CHAPTER 7

RECREATION AND GAMES

7:01 Introduction:

Play is an amusement giving performance so universal. In some cases, it is associated with competition and the winner is awarded. For play more than one person is required. Being amusement giving performance it is the unavoidable part of human life. Actually, play is a drama in which players are actor and their actions are dance performances. Certain rules and time maintaining are necessary in play. In some play expertise is needed which can be availed by repetition and practice. A number of play, however, associated with human beliefs and continuing since unknown times carrying some of the ancient customs.\textsuperscript{538}

Play may differ according to time and place. Many of the play found in different variations in different places. Impact of the socio-cultural tradition of the place and of the situation is clear in these plays. So in some of the variations it losses its original form.

Some of the plays are seasonal, time bound and based on the condition of the environment. Most of the outdoor play depends on weather condition and all of the play cannot be played by both sexes. There are some plays directly related to the children. Some of them associated with recitation, verses of which are unintelligible but directory to actions.\textsuperscript{539}

\textsuperscript{539} ibid
Origin of play still cannot be clearly understood. Whether it was geographical or social is still to be determined. But it is acting as a medium of amusement since its origin. It can give information about strength, ability and power of a person or a group.

Play does not satisfy biological needs associated with survival. It is also non-productive and not a media to yield wealth or goods though it may contribute substantially to physical, social and psychological growth and development of an individual. A person learns to play a game simply because he enjoys it and amuses others. He is not forced to participate nor does he expect any reward for having played. Another characteristic of play, that it separates a person from actual life, time and place. That is why most of the children games determine the actions within the context of the play.540

Games are also play but they differ due to its involvement of competition between two persons or parties. The persons involve in a game must be familiar with the explicit and implicit rules. Specific method to determine the winner or loser at the end of the game is also acceptable to all. For example, football is a game which; (i) it is time bound; (ii) required limited players equal to two groups; (iii) maximum goal maker within the provided time is the winner, and finally, (iv) judgment of the referee is final. It is the expertise of the players that determine the result.

7: 02: Research on Traditional pastime:

Very few researches have been carried on about the recreation hours of the people. The European and American

540. ibid. p. 173.
folklorists had done their folkloristic approach on play only during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. They primarily gathered edit texts and provided distributional and historical descriptions. The studies are limited to classifications of the games and recreations. In some of the studies, in the social sciences; like psychology, sociology and anthropology; findings include traditional pastimes, specially referred to play. Students of traditional recreational recreations and games have devoted bulk of their time to recording, editing and annotating the texts but reluctant to cope with the problem of the nature of the traditional pastimes. In other words, suitable classification system of them is yet to be revealed.541

In Indian context, research on traditional pastime is yet to be materialized. Students of Social Sciences however investigated the children's play, lullabies, puzzles and riddles. The classical verses supply sufficient information of the children lullabies and the young lover's romantic pastimes.

Traditional pastime in India may be traced back to the pre-Vedic period. Arrowing as a game may be traced back to the period of the pre Vedic Assiryan or the 'asura'. The horse climbing play is, however, post-Vedic as horse was not known to the pre-Vedic people. Hunting, as a game was also known to the Indian people from the very early period. But most of them were games rather than recreation. The recreation hours, like the 'paxha' was also involve gambling by the people. In such games wives were also gambled like animal and one of the 'Samhita' expresses the tragedy and helplessness of a husband who losses his wife in gambling. This 'Samhita' also includes

541 ibid., p175.
that gambling became such popular that public play houses were built under an officer called 'Akhyabap'. We are informed about the result of the 'paxha' played by the eldest 'Pandava' Yudhisthir loosing his wife 'Draupadi' to the 'Kauravas' and the result thereon. Most of the games in ancient India were competitive. Cavalry, horseback or 'chariot-race' was favourite among the royal families. Most popular game 'paxha' was said to have made out of the 'bhumura' seeds as referred in the 'Brāhamana'. These were the popular pastimes in ancient India though, referred in the classical literature were borrowed from pre-Vedic people.  

There were also some pastimes though competition, were not included gambling. Swimming ('jala-krida'), hide and seek of the 'mundri' (finger ring), hunting etc. were such recreations. A few of such recreations like hide and seek of the 'mundri'; 'cowdi'; shooting of arrows; dance and pearch etc. are ritualized with marriage and are still played.

7:03: Pastime in Indian Context:

Most of the pastimes of the Indian people are associated with their occupation. Being agrarian in character, they associate their pastimes with the agricultural activities. During the sowing of the seeds, planting of the saplings, harvesting, husking of the paddy were the occasions within which individual and group recreations were observed. The Oriya people enjoy playing when fishing, hunting and during the tour. Most of these kinds of pastimes include competitive games, chorus, attached with mock music, made out of whatever they find on their way. They play with the sand or mud

542. op. cit., p. 147.
in the river or pond during fishing as relaxation from exhausting.

The traditional ‘holi’ or ‘phaguwa’, the Indian people observe, is actually a play which sometime becomes competitive between two persons or groups. The occasional scene during ‘phaguwa’ is colouring between brothers-in-laws and sisters-in-laws, between whom one tries to give as much as colour to the other or between two groups, trying to put as much colour as possible leaving no space left uncoloured. And through hide and seek an unintentional is aggravated to play colour etc. are the main features of this celebration. These plays, as it is associated with ‘holi’ are formless and fixed dated.543

Unlike ‘holi’ the ‘deepawali’ celebrated on the last day of the month ‘Aswin’ (October/November) is though a festival of lighting is also associated with gambling, like dice, play-cards, ‘cowdi’, etc. which are ritualized as gain or loss is believed to be good omen for the year to come.544 Most of the people in ‘deepawali’ engage themselves playing these competitive games. The tea community observation of ‘jahli’ during the ‘dewali’ is also a kind of recreation that the cow-herds, after their longtime hard work of keeping the cattle away from the paddy field, are released and before leaving their master, express their feelings during and after their engagement through the ‘jahli’ songs.

7:04: Pastime in a Tea garden:

The tea community’s one of the common festivals is the

543. The tea garden Oriya people regard ‘holi’ a play started by Sri Krishna.
544. Most of the Oriya people believe it.
'Tushu'. This festival though ritualistic, is associated with play between young boys and girls using the materials found beforehand. It may be the turmeric paste, vermillion, mud, bamboo stick or the broom what ever it may be, are used by the young girls to deal with the teasing boys. This is not simply a play but ritualistically observed. The play is competitive between young boys and girls without any distinctive method. The sacredness of the ritualistic devotion of 'Tushu' is also absent in these plays. They are fixed dated.

The 'akhada' of 'jhumoir' since the beginning of the sand collection for the 'jawa' planting of the 'Karam' festival is one kind of playground for the young boys and girls who exchange their feelings through songs in playful verses. The interactions are competitive and become enjoyable when a pair is getting identified to be in love.

The above mentioned and a number of such amusement giving occasions take place in the life of an individual may not be a pastime but the playful occasions of competitive enjoyment place them with plays.

The Oriya people in the tea garden is one of the major parts of the tea garden community equally participate in these plays. Say it be 'holi' or 'dipawali' 'Tushu' or 'Karam'; the open participatory atmosphere beckon them to enjoy the occasions.545

Similarly, cock fight also equally participated by the Oriya people in the tea garden atmosphere. This is a competitive game through the cocks which the two owners and the attendants enjoy the actions of the cocks, supporting and 545. The Oriya people though not associated with their rituals join them only as a recreation.
instigating the cock on which they have betted their money. The situation entirely becomes full of tension and enjoyable until one of the cock falls or flees. The winner takes away the deceased cock and enjoys it with his family. The persons involved in the cockfight do not directly play but their betting against the cocks make it competitive and thus a game.\textsuperscript{546} Among the Oriya people buffaloes, oxen, sheep, goat fights were also organized in the past. Even in the tea gardens such games were organized in the places where such animals are in abundant. The main feature of these games is that they are associated with certain religious observation and so seasonal mostly starting from the middle of January after the ‘Makar-sankranti’ and continuing up to the middle of March in the darkest day of the month of ‘Phalgun’. The ‘Paxha’ which is a dice involved unlimited betting. The modern dice of six cubic material with symbols to or the cards by which one can enjoy and at the dame time gamble whether becomes winner or loser or the ‘cowdi’ played for the same reason may be included in this category. There are however, some differences; that in case of animals or birds direct involvement of individual is absent but he enjoys attending the fighting. The persons attending the dice or play-cards without betting also enjoy but cannot get the benefit. The Oriya people in Assam are involved with all the above games. The animal related games nowadays are not seen. The cockfight is a seasonal game and it is organized during the winter after harvesting of crops. All the Sundays or one of the day amidst of the week beginning from the month December is continued up to the end of the month March. Sunday is a holiday in the tea garden and they use this day for this game. This is their inherited nature that after harvesting, husking and suturing of the paddy in the house they

\textsuperscript{546} In this game cocks are betted by the persons involved and the others bet money against the result.
enjoy the period as recreation hours. So until the next season of engagement in works comes their enjoyment continues. Playing of 'dice' for the whole night in 'dewali' keeping one awake would be impossible without a gambling. The darkest night of the month 'kartik' is important to keep the insects away from the maturing paddy. The gambling thus associated with good omen whether gain or loss. Because the time of 'deepawali' is the period when the paddy in the field is matured and ripe and may be destroyed by animals or harmful insects in the darkest night.  

Playing in 'phagwua' is a matter of amusement for the players and the persons involve for whom it is a competition to show physical strength without betting. It is the unavoidable part of the festival without which the festival is not complete. Putting different kinds of colour on friends, in-laws, cousins, relatives; and even unknown persons brings enormous enjoyment for the attempts. Most of the enjoyable moments are, however, between the two lovers or between brother-in-law and sister-in-law, etc. The day involves no restrictions to meet or colour among them. They sometime sing with their playing:

"phāgwūā-re-phāguā tin doguā
bhouji-bhātār-ghore moī āguā..."

means; "O, the festival of colour ! I am a bachelor and wishing to become the first to put colour on my lover/sister-in-law/brother-in-law."  

The play is neither game nor recreation but traditional play for enjoyment. 'Holi' or the 'Phagua' is celebrated on the full moon day of the month of February/ March ('purnima' day of the month 'phalgun'). Group involvement in the 'holi' equally

---

547 Gambling in 'dewali' is not a ritual but believed the loss or gain as fortune
548 'Phaguwa' is the occasion of the in-laws to play colour
makes enjoyable on putting colour on everyone in the group or on the stranger at the same time singing and dancing, consuming different type of edibles, specially prepared for the occasion. This is an annual feast acceptable to all odds concerning the play, but not in a form of a game.

7:04:1: Pastime for the Oriya origin:

There are some plays, sometime competitive as it yields some gains, seen in the marriage ritual among the Oriya people. These kind of ritualized play, played between the bride and the groom is the 'hide and seek' of the different materials like finger ring, coin, 'cowdi', or gambling with 'cowdi' is a matter of enjoyment for the couple as well as the gathering around them. The 'Kondh' among the Oriya people play mock hunting by the groom assisted by his bride during the marriage, is also a matter of amusement for both the couple and the people around. These games are part of the marriage rituals, perhaps played to divert attention of the bride's family from the sorrowful occasion of handing over their daughter to a new person. Colouring of clothes and faces of the people by turmeric paste is also one of the play-full occasions ritualized in their marriages. Both the game and the turmeric playing are the occasions to divert concentration of the bride's family.  

Robert A. George has adopted classification of the games into four different divisions: first he had categorized the games played in pairs, like the 'Kings of Spain' and the 'Old Witch'. In his second group he took the nature of games containing theme of 'loss and found'; 'kill and save' etc. In the third section he took those games which involve 'tricks' like 'Hare and Hound'

549. Turmeric play in marriage is not a ritual but it gains gaiety.
and 'dog and fox' and lastly he enlisted the games of 'Odd and Even'; 'hide and seek' etc.\textsuperscript{550} In his classification the first group contains 'love games' between boys and girls or mother and children in which selection of partner or saving of the life of one's children is the main theme. In his second category strategy and physical capacity between two groups is clearly observed. In the third, trick plays important role than physical strength to save a weaker from the unattached powerful enemy. And the last one involves 'intelligence' rather than the themes necessary in other three. In this section, intelligence as well as observation of the situation at micro level is necessary. All the above four category of games found in India and thus among the tea garden people. We have here the 'Raja-Rani', 'Bor-Kanyia' as the first category; the famous 'Kabadi', 'Ghor-bodla-bodli' etc. may be compared to the second category; 'Bilai-Musa', 'Bilai-Puchu' in the third category and 'Luklukani', 'Aba-Aba' are may be from the last category. All these games are however, children games and hardly played by adults.\textsuperscript{551}

In Indian context, as discussed earlier, most of the recreation hours of the adults associated with the hobby of productive activities. This is because of the rural nature of the Indian peoples' special attention to their recreation hours relating with their day to day activities. The tea garden community also for their rural nature, habituated to relate their recreation hours with their daily activities may be productive or non-productive.

\textsuperscript{551} The children play in Indian context is similar with those of the games mentioned by Robert A. George.
7:04:2: Recreation during work:

The Oriya people in the tea garden are little adamant with their rituals but are no different from others. The tea garden situation; the working hours, the leisure hours after completion of the ascribed duty, the Sundays which are the weekly holidays, the National Days, the few holidays associated with festivals and finally, the annual leave of fifteen days are the recreation hours they use for their individual or social activities beside using as pastime through games, sports, individual hobbies, group performances for amusement, observing other performances and gambling etc. The complexities of their pastime sometime confuse one to select it whether it was a play or a compulsory social ritual. But the amusements they get through these activities associate them with play though they are not played in game form. Similarly, one's hobby to create or produce something during the time of recreation is also at the same time his relaxation hour. The women passing time picking and killing the louses in between their thumbnails is a pastime as they enjoy it through every successes of picking and killing of the louses. Even the young men enjoy with his work when he carries more weight on his shoulder, slicing the logs tactfully or shooting an arrow to a prey exactly at the target. He enjoys it through the competition with his colleagues. The tea garden Oriya people in their packed duty in the tea garden, habituated with finding out amusing hours during their work.\(^{552}\)

7:04:3: Recreation after work:

The plantation work generally starts at seven in the morning and continues for eight hours for the day. In between,

\(^{552}\) Informants: Sri Rajaram Tanti and Smt Hemo Nayak
leisure of half an hour is allowed for lunch on the spot. The general belief of six or four seasons in the year has nothing to do with the plantation work. There are only two self-oriented seasons i.e., the plucking season and the pruning season. They can feel only these two seasons in the tea garden. During the plucking season, which fall mainly during the summer and when the days are longer, they use the evening hours for their individual and group recreations. The young boys and the able men play football joined by the garden staff and a few of the managerial staff. The football play is attended by most of the people on leisure making the situation enjoyable both for the players and the audience. It becomes more joyous when the winner prized with some trophy, cup or cash by the hand of the senior managerial staff in the garden. The Oriya people who are about half of the total population in most of the tea gardens also share these consequences equally with the others. So the single game becomes pastime activity for all the players as well as the attendants.\(^\text{553}\)

The old men either attend such games of the youths or pass their times telling story to their colleagues or small children around. Playing ‘twenty-nine’ (play card) with the cards is also common to all of them. The warm evening of summer, before dusk children gather in some selected spaces for their plays. ‘Luk-lukani’, ‘kheda-khedii’, ‘Am-l, Yes’, etc. are played in such summer evenings. ‘Luklukani’ is the same with the ‘hide-seek’ game and the ‘kheda-khedii’ is the open game in which hiding is not necessary. The ‘am-l, yes’ which needs a circle on the ground is mostly played by the girls and small boys.\(^\text{554}\)

The recreation hour of the Oriya women in the tea garden

\(^{553}\) Informant: Sri Sanjoy Tanti (32) on 27.4.2007

\(^{554}\) Informant: Smt Teresa Kujur (28) on 6.8.2002
however, passes in other ways. During their work they pass boring hours by chatting, teasing, making jokes, puzzles, riddles, proverbs etc. with enjoying the consequences and reactions on their colleagues they target; sometimes result with quarrel and weeping. But most of the boring hours they convert to recreation during their work.

After the day work, when they return to their houses, they do not get much time for recreation, but the common washing places, provided by the garden management sometime becomes places of such recreations within the limited period they pass there for washing. They become busy washing of themselves and their children; cleaning houses and lighting up of the hearth for the dinner. Then, taking food with the family and sleep, are there daily routine after their garden work.555

7:04:4: Recreation on Sunday and other holidays:

Sunday as weekly holiday becomes recreation day for the plantation workers and the Oriya people are one who uses it for their recreation in various ways. Most of the adult males in the interior gardens use to go to the ‘murgi-akhda’ either for direct involvement with one or two cocks or just to attend the cock-fights. They also visit with friends to play dice. Drinking ‘house-beer’ is common practice of recreation among them in the ‘murgi-akhda’. They enjoy there from morning to afternoon and pass the evening hours taking more drinks with friends with the meat of the deceased cock owned in the cock fight. In this manner recreation hours for them continues till they get sleep. The looser on the other hand kills the household fowl and enjoy with friends and family to forget the sorrow of losing his cock.

555. Informant: Smt Melani Dhanowar (45) on 27.12.2005
Others who went to the 'akhda' get limited enjoyment due to their indirect participation. This is the nature of enjoying the recreation hour by the Oriya males during the off seasons. The people living near towns get on to their cycles and peddle up to the town to attend cinema in the town cinema hall or have some delicious food in the hotel. They roam the town and in the evening return to their homes. A few leave for the nearby 'beel' (damp area) or spring for catching fish as it fulfills their hobby whether they get a fish or not is not a matter. Among Oriya people there are about none to go for hunting as recreation.

Women at home on Sundays, are busy with their household washings, cleaning, cooking, feeding of their children etc. But in between they save some moments for collective pick-up of the louses from their hair, making 'beni' out of the hairs of other women by sitting on the back one after another in someone's doorsteps or in an open space enjoying with the same kind of puzzles, jokes, riddles, folk tale or myth; sitting until a respected person arrives or passing through. Some of them, during the pruning seasons go for collection of the pruned branches of the tea bushes for fire wood where with their collection of the dried branches they save some moments for recreation with the same way they would have done at home. The habit of finding out leisure hour for recreation minimizes the tedious household works. A few of them also go to the nearby jungles to collect the dried fallen stems of the trees, to pick up wild vegetables or to dig wild roots they know as edibles and within such busy hours they find out time for the recreation.

The old Oriya women, who are already retired from the garden work, use their leisure hours fulfilling their hobbies by
working with the grasses they have gathered. They begin knotting them in a fashion that make into a broom; while at the same time, they tell tales, make puzzles or make riddles with colleagues or the small children of the family sitting around them.\textsuperscript{557}

During the winter, if the children or the youths succeeded to gather some waste materials, like broken tea baskets, other spoils thrown from the factory or the dry stems unsuitable for burning in the hearth are used for making fire. All the young and old gather around the fire making a circle occasionally putting fuels to the fire from these gatherings and make all kind of jokes, folktales, myths, riddles, puzzles and even mysterious news from critical participants come out which the youngsters listen carefully, puzzling, astounding as the speaker continue one after another. This is the place where young and old enjoy recreation hours.

7:04:5: National Day and Festivals:

The Independent and Republic Days in the tea garden are considered as paid holiday. The staff and the workers collectively organize whole day program as social functions, sports, games, etc. for common participation and by evening, the head of the garden, who is the manager himself attend with his spouse and participate in the prize distribution. The occasions are competitive and considered to be games rather than recreations. Most of the people who do not compete pass this day with recreation similar to other holidays. Even during the Durga Puja and ‘Phaguwa’ they enjoy recreation hours with their individual engagement in other works.

\textsuperscript{557} Informant: Smt Kamela Kujur (55) on 25 6.2005
These are the pastimes of the tea garden workers and the Oriya people equally share it. Special identification of the recreation hours for the Oriya people is impossible due to the similar type of life style in the plantation.

7:05: Games:

Play is a form of expressive behaviour; includes pastimes of competitive games which every person engage since unknown times. As Johan Huizinga in his Homo Ludens (1949) postulated, "civilization arises and unfolds in and as play." However games are differ from other play activities that they involve competition between at least two persons. Certain explicit or implicit rules specify human interaction permissible which the players are familiar before and during the play. Specific method to determine the winner and loser is applied in game.

Among the tea garden Oriya children, the game 'ghar-dega-degi' involve players to know that there always be one less pole used as house (ghar) than the actual member of players that they are to hold one at once when movement starts; that if one fails to hold becomes homeless; that in every movements one pole is less than the member of players. And the last one who cannot find a pole is the loser. It is the awareness and ability of the player to find out house (pole) for his existence in the game. In this play swiftness is necessary for a person to occupy a house (pole). This game is played by the youth of both sexes and also by children.

558 loc.cit., Dorson
559. Informant: Sri Putnu Nanda (18) on 4.9.2008
When describing about the traditional games played by the Oriya people we have no distinct method to classify them. We shall use the method forwarded by Robert A. George to classify and adopt our games played in the Indian situation.\textsuperscript{560} The investigation concerns the traditional games primarily of the Oriya people which are of competitive type played by individual or between two people.

\textbf{7:05:1: Games of Imitation:}

The first groups, as referred by George, are the games played among boys and girls to find out pair like the ‘King of Spain’ or the ‘Old Witch’. They are played pretending to be a witch, mother and her children. I grouped these types of games one of which is a play to join the separated prince and princess to select their partners throughout the game and the children separated by witch rejoin their mother in the second game. Among the Oriya traditional games I could not find out such a ‘rejoining of the separated’ but intimated with a game direct imitating of the adults by the children. It was a mock marriage called ‘sadi-sadi’ or ‘bor-kaniya’.\textsuperscript{561}

All the players in this game must be in pairs. No songs are sung for combining the separates but they sung the songs, heard and learnt in the marriage, dance to the music which they made out of the materials found around. The interesting part of this game is that it involves no competition but teasing, mock quarrelling, crying by bride’s mother with ‘kandana’ git etc. Another love game I came in contact was a mock drama of a folk tale ‘Dui-bohon aru saat bhai’, which the children know as ‘makor-sami’. In this game there are two girls, the elder one

\textsuperscript{560} ibid p. 176.
\textsuperscript{561} Informant: Smt Nijra Tanti on 9.9.2004
falls in love with a monkey and goes to live with him in the jungle. She also takes her younger sister with her, who after boring of a monkey-child becomes attendant to it. Their seven brothers goes in search of them and when they were near to the monkey family, certain songs are sung as question and reply between husband and the wife which are as follows:

*e rājā bunrā, bunrā, sāāt bhai sāāt kāḍ dhārā āsochhet ne rājā bunrā, sāāt bhai sāāt kāḍ dhārā āsochhet.*

the song is the information by the wife to her monkey husband that her seven brothers are coming with bows and arrows to kill him so he should immediately leave for some other place leaving her alone. The monkey husband replies:

*e rānī bunrī, bunrī, sāāt bhai ke sāāt khāḍ unchi bāhārī des ne rānī bunrī, sāāt bhai ke sāāt khāḍ dhuti bāhārī des ne rānī bunrī, bunrī...*

the monkey husband asks his wife to meet her brothers with seven towels and seven ‘dhotis’ to receive them respectfully in the house.

7:05:2: Raja-Rani:

After several repetitions of these songs the seven brothers reach, kill the monkey and make a pyre for the funeral. The woman instead of going with her brothers jumps in the fire with her monkey children and the play gets end. This play is however a part of an Oriya folk tale, the children learnt from their grandmother and converted the known parts of the tale into a game. The game ends with a tragedy but the love contained in it categorizes it with the first group. The imitating

---

562. The song is sung in front of the investigator by Smt Panpotro Tanti
563. Informant: Smt Panpotro Tanti
nature of children converted a part of tale into traditional children play which has partial story behind. The play of "Raja-Rani", in which the Rani is kept imprisoned and guarded. One of the children play as Raja comes to rescue her. The rule in this game is that the 'Raja' has to kill all the guards before rescuing the 'Rani' which can be done only by a touch. But if his back is touched by any one of the guards, the Raja is killed and thus another child plays the role of the Raja. If he is success to touch all the guards one after another they will be killed and the Raja enters the prison and rescues the Rani. The play continues until the Rani is rescued. This play is also perhaps borrowed from some folk tale. Both the boys and girls play this game. The winner Raja is married to the Rani as prize.564

7:05:3: Kheda-Khedi:

In the second model of games like 'kill and save' include the 'kabadi', 'khedā-khedī', etc. require physical strength and swiftness of the players. In these games two groups of equal number compete to kill all the members of the opposite and to become winner. In 'kabadi' attacking the opposite needs continue pronouncing a certain word without changing of the breathing. The opposite players try to stop him or keep him engaged, so that he is forced to take another breath and is dead. If he touches some one in one breath and returns to the given line the person in the opposite is dead. Like 'kabadi', 'kheda-khedī' etc. has no certain time. But the player has to stop his breath during his attack and must return to his place before taking another breath or he is dead. This kind of games is popular among young boys and girls but played separately.

564 Smt Nijra Tanti on 9.9.2004
George mentioned of the 'Prison Base' quoted from the collections of Brewster is similar to this game.\(^{565}\)

7:05:4: Bāgāl-ho-Bāgāl:

We have among the Oriya children, the game "bagal-ho-bagal" contains speeches and actions to enchain and save the wise cattle from imprisonment. Two cowherds (bagal) who play the role of the leader in this game make a chain locking the hands with other players who play the role of the cattle, make a semi circle with their hands locked to each other with the two cowherds are at the edge of the two ends. One of the cowherds with the chain moves and enters through the locked but pulled hands of the two boys as cattle locking the first cow with the second cowherd. The same action repeated until all the cattle are bound and the two cowherds remain unlocked. Before every binding of the cow the following conversation takes place between the two cowherds.\(^ {566}\)

Question: "bāgāl-ho-bāgāl",
: o cowherd

Answer: "ki ho-bāgāl",
: yes, o cowherd

Question: "tor gāi kāltā khāisi:
what your cattle eat?

Answer: mor gāi ghās khāisi
My cattle eat grass.

Question: "tor gāi mor bāḍiti dhukā
āche, kāi korte
:your cow entered my garden
what should I do?

Answer: bāndhochhes hele bāndh."
= if you bind; go on.

565. op. cit., Dorson, 1972. p.179
566 Informant: Smt Teresa Kujur (30) on 6 8.2008
The cattle's are then, let sitting with crossed locking of their hand with the toes of the foot. The two cowherds carry them to a certain distance one by one in the same position holding from the joints of the hand. All the cattle thus carried home in that position and the one which cannot hold his folded foots from the toe are left away saying- this is a 'naughty cow' so be killed. The children acting as castle are saved by holding their toes tight while carrying.

The third category reflects the dominant position of one of the participant to which another tries to reach. Georges cited 'Hair and Hound' from the variants collected by Strutt (1801), Lady Gomme (1894) and Brewster (1955). The primary objective of each side is to win (i.e., the "hair" by avoiding capture, the "hounds" by catching the victim), that competition between the two is the central theme of this game. Among Oriya people such game of 'Fox and Hounds' similar to 'Hair and Hounds' found with little variation. In Indian context the fox does not use strips of papers to trick the Hounds but tricks other animal he finds on his way to divert the attention of the Hounds to get time to reach the agreed home.567

7:05:5: Chor-pulish:

The Oriya children play a game which is competitive; trick related and required firm awareness. In this game children sits on the ground making a ring keeping their backs at the exterior. One of the child with the one side knotted towel runs around through the backs of the others and place the knotted towel all of a sudden without lifting know in whose back he has place the towel and he continues running. When he returns encircling all the sitting children he picks up the knotted towel and begins to

567. Informant: Sri Sanjoy Tanti on 27.4.2007
hit the unaware boy who, to save himself stands and run around until he is able to get another space to sit. The child who was hitting him continues running and again place knotted towel in the back of some other boy and the actions continue. In case the sitting child can guess the trick he stands, hold up the towel Knott and run after the first one, to hit him. To avoid being beaten, the first boy runs around to find out a space to sit and the towel holder continue to run and repeats the process. 568

7:05:6: Am I? Yes:

Georges has also mentioned about the game of "steps" or "May I?" Among Oriya children such game is called "Am I? Yes". In this game a circle of about ten/twelve feet radius is marked on the ground. Two perpendiculars drawn on it crossing each other at the centre and thus the four radiuses make houses in the circle. A piece of broken earthen pot called 'khapri' of about less than the palm is chosen. Each player places it in every house in all the time till he crosses the houses standing on one leg and slipping the piece hitting by the same leg towards the next houses one after another. Then he holds the piece hitting by the same leg towards the next houses one after another. Then he holds the piece of broken piece on his hand and crosses all the four houses by jumping with one leg. The play continues with holding the piece on the fore forehead without seeing the ground. When forwarding each step, he questions, "Am I?" and if he is correct and has not touched the lines the children reply, "Yes". Thus he succeeds to complete the game. During his whole actions he must not touch the line or let fall of his another leg on the ground I support of the standing leg. If he fails; the actions are repeated again. 569

569. Smt Nijra Tanti.
7:05:7: **Ghār-degā:**

The same type of game is played in rectangular houses but here each success with the earthen piece marked with cross to which the piece was placed. In the next round the same house should be avoided playing the leg which after successful completion owned and may be used for relaxation or putting both the legs on the ground. Such owned houses used when turning required putting both the legs on both the houses. In this game, however, “Am I?” or “yes” is not said.

The above two games are most popular among girls at teenage. Among them a girl who is an expert first predominates but joins by the others who becomes successful with complete of the game. The game is competitive and each participant tries to be successful. It is interesting to note that the first game containing its speeches as, “Am I?” and “Yes” are clear indication that the game is a borrowed form of the West.570

7:05:08: **Mithā-pānī Tītā-pānī:**

The last category of ‘Odd and even’ and ‘hide and seek’ are equally played among Oriya children. Both the games played in several varied forms even in the different parts in India. For example, the ‘odd and even’ played by minor children with imaginary materials closed in their hands and the participants has to guess what is inside it. Mostly, small children sent to bring water which they pretend bringing on their tops and waists closing their hands. Others waiting for them ask what kind of water they have in their two pots (close hands supposed to be posts). They speak as: - “itā ki pānī?” (What kind of water is this?) and the answer, if “mithā pānī”

(sweet water) told “toi kha, moi khabo aru sobey khaok.” (You drink, I drink and let drink all). If told “tita pani” (sour water) asked to throw it on the ground saying, “pheka pheka” (throw throw). That the even are accepted and the odds are thrown.\(^571\)

7:05:9: Luklukāni:

The ‘hide and seek’ game is played in two forms. One by hiding all the children participating accepts one who is selected to search them. When hiding he should close his eyes must not notice where the others are hiding. After hiding, a signal is passed to the seeker, and he begins to search. If he is successful to find out, at least one from the hide he has to search the others. In another form the selected child covers both of his eyes with clothes tightly that he should not see anything then the others begin strolling near him. If he is successful to catch anyone among them, he will be the next seeker. In these two games there are no songs or speeches but signal to inform the seeker that his time has come to seek them. To identify the first seeker a member is selected and serially counted the participants. The seeker is chosen on whom the number finishes.\(^572\)

7:06: Children Game:

There are a number of games played common to all the children in the tea garden of Assam. Minor varied form of the same games also played by children of other areas. The “pānch-gutīā” (five stones) played by girls is common to all. The other games, “etna-etna pani”, “echik-michik”, “ātul-pdtul”, ‘ālting-bālting”, etc. are played especially by girls. While boys

\(^{571}\) Informant: Sri Dipen Tanti (36) on 22.4.2002.

\(^{572}\) Sri Dipen Tanti
play "àiting-khàtating", "ànoumoni", "khàtô-khàti", "jopo", "pàikhànà", "pitu" etc. The games played by girls consist speeches with tone are competitive in nature. Among them a few are played by very small children by the help and guidance of their older. The verses in the lullabies are as:-

"àtul-pàtul, simnà-chatul; dàdà gelo hàât,
ànbe dàdà, pàkà tetul, de porson bhàât."

An older child chants these tones in a tone when his hands gently pass on the stretched legs of the minors sitting in line. In another game, children place their palms flat touching the ground and the leader says:

"echik-michik, dhân kich-kich, lâwà-lathi, bel-pâát,
duâre âche lim gach, lim jhar jhar kore....
Khàkðà no kuchiyà?"

Translation of these verses is impossible as they have no meaning. But a few of them consists questions for direction. Such as the last line, "khàkðà no kuchiyà?" is a question asking whether it is crab or? The child in his reply answers any one of the two and the item is treated alike.

The play "àlting-bàlting" though some of its verses cannot be understood as most of them are peculiar and perhaps children's inventions. They are used only with certain action in the game, thus:-

"àlting-bàlting sàlting soi,
moí por dipor poti poi
tàtu ghodâ malaise
bàbu khài biscut
sàheb bole very good."

The last two line are intelligible and there inventions is purely in the plantation situation as bàbu khài biscut means babu eats biscuits and sàhtb bole very good means 'sahîb speaks very good' but unattached with the other lines to give a
meaning to the whole. The children follow the verses and make certain action as advised by there leader. The action however varies from place to place.573

7:07: Play of the Teen:

There also games played by marbles, 'gop' (small hole dug on the ground) and a marked line to start with. The boy who can place his marble nearest to the 'gop' he takes equal shares of marbles, goes to the line and from there throw the marbles towards the 'gop' to any of them enter which will be saved for himself and to hit one of the directed marbles by his own from the line. If he is able to hit, he wins all the marbles. In another, the boys hit the other marbles by finger in different positions to send the marbles as far as possible from where the possessor has to put it in the 'gop'. In both this marble play competition and expertise prevails.

The boy's game mentioned above are played with supporting items like marbles, sticks etc. competitive and in some cases, punishable to the loser. The 'Anomoni', 'toppo', 'paikhiana', 'pittu', played with marbles are competitive and an expert can only win a marble as a prize or to punish the loser in these games. Such punishable games are the 'aiting-khatating' or 'khata-khati'. The loser has to strike the marble by his elbow to put it in the 'gop' (hole), as punishment which continues until he is able to put it in the 'gop'. Others, who are successful, try to hit his marble to send it as far as possible from the 'gop' as maximum punishment to him. The boy unable to put his marble on the 'gop' sometime weeps and the boys enjoy and feel joyous.574

573 Informant: Smt Panpotro Tanti on 8 6.1993
574 Informant: Sri Putnu Nanda on 4.9.2008
7:08: Game of Elders:

A number of traditional games played by the Oriya children even by the adults are of more competitive, and expertizing. The games, "Khuti-bāḍi", "Bāḍi-ghichā", "Bauσa-khēl", "Das-kāthīā", "dobol", "Sulo-guthīā", "Cowdi", "Bhāwrā" etc. are played by teenage as well as adults. In this category, except the first three the rests are played by both boys and girls and even women. They are challenging games and success depends on physical strength and tricks. Some of them even dangerous and require more expertizing. 575

7:08:01: Khuti- Bāḍi:

"Khuti-bāḍi" is a game of in which throwing of the "Khuti"(a three inches length and two and half diameter rounded stick) which is hit by the 'bāḍi' (a stick of sixteen to eighteen inches length and breadth of same diameter with the 'khuti') and the distance of falling of the "Khuti" if hit measured by "bāḍi" at five stick as a "hāl" (a measurement of five consecutive "bāḍi") up to the 'gāḍhā' (a small pit of about three to four inches length, one inch breadth and one to two inches deep) which is the centre of the play. This game is played individually but participated by more than one person to play is necessary. The game is decided by hitting of the 'bāḍi' by the 'khuti' from a given distance (about twenty feet from the 'gāḍhā') The person who can hit starts the game with pulling out the "khuti" placing on the "gāḍha" vertically towards the player waiting to catch it on the air at about twenty feet distance from the 'gadha' and if it is caught the player is out. Then the next comes, does the same and it continues. If the 'khuti' is not caught several forms applied to hit the 'khuti' by

575 Informant: Sri Rajaram Tanti on 13.9.2006
the ‘bāḍi’ towards the opponents who try to catch it in the air if unable; collected and thrown towards the ‘bāḍi’ holder who at aim to hit again on the air, while thrown. If he is able to hit it on the air the distance where falls from the “gāḍhā” is measured. In any condition, if the “khuti” is caught by the opponents in the air the striker is out. This game is dangerous, because any one may be injured by the flying “khuti”, so children are prohibited to play this game.\(^{576}\) In some places the game is also called ‘biti’.

7:08:2: Badi-ghicha:

The ‘bāḍi-ghichā’ game is played by two persons sitting on the ground facing each other with their legs stretched touching each others feet. A ‘stick’ of about one and half foot, is held by both the persons by hands while stretching their legs straight towards each other. Then, without bending the legs, which are touched with each others to pull the stick towards oneself, so as the weaker is forced to be pulled on his legs onwards. In this game the puller is decided as more stronger than the other. This game is played to identify the stronger. No trick is required in this game. But physical strength is necessary.\(^{577}\)

7:08:3: Bausa khel:

‘Bauso-khel’ is the famous dance on the bamboo poles. In this game each player holds a pair of bamboo poles of equal diameter and length on each hand which are fastened with some sticks with clothes so that one can stand on it by his foot at about two to three feet height. The dance begins with

576. Sri Rajaram Tanti
577 Sri Rajaram Tanti
standing on the fastened stick on the pole, holding the other ends on hand. By standing on this pole of person’s height increases on the lower part of about two feet is supported by the pole. In this game technique and practice is necessary. This game is played to dance, enjoy and show tactics. All who have practiced play this game.578

7:08:4: Das-kathia:

The ‘Das-Kathia’ is the stick dance played by both boys and girls with songs and music, especially during the ‘Dol-Jātrā’ occasion. This game is also required tactics and sufficient practice.

7:09: Other Plays:

‘Dobol’, ‘Sulo-gutia’ and ‘cowdi’ are played as pastime but sometime involve with gambling. For ‘dobol’, a small pit of about one inch radius is dug. Participants equally sharing the materials like, safety pins, coins etc. to be thrown to the pit from a distance. The person who can throw nearest to the pit first starts the game. He takes all the shared materials in his hand and throws it to the pit from the same distance decided by marking a line on the ground. He then aims the ‘dobol’ (a piece of metal, slab or weighing iron of about four inches radius), on the allowed material to hit it. If he is successful the whole materials or coins are his. Then the game starts again. Sometime he can put one of the materials in the pit and that particular piece is saved. Girls play this game with their safety-pin and sometimes with small coins. Among adult males this game is popular for small gambling. ‘Cowdi’ is also a game of

578. Sri Rajaram Tanti

- 311 -
gambling which is decided upon counting the 'chit' or 'pot' (alike the 'tiger' or 'number' in the coin). The 'sulla-gutia' is the traditional chess played on the ground by making a chess board and sixteen numbers of equal stone or any materials which are small and round are used to play the game. In this game, there is no ranking of the stones like king, queen, jacks etc. All having equal ranks can kill the opposite just by overlapping the other. Only two people can play this game as pastime. The significance of this game is that the chess board on the ground is different from the general chess board. The board is sketched as below:  

'Bhāwrā' (lātum) is a small rounded, pointed top towards the bottom at a point; made of wood is thrown to the ground to roll with a thread tactfully. This is a children game and sometime teenage play it as competition with certain rules. To start this game one is to pull on the 'bhawra' by the thread on hand and the player who cannot hold or falls his 'bhawra' on the ground while pulling; has to place it in the marked round space on the ground. The others who were successful hit it with their 'Bhawra' in such a way that it should not roll standing on the ground; and if it is the loser pull it by his thread and he will be saved from being hit. The game needs sufficient practice and only the boys individually play this game.

While observing the games it appears that there are tantalizing similarities between the behaviors of persons asking question and answering riddles as I have given some examples in the third and fourth categories respectively, person who make riddles is, in fact, a straight, while the person who gives answer is a fortunate. My study is the preliminary observation and behavioral context in the field.

Informant: Sri Putnu Nanda on 4.9 2008