



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

B. P. Ed. 3rd Year

PAPER NO. : Practical (III)

**TOPIC NO. 1
Indigenous Games**

**Lecture – 207
Leiteng Thang Tamba
(Practice of Leiteng Thang)**

Introduction:

Dear students, traditionally, there are two systems of the practice of Thang. They are 1. Leiteng Thang, and 2. Yannaba Thang.

Leiteng Thang is a practice aimed at building a dexterous skill of the performer giving a blanket protection to his body with the use of two swords each in both left and right hands, or with a sword and shield.

Yannaba Thang is the practice of using sword in an actual field application of combating the foe. For today we take up Leiteng Thang.

Leiteng-thang

Now, Leiteng-thang. The two swords or a sword and a shield wielded by the artiste are used in such a way that the entire body is protected from any possible strike from any side or all sides at a time. The footwork is of fixed order.

Proficiency of a thang-ta performer in leiteng thang largely depend on supple wrist work and its coordinated footwork pattern.

Yet-thang is the technique of handling the sword with the right hand and of executing the *Thanglon* which is a prescribed movement pattern done in coordination with the left hand and the footwork.

Similarly, Oi-thang is the technique of handling the sword with the right hand and of executing the *thanglon* which is a prescribed movement pattern done in coordination with the right hand and the footwork.

There should be solid and effective stances and body postures which are followed always both in cases of attack and defence.

- Wristwork
- Traditional methods of handling sword
- Yet-thang method of handling the sword tightly but with enough room for making hand movements.
- Oithang method of handling the sword tightly but with freedom for making hand movements.
- Specific and related footwork
- Keen eyesight, etc.

Positions, stances, and body postures are specific. It is organised in such a way that the performer defends himself from any attack, but simultaneously these techniques also help the performer in striking the opponent at will at any moment of time. This is an effective way of making surprising counter attacks.

- Counter attacks
- Cuts
- Thrusts

Each cut or thrust should have coordinating body positions along with keen eyesight.

- Cuts with coordinating body positions along with accompanying eyesight

This means that footwork, hand movements, body postures, and eyesight are all coordinated. To attain this end various forms of exercises are given to the beginners to develop agility, flexibility, balance, and coordination of the body. Following are the exercises

- Meibul haibi
- Cheitup haibi

Some fixed stepping patterns

We now come to some fixed stepping patterns. This is the basis of the footwork employed in Leiteng-thang. These stepping patterns are

- Phunga nungdum saba (triangular stepping)
- Tha-machet saba (semicircular stepping)
- Khongpham manga (five steps)

Coordination of body limbs while making movements is a typical feature of Thang-ta which makes it highly effect in combat situations. It also makes the art highly accomplished during performance shows. Here are some examples

- Thang-khawon (swinging the sword in crossed curvilinear pattern with the chest facing upward)
- Hangmei kokthong onba (front roll)
- Leiba (turn)
- Chongba (jump)

On the basis of the principles of the movement of Leiteng thang there have developed a number of performing art traditions. Movement of the Natasankirtana performers, specially the movement of the drummer is based on the movement principles of the Leiteng thang.

- Body positions of the drummer
- Footwork of the drummer
- Hand movement

A typical feature of Leiteng thang is that over the years practitioners have developed dramatised or pre-scripted bouts of duel fights composed for regular exercise to keep the practitioners at an optimum level of fitness. But, now, these forms of exercises have become performance pieces which attract audience attention, not simply in India but also abroad.

- Thang yannaba
- Thang-Ta chainaba

Conclusion:

Leiteng thang was perhaps developed as a system of exercise for individual or group practice sessions to keep the swordsmen always at the top level of fitness to meet any kind of eventuality. This has also helped in keeping the text or structure of performance alive for successive generations of swordsmen. Being an art existed only in live practice sessions practitioners also had the advantage of polishing the texts and improving it over time. Now, the context of thang-ta has been shifted from actual battle field to a playground or a performance stage. The changes on the other hand have also brought many qualitative changes according to the newly found space.