	V	X	P	N	L	I	O	C	C	U	E	A	U	N
A	P	C	I	A	O	I	U	J	N	Z	F	L	G	T	A	B	Z
L	P	O	F	Y	I	B	A	Q	U	I	A	S	M	L	X	J	L
L	R	Y	R	E	H	C	R	A	R	Z	K	N	S	Z	K	M	X
D	A	U	L	M	X	C	L	O	S	N	K	Y	A	T	K	U	A
K	L	Z	D	B	O	Z	G	P	J	G	S	N	A	D	B	W	X
D	L	L	Z	D	B	O	Z	G	P	J	G	S	N	A	D	B	W
L	I	G	N	I	C	N	E	F	N	A	R	C	B	C	K	X	P
D	O	L	X	W	Y	W	U	Y	D	I	H	T	I	R	H	S	Q
V	G	E	U	E	I	G	X	A	Q	A	X	L	G	Q	O	A	H
Y	A	G	V	K	D	S	P	R	T	Y	L	D	I	O	P	Y	R
J	I	I	R	Z	N	A	B	U	Y	I	N	S	Q	E	S	S	J
R	O	R	V	O	T	A	R	Y	G	K	A	G	F	R	C	I	B
E	M	I	O	H	Q	A	L	D	K	J	Y	M	H	D	O	B	I
B	Y	W	S	G	N	G	E	L	N	C	D	E	Q	K	T	H	H
M	T	A	R	G	A	Q	N	S	A	K	T	T	P	B	C	T	Z
E	R	A	D	M	L	S	C	O	P	O	F	E	I	H	T	X	S

Traditional Games Word Search

Word search grid containing various words related to traditional Indian games.

- Find the word in the puzzle**
- Words can go in any direction
 - Words can share letters as they cross over each other.

- | | | |
|------------|------------|-----------|
| Antakshri | Archery | Ashtapada |
| carrom | Chaturanga | Kabaddi |
| Gilli | Hopscotch | Lagori |
| Kallankal | Kancha | Fencing |
| Pallankuli | Kusti | |

Milkha Singh (20 November 1929 – 18 June 2021), also known as The Flying Sikh, was an Indian



track and field sprinter who was introduced to the sport while serving the Indian Army. He is the only athlete to win gold at 400 metres at the Asian Games as well as the Commonwealth Games.

He also won gold medals in the 1958 and 1962 Asian Games. He represented India in the 1956 Summer Olympics in Melbourne, the 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome and the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo. He was awarded the Padma Shri, India's fourth-highest civilian honour, in recognition of his sporting achievements.

For Internal Circulation Only.