

### Gatka

Gatka was developed by the Sikhs when the Mughals invaded India. Later on, it developed as a martial art form for use in self-defense. The popular sport of Punjab attracts a lot of attention. It starts with the playing of drums and chanting of the holy verses accompanied by several brave actions. The name of this sport has been derived from the wooden sticks used for sparring. Covered many times in the latest sports news in Hindi and Punjabi, the sport involves two competing participants attacking each other with wooden staves. Both mimic the action of swords. The players also use a shield to protect themselves from the attack.

### Kalaripayattu

One of the most popular sports of Kerala, it is a typical martial arts form of the state. It emerged as the "mother of all martial arts." Striking and kicking action in the game is accompanied by the use of weapons. The players display intrinsic grace which makes it a pleasure to watch.

### Pachisi

Although a board game more than a sport, it definitely deserves attention by sports lovers and the sports department of India. It is an ancient version of the present age Ludo. This board game is also often referred to as the 'National game of India'. It involves players moving their pawns across a symmetrical cross board. This board is prepared from embroidered cloth and the players are supposed to reach a designated "nest." The player who manages to move all pieces to the nest is declared as the winner.

### Thoda

This sport has drawn inspiration from the Mahabharata age. Thoda is a type of martial arts from the land of Himachal Pradesh. Participants display their prowess in archery by shooting arrows fitted with a head holding a round wooden piece to decrease its ability to cause serious wounds. The archers are divided into two groups. This is done to ensure a symbolic representation of the Mahabharata clan, Pandavas and Kauravas. Thoda aims at hitting the legs (below the knee) of an opposing team member. A martial music is played in the background. Members of the group dressed appropriately dance with their swords and the face-off. The supporters cheer them.

### Mallakhamb

Originated during the 12th century, this sport is the Indian version of gymnastics along with martial arts. It comprises of acrobatic feats. Two of these formats are quite popular. The most popular is the rope version where the performer hangs by a rope from the pole. Another one is the hanging version. A pole is hung from a chain in a fashion that a little distance is maintained away from the ground. The gymnasts involved in the game display amazing body balance and controlled movement. The sport requires intense mental concentration while executing their feats.

### Rural Olympics

The Kila Raipur Sports Festival is a popular sport event in India. The farming fraternity of Punjab has hosted it since 1933. Recently, it has been re-christened as the 'Desi Olympics' or 'Rural Olympics'. Some of the interesting sports played at the event include racing bullock carts, acrobatics on horseback, lifting bicycles using teeth, motorbike stunts, enduring an attack by farm machinery and pulling vehicles with the hair. These astounding feats attract many hundreds of audiences at this popular 3-day event.

### Hinam Turnam

Hunting has been a way of life for people residing in the forests of Arunachal Pradesh. They have still maintained this ritual and achieved expertise in the sport. Hinam Turnam is one of the traditional games in this region. Participants are supposed to enact roles specified as per the rules of the game. Both the hunter and the hunted are supposed to imitate the adroit movements that form a part of the struggle depicted between a man and the beast.

### Vallamkali

This is the iconic snake boat race played in the Alleppey region of Kerala. It takes place during the festival of Onam. The racing teams gather along the backwaters of Alleppey in traditional long boats. They move with an enthralling rhythm. The team work of paddlers is commendable. It is one of the tourist attraction in Kerala.



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