



to knock the other off balance so that he loses his grip on his right foot. The one that lets his foot drop first loses the game. It requires the player to use his instinct and make the move by studying the movement of the opponent. This game also became popular in schools.

2.2.12. Weight Throwing Game

The game of backwards weight throwing is called *jab dho*. It is a kind of an outdoor sport where a man throws a heavy weight backward over his head with all his strength. But *jab* (back) *dho* (stone) is somewhat similar to the hammer throw in the Olympic Games but without the chains to hold the weight. There is no measurement of how far a person can throw the weight over his head. The man holds a heavy stone or a wooden block with both of his hands and swings it between his legs. When he has gained enough momentum, he hurls the weight over his head as far as he can. The throw is then measured by distance. Thus, he earns a reputation of a strong man in the community.

Today, this game is played as one of the events in a strongman competition in Bhutan although its standard is still indigenous and different from that of the Olympics.

2.2.13. Shot-put

The Bhutanese version of shot-put, called *pung dho*, is closer to the shot-put in Olympics except that the shot-put is randomly picked from the ground. *Pung dho*, as elders recall, was a game played by men to measure strength among their



friends. A heavy spherical stone is randomly selected for the challenge. Any number of players can participate in this sport. A line is drawn from where a player should hurl the stone. The player holds the stone on his palm above the shoulder. A right-hand thrower keeps his left foot in front of the line and then the right foot is used to kick in motion whilst tossing the stone. The first drop is marked and the other players follow.

There is another technique of tossing the stone called *Chong do* wherein a player gets the option to run to the line for a few metres before tossing the stone. It would be prearranged by the players themselves if they can use either option or just one. The goal is however, to release the stone with maximum force in a forward motion to see who throws the farthest. Outwardly the game is played for fun, but inwardly it is a contest for strength.

2.2.14. Hide and Seek

Hide and seek or *eeb tshoel* is basically a game of hide and seek (*eeb* means hide and *tshoel* means seek) played by children inside their homes. It is commonly known to the children as *kuku*. Any number of children can play the game. One among the children is selected as the seeker while all others have to hide around the house. The seeker has to either count down from ten to one before he or she starts to look for the others or a warning alert has to be sounded that he or she is coming to look for them. If he or she receives no answer, then the seeker is assured that everyone has hid themselves.

The first child who is discovered by the seeker is out of the game and the last person is acclaimed as king or queen of the game. The child who is discovered first becomes the seeker for the next round of the game and the process goes on and on. There is nothing to lose or win in this game but it is just a little game for children to keep themselves occupied.

2.2.15. Game of Sticks

The game of *tsang dum* is a simple game played between two persons with a bunch of small sticks. The bunch should be made up of at least 20 to 25 pieces of finely cut sticks, each about the length of the index finger. The number of sticks depends on the players willing to add more fun and time to play. The more sticks, the more time it takes to end the game. The player holds the bunch of sticks inside his fist and puts it on the ground in an upright position before releasing it without any force. He picks up the stick which has fallen furthest from the others and uses it to throw away the others without disturbing any other stick. The difficult part is when the sticks are lying on top of the other. The player



has to remove them one by one without touching the underlying stick. If the player happens to move the lower stick while picking up the other one, he is disqualified. The turn goes to the opponent player, but the first player keeps all the sticks he had picked up in the first round. A new game starts all over again by the second player by releasing the sticks repeating the process. At the end of the game, the players count the number of sticks to see who has collected the most.

2.2.16. Sling Shot

Sling shot or *wur dho* is a kind of weapon used mostly by cow herders to hurl stones at wild animals. Sometimes farmers also use slings to drive off monkeys and other pests in the farms. A sling is a relatively flat rope of about one fathom long and has two straps in the middle which can hold a pebble. With the pebble held in the strap, both ends of the rope are held in hand. One end is thicker and has a loop enough to put a finger while the other side tapers towards the end. The loop is locked in the fingers so that it does not slip off the hand. The slinging rope with a pebble in the middle is then swung round and round until it picks up enough speed. When the holder gains enough speed, he releases the narrow end of the sling so that the stone is hurled at the target. Apart from the throw, it also makes a crackling sound that resonates through the area. In order to use a sling, one must stand at a vantage point and free of any obstruction for a radius of three metres. As a game, the players test how far they can throw the pebble or hit a target at a distance.

2.2.17. Darts

The traditional darts game, *khuru* which is played on special events like local festivals used to be a gender-specific game, played only by men in Bhutan, but nowadays it is also played by women. It is the next most popular game after archery played generally all over Bhutan. It involves throwing a dart at a target at either end of a field of about 20-25 metres in length. The targets are made from wood which should be around



10 cm thick. The cylindrically shaped wooden darts are around 20 cm long and carved from hardwood. Earlier, two feathers of a bird were fixed at one end while a strong stick fixed at the other end. The dart is hand-carved in order to give a tapering shape. Two teams consisting of any convenient number can each throw a pair of darts alternately from each team at the target. Each hit right on the target fetches 2 points while the one nearest to the target as measured by the length of the khuru, fetches one point. Khuru is played in competition between teams from different places. Most often friends play among themselves on special occasions like New Year celebrations for fun and for the love of the game.

2.2.18. Pocket Pebble Game

The pocket pebble game *dus za lay* is a simple game played by teenagers and children outside their homes. Seven small pockets are dug out in the ground in a strategic manner so that there are two rows of three pockets facing each other. A main pocket called *Apa Gutoh* is centred at the top away from the rest of the pockets. All the pockets are filled with 5 pebbles each except the main one is kept empty. Two players are involved in the game. The first player can pick a bunch of pebbles from any pocket and drop each pebble in the consecutive holes in a clockwise direction. The player keeps filling the pockets until a point where he or she drops the last pebble in one pocket. If the next one is empty, he/she makes a swiping gesture at the empty pocket and whatever number of pebbles collected inside the following pocket is won. A player cannot make the run if the last pebble is dropped just before the *apa gutoh* pocket (provided the *apa gutoh* is filled). Each of the players can start by choosing any pocket (except the main one) filled with pebbles during their turn. A good tip would be that you pick the pocket that is most filled after the initial round. The ultimate winner is the one who collects the greatest number of pebbles. Getting a chance to empty the main pocket earns a lot of pebbles since that pocket is the toughest one to empty.