

## Lesson -4

# Folk Games of Punjab

### Introduction

A game is an activity which is done for enjoyment. This kind of activity gives us pleasure. We see that a child in a cradle feels happy while moving his hands and feet, then his mother comments that the child is playing. The child grows a little, he starts sitting, standing and walking, but he feels happy while running. Besides this, he starts observing and examining the things around him. Even then it is thought that the child is playing. We understand that a game is an activity which is done by two or more people for their enjoyment.

People of every age play games. The children, the young and the old play games. In the same way boys play games and girls too play games. Many games are played together by boys and girls. They have separate games too. Thus, playing is a natural activity. This makes the body stout. Playing games produces flexibility and quickness in different organs of the body. The player's mind also remains calm and happy. We learn the art of working together. There are many benefits of playing games. Therefore every school has a playground. Games are played in these playgrounds in leisure time, games period or during the tournaments.

### Kinds

Games can be classified in many ways e.g. physical games and mind games. There is a similar classification of

games- Folk games and modern games. Cricket, Hockey, Volleyball, Football etc. are modern games. There are certain equipments, playgrounds and special rules to play them. On the other hand folk games are contrary to these modern games.

**Their special characteristics are as following :**

Folk games have been prevalent for centuries. These were made by our own people according to their own necessity and comfort. These games do not require any special equipment. In these games number of players is not fixed. Rules of games are also flexible. Some rules are fixed by the players themselves. Games are played on the vacant spaces wherever they are available nearby. Turn is fixed before playing any game. First of all, to fix the turn 'pugata' (a method/an action by which the turn is fixed for the player) is done. There are different methods of fixing the turn.

**1. First method**

First of all three players place their right hands on one-another's hands and toss their hands together in the air and then they are reversed or kept straight. If hands are placed upturned by two or three players and the third player's hands remain straight (palms facing the sky), then that player is supposed to be '*puggna*'. In this way one by one all the players except one supposed to be '*puggna*'. If the position of the hands of all the three players is same, it means either their hands are upright straight or downward reversed, they are tossed together in the air till all the players supposed to be '*puggna*' except one . Methods of 'pugata' are different.

## 2. Second method

All the players stand in a circle. One out of these players touches each player one with one by one his shoulder with his finger or hand and sings the following song simultaneously:

*"Eengan meengan taali talingan  
Kala, peela, dakkra  
Gurh khawan, vail wdhawan,  
Mooli patra.  
Pattan waley, ghorre aye,  
Hath Kutarri, paer kutarri  
Nikkal baleya teri wari."*

The player who is touched at the sound of the last word spoken is not supposed to take his turn. He is supposed to be *pugna*. By using this method again and again, the player left in the end ,gets his turn fixed.

3. Many games are played by dividing the players into two teams e.g. Kabbadi, *Gulli Danda* (tip and cat), *Rassa-Kashi* (Tug of war) etc.

## Names of Main Folk Games

List of the main folk games are very long. Names of some of the games are like this- *Bandar Killa, Gulli Danda, Anna-Jhota, Lukan Meeti, Budhi Mai, Kotla Chhapaki, Bhandra Bhandria, Peengh Jhootna, Kushti, Kabaddi, Rassa Kashi, Shatranjh, Baran Beeti, Rassi Tappna, Khido Khoondi* etc.

All these games are played both by boys and girls.

Let us know more about the rules of the folk games.

### *Kotla Chhapaki*

*Kotla chhapaki* is a game played by small boys and girls in the villages. Number of players is not fixed in this game. This game is also known as '*Kaji Kotle di maar*'. This game is played by 10-15 children. Children prepare a '*Kotla*' (a twisted thick rope of cloth) with some wash-cloth or some other cloth by twisting it before playing this game. Then a child draws a circle with a twig or sharp object on the ground. All the children sit on the edge of the drawn circle facing inside. Now the child whose turn is fixed runs around the circle holding the '*kotla*' in his hand and sings this song-

*'Kotla chhapaki, jumme raat aayie  
Jehra agge-pichhe dekhe, ohdi shamat ayie.'*



*Kotla Chhapaki*

Children sitting in the circle run after the child who is taking his turn by repeating the same song. The child keeps on running singing the same song - *kotla chhapaki jumme raat aayie*. No child can look at back in this game. All the children keep their head bowed down. If any child tries to look back, the child on his turn gives him four-five beatings with his '*Kotla*'. He puts his '*Kotla*' secretly behind any child and completes his round and comes back to the same child. If the child behind whose back the '*kotla*' is placed does not come to know about the '*Kotla*', the child on his turn starts beating him with his '*Kotla*'. The child who is being beaten, starts running speedily around the circle to avoid his beating. He has to bear beating of the '*Kotla*', until he reaches back to his seat. If the child comes to know about the '*Kotla*', he picks the same and beats the child on his turn. He keeps on beating him until he takes a round and replaces his vacant seat. Thus, this game goes on like this.

### **Bandar Killa**

This is children's favourite game. In some places '*killla*' is also called '*keela*'. Children get together in the lanes of the colony and find the place for '*killla*' (peg) to play the game of '*Bandar Killa*'. The children address each other by singing on starting the game :

*'Juttian-chapplan da,  
Kar lo ve heela.  
Hun apan rall ke,  
Khedna Bandar killa'*

This means that we should arrange for collecting the shoes and chappals as we have to play '*Bandar killa*'.

The children playing the game of '*Bandar Killa*' take their shoes off and pile them up near the peg. Then they tie a rope about 5 to 7 meters at the bottom of the peg. All the children playing the game of '*Bandar Killa*' do '*pugatta*' (to decide about the turn) for fixing the turn for any one child. All the children after '*pugatta*' select the child for the 'turn'. This selected child is called '*Bandar*'.



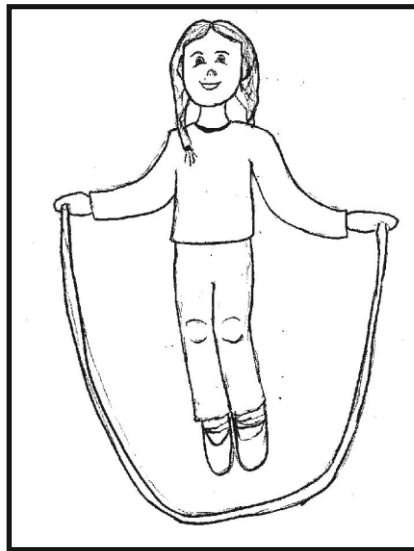
**Bandar Killa**

After this the '*Bandar*' child holds the rope tied to the peg carefully guards the heap of shoes and *chhapals*. The child guarding the shoes and *chappals* according to the rules of the game, without leaving the rope will try to touch any child. Other children without getting touched by the '*Bandar*' try to pick shoes or *chhapals*. If the '*Bandar*' touches any child while picking the *chhapals*, that child has to perform his turn. If all the children become successful in picking all the shoes and *chhapals* without being touched by the child guarding the peg, will run towards the place to

be touched, which is already fixed. All the children beat the 'Bandar' child with their *chappal* or shoes until he reaches the fixed place. As soon as he reaches there, beating with *chappals* and shoes stops. Thus, some other child gets his turn to perform as a 'Bandar'.

### **Rope Skipping**

This game is very good from the point of view of exercise. After deciding the 'turns', the last two left out children stand facing each other holding the rope, move it to the one side. Rest of the children standing in a queue come one by one or two-two together as the rule is fixed and skip the rope. If the child's feet are touched by the rope, he is supposed to be out and performs his turn to move the rope. Even a single girl can skip. This game is the favourite game of the girls, but these days it is played less.



**Rope Skipping**



### *Pithhu*

'*Pithhu Garam*' ( to heat the back) is one of the favourite games of children of Punjab. Number of children is not fixed in this game. Children are divided into two groups. Seven broken pieces of earthenware are placed on one-another. These are called '*Pithhu*'. A line is drawn at a distance of 10-15 feet from the pieces which are put in an orderly manner, both the teams perform '*pugatta*' (a method of selecting one player for his turn).



**Pithhu**

Any one member of the winner team stands on the drawn line and hits the orderly placed pieces of the earthenware with a '*Khuddo*' (ball). A player is given three chances to hit the target. If the player remains unsuccessful after his three attempts, he is declared out of the game. If the ball is caught after one bounce by the opposite team, even then the player hitting the pieces of earthenware is declared to be out. If he hits them successfully and scatters them on the ground, it is called Breaking of the '*Pithhu*'



*Pithhu* is broken." After this the hitter tries to collect all the pieces. Meanwhile, the members of the opposite team hit the player collecting the pieces with the ball. If the player places the earthen pieces orderly before he is hit with a ball, he deserves another turn. He declared out if he fails in placing the pieces orderly. In this way another player gets his turn to hit the earthen pieces thus, this game starts again.

### **Importance**

Children play different games in villages. Every game teaches a different quality to the child e.g. *Kotla Chhapaki* game increases quickness in the child. *Pithu Garam* and aiming with catapult make the child a good shot and *Bandar Killa* teaches how to be defensive. Wrestling and Kabaddi increases the physical strength. All these games even make the brain sharp. Especially, Chess gives the brain a good exercise. These games enhance association on one hand and are helpful in maintaining our culture and heritage on the other hand. We can say that these games are a boon for life as well as helpful in the all round development of the child. Today, there is a need of making these games alive again.

### **EXERCISE**

1. Name any two games of children.
2. How many ways are there of '*Pugatta*'? Explain any one.
3. Write a note on the importance of the Folk games.
4. Describe the method of playing the game '*Bandar Killa*'.
5. Which folk game do you like the most? How is it played?