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### RESEARCH ARTICLE

#### A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF RECREATION AND GAMES OF THE BODO SOCIETY.

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#### Abstract

Recreation and games are life sustaining activities. Every society has some indigenous games and sports and way of creation. These are integral parts of a vibrant social life. Play is a pleasant social control for both children and adults. It is a symbol of unity and integrity among the human beings. Although, there are some indigenous games and sports in Assam society as well as the Bodo societies also have a variety of folk games and recreation.

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#### Introduction:-

Robert A. Georges has observed "Play is a form of expressive behaviour common among all human beings and manifested overtly in all cultures. Like art, language, and religion, play is a complex phenomenon that cannot be defined succinctly. Several characteristics, however, can readily be isolated. First, play is voluntary in that it does not directly satisfy biological needs associated with survival."<sup>1</sup>

Human being specially the child and the youths means lovers of games. There is no exception to the Bodo children and youths in this regard. Like other of the universe, the Bodo children and youths also like to play different games, they make hue and cry, play dances and sing songs in the rest time. These games are also considered as a part of their folk culture as well as of folk literature.

#### Methodology:-

This study is based on the data collected from field work. During my field survey i have met some of the villager personally for first hand knowledge of the subject. The secondary source of data, I shall carefully analyze the different books, journals and magazines that have been published about the recreation and games of the Bodo community.

#### Discussion:-

The Bodos have a variety of folk games. The indigenous folk games and sports are Naojaunai gelenai (boating), Dwiao sanchrinai gelenai (swimming), Tengenabari gelenai, Guti gelenai (counting), Hisandanai gelenai (weaving), Hui gelenai, Dang gelenai (catching game), Thakhumalainai gelenai (hit and hide) etc.

<sup>1</sup> Georges, R.A. : "Recreations and Games" in *Folklore and Folklife : An Introduction*, (ed.) R.M.Dorson, Chicago, 1972, P.173

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**(i) Nao jaunai gelenai (boating):**

Nao jaunai gelenai is one of the interesting games of Bodo community. This game is played by the young boy in the river or pond. Generally the girls do not play this game. Nao jaunai gelenai is played in the summer season. Two parties are involved in the game. They make a boat by banana tree and two parties will match between the boating in the river.

**(ii) Dwiao sanchrinai gelenai (swimming):**

Dwiao sanchrinai gelenai is one of another interesting game. This game is played by the young boy in the river or pond. This game is basically played in the summer season. Some players are required in this game. There is no party in the game, it is an individual game. There is no rule governing this swimming game and they match among them who can first swim.

**(iii) Tengnabari gelenai:**

This Tengnabari gelenai is another traditional folk game of Bodo society. This game is like with cricket game. There is required one bamboo stick of about one metre in length and five to six inches of one small bamboo stick. These tengnabari is made of either by bamboo or wood. Tengnabari is played between two parties. There is no limit of number of the players. There is a starting point from which a player strikes the guti with laothi (stick). The player of the opposite party tries to touch the guti with sticks in hands. If the player of opposite party touches the guti the player who sticks the guti is considered to be dead out.

**(iv) Gutu gelenai or Phul phul gelenai (counting):**

Gutu gelenai is a popular game of Bodo community. This game is played by young girl and four players are required in this game. This game is played by small five pieces of stone or seed. Players sit around and play into their hand one by one. But this game is associated in a song. They utter the song and start the game i.e. the song is given in the below lines:

“phul phul phulonti  
eti lokhon dulanti  
telanti  
eti eti eti  
jarmano jarmano jarmanotiti  
langkhono langkhono lankhonati.  
eti poisa dwiti poisa  
dimbaroni saroni  
ponshomi.”

Who completes these five steps without any fault she will be winner. Again it is started in the same process.

**(v) Chi danai gelenai (weaving):**

This game is played generally by young girl. There is no fixed number of players. It is an individual game. They also collected the old thread and weaving in their house corner. They weave and in this way they enjoying the whole day by weaving. This game also called khaphandigelenai.

**(vi) Hui gelenai:**

This game is another folk game of Bodo community. Hui gelenai is played in an open field. There is no limit of number of players for this game. There is one starting point and one ending point. The player who takes his position in the starting point is known as Bima. Bima always tries to reach the ending point of the field to win a game. The players of his party always try to keep away the players of the opposite party by touching them while uttering the word hui. On the other hand, the players of the opposite party try to touch the Bima. If Bima reach the ending point without being touched by any of the opposite players, he wins the game. But if the Bima is touched by any player of the opposite party he is considered to be dead out. The opposite party now comes to the starting point and tries to win the game in the same way.

**(vii) Dang gelenai (catching game):**

Dang gelenai is another folk game of Bodos of this district. This game is played by the young boy and young girl. This game is played in open field. There needs two party, no fixed number of players is required for this game but two parties must be in equal number of players. Dang gelenai is played in the afternoon in the spring season. There

need a small field which it is divided into two parts by a middle line in the centre. A specific number of quads equal to the number of players of a team are made by drawing lines on the ground. One player is placed in each of the quad for restraining the entry of the gwthang player of the opposite group. If in the process of tactful entry in the ground of the opposition player the restrainer touches him then the opposite group loss the game and the second group starts to play. If gwthang player return without any touch then they win the game and started the beginning in the same process. In this way the game continues.

**(viii) Thakhumalainai gelenai (hide and seek):**

This game is generally played by young girl and young boys. When they get leisure, this time they play thakhumalainai. This is called hide and seek game. Hide and seek game is played inside the home and outside the home. They like this game very much and this way they enjoy the moment.

**(ix) Ongkhri ongkham gelenai:**

This game is also played by small children. It is very interesting game, girls like this game very much. Basically this game is played in the afternoon time and they cook by artificial utensils in the corner of the house. They collect varieties of immature fruits, flowers, leaves etc. Girls cook food and the boys perform cultivation. Some boys established the market and do marketing. In this way, they are enjoying the whole day by taking food, meat, fish etc.

**(x) Khwina gelenai:**

This is a very popular game in Bodo society. The children make dolls bride and bridegroom, parents, etc. with clay letting them to dry in the sunlight. After the dolls dried up, they colours with different types of traditional colours and make dresses with khwina gwdan (mini handlooms) and make wear up to the dolls. Then the children arrange marriage of the dolls and enjoy it.

On the otherhand, the old men pass their time by playing cards, gather for talks in which they produce jokes, riddles, and proverbs, remind old tales especially during the evening time. In the winter evening they gather around a lighted fire and carry on such things. In the Bodo society, the woman folk can not enjoy the leisure hour's facilities due to their busy routine. Because, in the evening time they are to look after babies, arrange for cook, watching T.V etc. They of course enjoy talks, tales, jokes, proverbs, riddles etc. amidst of this busy routine and during plucking hours in the paddy field and in festival.

**Conclusion:-**

The traditional folk games of the Bodos disclose their ethical features. These games are also considered as a part of their folk culture as well as of folk literature. Traditional folk games and sports played among the Bodos are Naojaunai gelenai (boating), Dwiao sanshrinai gelenai (swimming), Tegnabari gelenai, Ongkhri ongkham gelenai, Guti gelenai (counting), Chi danai gelenai (weaving), Khwina gelenai, Hui gelenai, Dang gelenai (catching game), Thakhumalainai gelenai (hit and hide) etc. These folk games have contributed generally to development and growth of the physical, social and psychological aspect of Bodo people. Due to the involvement in modern games for better scope, some folk games have been disappearing in the Bodo society by leaps and bounds.

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