CHAPTER - V
Political development in Orissa has been characterised by instability and stagnation. Of course, party building in such a complex traditional and heterogeneous society involves a tremendous task, and political instability is bound to be a constant feature in it. There may be several causes for this instability and one of the arguments can be extended to party system and party behaviour.

Since our approach is to study the politics of Orissa through political parties and party systems in its totality, therefore, in this Chapter and the following Chapter, we focus our attention on the study of "Congress" and "Opposition" parties respectively.¹

¹. We have discussed earlier that the Congress played a significant role in the two Orissas before 1947.— Its leaders worked for the creation of a separate province, took part in the National Movement and provided guidance for the merger of the feudatory states with the province of Orissa. The Praja Mandalas were created to gain popular support by demanding administrative, political and social reforms. However, if the INC had not followed its "policy of non-intervention" towards the feudatory states, these Praja Mandalas would have grown into much powerful and popular organisations. With a change in the policy of the INC, these organisations cooperated together to liberate the people of the feudatory states.
Section A: From National Movement to a Political Party:

The Congress found itself in a different socio-economic environment after independence. As a political party, Congress focussed its attention on "national reconstruction" and "mobilization of various sections of the society."

According to Weiner, a successful party organization operating in an open competitive environment must be able to:

"recruit and train its personnel, thereby perpetuating itself as an organisation; win support (goodwill, money, votes) from the population and substantial part thereof; and to maintain internal cohesion".1

Among the several causes as to why National Movement started as late as 1921 in Orissa, two important causes - poverty and illiteracy - can be

1. He further maintains that: "If the party is unable to recruit personnel then it has no durability and its life span is no greater than that of its members. If the party is unable to form a government when it has a majority of seats in a parliamentary body, it would not only be appropriate to speak of the party as successful but it would also be doubtful as to whether we were speaking of several parties".

attributed for it. The Congress was nevertheless, the most popular political organisation in Orissa. Till 1952, almost all Congress candidates had hundred percent success in the various elections, and the people had great faith on Congress achievements.

Why is it so? Several reasons may be put forward. Firstly, the grinding poverty of the masses had attracted them to the Congress fold. It had fought against the alien rule and cooperated with the Praja Mandal. The historical factor of a fragmented Orissa is said to be another cause for Congress popularity. This is why many Congress leaders were popular in the princely States; and many Praja Mandal leaders like Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Radhanath Rath etc. were taken into Congress fold.

1. According to the Census figures, the literate per mille aged 5 and above in Bihar-Orissa numbered 53, and in the Bihar-Orissa States, the figure was only 39. This was quite low as compared to the other provinces as well as States of India. The percentage of increase as compared to the Census of 1921 was only 8.9% which was also the lowest in the Country. Separate figures for Orissa were not available as the State in 1920's and 30's was tagged to Bihar. But looking at the history of the State and its vivi-section, it can be assumed that the literacy rate during these years must have been quite low as compared to other provinces of India as well as the princely states.

This is why the Congress programme had attracted the masses and politicized them to a certain extent.

Soon after independence, representative institutions were established in various parts of the State. But these institutions were alien to the people of the feudatory States, and were responsible for exposing the incoherence between the polity and society that existed in those days. The emergence of the GP offered a new challenge to the Congress. It had to widen its base in Western part of the province where regionalism had to be contained. In short, Orissa with a combination of two different types of sub-structures, feelings of regionalism, deep-rooted feudal values and antiquated model of social organizations made the Congress task much more difficult and challengeable.

With the advent of Gandhian epoch in 1920s, the Congress was partially emancipated from its era of intellectualism and provided the focus for the urges and aspiration of the millions in India. The

Congress had yet to mobilize the rural masses and to liberate them from being exploited by the ambitious politicians on communal and regional lines.

In Orissa, the early Congress leaders were mostly from urban areas, high castes and educated. With Gandhi's call for non-cooperation, these leaders made attempts to reach out to the masses through local level Congress organisations, Kissan Sabhas etc.

Thus, having discussed the genesis of the Congress, followed by an exposure of various challenges and limitation to which it had to operate in the immediate post-independence years, we proceed to describe, in brief its organisational set up as it is reflected in the party's constitution.

1. Shiriman Nayaran, a former General Secretary of Congress argued: "We have within the organisation, persons belonging to the landlord as well as the tenant class; others are businessmen, industrialists as well as the working class. When natural differences arise as a result of existing conflict of class interests, we try to strike a balance in order to satisfy both sections".

Organisation is one of the most important part of any political party.

"In modern parties, organisation assumes great importance. It constitutes the general setting for the activity of the members, the form composed on their solidarity; it determines the machinery for the selection of leaders and decides their powers. It often explains the strength and efficiency of certain parties and the weakness and inefficiency in others."

Congress which started originally as a National Movement was converted to a political party on the eve of independence. The party evolved a


2. After independence, Gandhiji had planned separate course of action for the Indian National Congress. The day before his assassination in 1948, Gandhiji had worked out a brief memo on the future course of action for the Congress. The memo declared that the "Congress as a propaganda vehicle and parliamentary machine has outlived its use" and that "it must be kept out of unhealthy competition with political parties". He suggested that the Congress should evolve itself into a non-political, non-governmental social service society, working towards the end of rural development. It should not evolve into a political party. Those who wished to engage in political and parliamentary work should leave Congress to create their separate political party. The Congress, in the opinion of Gandhi, was to operate as an organisation devoted to social reforms. The Congress could not accept the Gandhian proposition, as the assumption that its acceptance would have left the country without a single political party capable of running the government.
democratic organisation having on its roll people belonging to all sections of the society.

In Orissa, the organisational wing of the Congress is patterned according to the provisions of the constitution of the AICC. At the apex is the Utka Pradesha Congress Committee, a representative organisation of all Congressmen in the State.

The members of the UPCC\(^1\) constitute:

(a) Members elected by electoral colleges from single member constituencies (these members constitute an overwhelming majority);

(b) Ex-presidents of the PCC, who have completed full term of 365 days and continued to be active members;

(c) Presidents of the District Congress Committees (there are 13 districts in the State);

(d) AICC members who reside in the State;

(e) Members elected by the Congress Legislature Party at the rate of 5% of the members of PCC or TCC members subjected to a maximum of 15 members;

(f) Members coopted by the PCC Executive from special elements not adequately represented and others in accordance with the rules prescribed by the Working Committee.

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The other bodies working under the PCC are the District Congress Committees, Mandal Congress Committees and the Taluk Congress Committees. The most important bodies attached to the PCC are the Working Committee and the Election Committee. 1

Again the delegates to the All-India Congress Committee are also elected by the PCC. They include elected members (from among the members of the PCC who should not exceed ⅛ of the total number), the PCC President, the leader of the Congress legislature party and the representatives of other auxiliary organisations of the Congress.

1. The Working Committee members are elected by the PCC and this is the most important body with regard to the routine work of the party. The Pradesh Election Committee consists of the President of the PCC/leader of the Legislature Party and some members (ranging from 4 to 10) who shall be elected by the General Meeting of the PCC. If the members of the Committee are elected by two-third majority of members present and voting, they shall be declared elected. The voting for such an election shall be by ballot and on each ballot paper, the voter shall have to record as many as votes as there are members to be elected to the Committee. In case, a two-third majority is not secured by each of the members to be elected there shall be fresh election by the system of single transferable vote.

The President of the PCC is the ex-officio Chairman of the Pradesh Election Committee, which is the highest body in the State party organisation to recommend the name of the candidates contesting election to the General Election Committee.

The pattern of Congress membership has fluctuated in recent years due to split in the party on several occasions. However, the total enrolment of primary and active members in Orissa Congress upto August 15, 1972 was 1,87,849 and 8,142 respectively. This number was collected after the party split in 1968. There was further change in the number due to party split again at the national level into Cong-U and Cong-I.

Section C: Congress Strategies and Pattern of Political Mobilization

After having analysed the organisational set up of the Congress in a broader framework, we now proceed to analyse its strategies to mobilize different sections of the society. Congress in Orissa after 1947 came to be identified with leaders like Hare Krishna Mahtab, Naba Krushna Choudhury, Biswanath Das, Nityamand Kanungo and others. These people came from

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1. Normally the concept 'member' of a party refers to a follower or adherent who should be distinguished from the 'supporter' of a party. A supporter, unlike a member, is one who is in agreement with the party ideology and also finds himself in a position to lend his support to the party but at the same time remains outside the organisation.
wide walks of life and carried with them the message of dedication and sacrifice. Their appeal to the rural population was effective only to a certain extent. The lower and middle class people were impressed by the Congress ideology and programmes, but even among these classes (in the Western Orissa) the beneficiaries under the princely regimes were hostile to it. The conflict between the royalists and the middle class of the coastal regime was perceptible from the merger days. Of course, it is rather difficult to pinpoint which political community or group came under the Congress influence.

However, looking at the socio-economic set up of Orissa, it can be roughly said that on the eve of independence, it was the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes people, the peasantry, the feudatory chiefs, and the Zamindars for whom democracy and nationalism had special charm united under the Congress banner.1

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1. The close cooperation between the Congress and the Kissan Sabha also contributed to the Congress popularity among the peasants. The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes people were attracted to the Congress ideology in view of Gandhi's message towards these outcaste people. The Muslims to some extent had also aligned with the Congress.
The Congress programme to mobilize various sections of the society in Orissa can be roughly categorised as:

(a) The Congress because of its historical role in the freedom struggle had become a party of saviour that stood for pure and lofty ideals;

(b) Congress was the oldest party in the State;

(c) Congress was the only party that had members of national status, like Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, Subhash Bose and others;

(d) Congress was the only party which had many eminent leaders who were equally acceptable to the Coastal as well as Western part of the province. For example, Mahtab played an important role in the politics of two Orissas' in the pre-independence period;

(e) Being the ruling party since 1935, Congress possessed vast powers of patronage which was also of tremendous political value;

(f) Congress experience over district administration was another factor which gave Congress a 'new dimension as a ruling party'. Congressmen had the opportunity to win elections to District Boards in Orissa in pre-independence years.

Today, the Congress has developed several auxiliary organisations through which it can mobilize a particular section of the society. For example, there is the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC); the Youth wing and the Women's wing of the
UPCC. Again, there is a provision in the Constitution of the Congress dealing with the fact that persons who represent different organisations, working in collaboration with the party shall be taken as the member of the UPCC. Among the auxiliary bodies, the INTUC is most important.

Section D: Ideology and Programme:

This section deals with, in brief, the Congress ideology and programme. The objective of the Congress as produced in Art. I of the Constitution reads:

"The objective of the Indian National Congress is the well-being and advancement of the people of India and establishment in India, by peaceful and constitutional means of a Socialist State, based on Parliamentary Democracy in which there is equality of opportunity and of political, economic and social rights and aims at world peace and fellowship".1

The issues before the Congress as early as 1946-52 were that of national reconstruction and providing stable administration. It emphasised on issues like advancement of education, public health, labour welfare, housing schemes for workers, improvement of agriculture labour and re-establishment of

the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.\textsuperscript{1} The Congress after independence devoted itself to set up a democratic political system on the English model and to build up a socio-economic structure that can guarantee justice and equal opportunity to the common man.

It also realised that factors like communalism, regionalism, narrow and parochial tendencies were impending the march of the Indian people towards new goals and modern social set up.\textsuperscript{2} With these problems the Congress, on the eve of the 1957 elections, laid special emphasis on issues connected with social integration, social transformation, parliamentary democracy and progress.\textsuperscript{3}

In Orissa, context, the Congress took up issues like "democratic socialism" as the party's principal objective. To promote socialism it proposed for the

\begin{enumerate}
\item What Congress Stands For? Election Manifesto (AICC, New Delhi, July 1951), pp. 7-9.
\item The Congress Manifesto (AICC, New Delhi, 1962), p. 4.
\item Congress - U.N. Dhabhar, Your Vote, Seminar (Delhi, 1962), p. 32.
\end{enumerate}
abolition of all intermediary interests in the land-tenure system and to make the peasant-cultivator, the owner of the land cultivated. It promoted more work opportunities for unemployed, education, minimum wage for the labour and resettlement schemes for the landless agricultural labourers. The UPCC appealed to the voters for a "welfare state" under the Congress guidance. 

In 1961 and 1967, it took up almost similar issues, for its electioneering campaign. In 1961, the G.P. had become the main opposition to the Congress. Criticising the G.P. hold on state politics in Orissa, the Congress manifesto declared that:

"....the rulers of the G.P. are mainly interested in maintaining their iron grip on the people and thus assuring the security and welfare of the ex-Maharajas and their families at the cost of the working class."

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In 1971, the Congress promised for the establishment of an open, democratic and socialist society.\(^1\) It laid emphasis on the welfare and "development of the tribal people who had been cut-off from the mainstream of our national life for years and are now coming into their own."\(^2\) The manifesto promised for the expansion of the public sector, nationalisation of the bank, price stabilisation, education, development of scientific and technical education, providing employment, rural credit, land reforms, prohibition, population control, communications etc. The most important aspect of the

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1. **Explaning the Socialist Society, the manifesto read** - "where the principal means of production will be under social ownership and control, production will be progressively speeded up raising the standard of living of the people and there is equality of opportunity and equitable distribution of national wealth. In an economically under-developed society like ours, the very structure of political power and its inter-linking with the command over economic resources make it necessary that the commanding heights of the economy shall not be in the private hands. For they who hold the livers of economic power will also ultimately run the political apparatus. The free exercise of the democratic process demands therefore, the intervention of the State in the running of the economy of the country".

**Election Manifesto, INC (New Delhi, 1971), p.2**

2. **Election Manifesto, Op.cit., p. 3.**
manifesto was the "national minimum".  

In 1974, the Congress programme highlighted on the distribution of land to landless, land reforms, industrial expansion, preservation of forests, fisheries, nationalisation of Kendu leaf, irrigation and power etc.  

In 1977, the central issue of its Manifesto was that "poverty must go, disparity must diminish and injustice must end". It pledged to solve the unemployment problem, focussed on development of agriculture, industry, mines, forests, transport and communication etc. The Manifesto released by Shri J.B. Patnaik, former Union Minister and Convener of the State Congress Election Committee, at a Press Conference on the occasion of the swearing-in-ceremony of her Cabinet, on 6th March, 1974, Sat. Satpathy said: "... the dream for establishing an egalitarian order has to be realized and poverty, inequality and superstition have to be removed. The tasks, though challenging, could be overcome with strong will and determination". See, Orissa: A New Chapter (Cuttack, 1974), p. 1.
Conference, declared for a minimum development programme for the rural areas.¹

The Congress manifesto promised for almost similar programmes and policies in the 1980 elections. An analysis of the Congress election manifestoes shows that the basic issues like agriculture, industry, education, land reform, poverty, price stabilisation, unemployment, better health facilities etc. have remained same over the years. After having discussed the ideological orientation of the Congress, we now proceed to discuss the party in organisation and in its exercise of authority together with their interaction.

1. It planned to establish 1,000 small and medium industries in the State during the next five years. For the prevention of floods in the State, the party proposed to accelerate the execution of the Nandigram project. The manifesto assured the agriculturist, a minimum fair price for the produce and provisions of inputs at reasonable rates, assured free education to women up to graduate level. It promised to correct whatever aberrations noticed in the implementation of the land reforms programme. The minimum development programme for the State, as was envisaged, included drinking water and road communication facilities for every village and providing medical centre for every 4,000 people. See: Election Manifesto, UPCC (Bhubaneswar, 1977).
Section E: Factionalism in Congress

The characteristic of the Congress as a political party can be analysed by taking into the account the performance of the party at the organisational and the parliamentary levels.¹

Like a number of other states in India, Orissa too provides a fine example of study of struggle for power between the organisational and governmental wings of the Congress.² Neville Maxwell, a long Delhi-based correspondent for the Times (London) had observed with consistency and relentlessness the fact that disintegrative forces in India are manifested through factionalism. On the eve of the Fourth General Election (February, 1967), he published several relevant articles titled "India's Disintegrating Democracy". He wrote:

1. See Myron Weiner, Political Change in South Asia (Calcutta, 1963), p. 36.

"No party in India is beyond the pull of faction. The faction is indeed the true unit of Indian political system, the parties are temporary and unstable coalition of factions."  

Factionalism, therefore, has become a common feature in all democratic countries. Party building in the new countries involves tremendous political competition and this is bound to give rise to "factional bossism" within the party. Under such circumstances, political patronage becomes one of the major aspects in party building and political development.  

Paul Brass makes an interesting study of factional politics in U.P. In his application of the factional approach to coalition politics, Brass concludes that intra-party divisions are more important than inter-party divisions. But, here we  

2. The governmental power is an essential instrument of party consolidation on India. Many social groups join the ruling parties to derive personal benefits. The 'pull' factor of a ruling party to attract powerful social groups towards itself is dependent on politics of patronage. Patronage may prove functional for a party under certain circumstances like the absence of severe political competition in a country. The politics of patronage can be dysfunctional for a party because it may create conditions for its disintegration and decay.
assume that both divisions are equally important leading to party proliferation, defection and instability in a political system. It is therefore, necessary to examine the factors responsible for such a conflict within the party system.

**Factionalism in Orissa Congress Before Independence:**

In 1937, elections were held to the Provincial Assembly under the Government of India Act, 1935. The leader of the UPCC, Nalichantra Das was apprehensive of Congress success at the polls. The party had a weak organisation and the feudal elements were stronger in comparison to the Congress. N.K. Chaudhury was appointed as the General Secretary of the Congress in view of his long-standing association with the Kisan Movement in the State. With an election manifesto which promised for radical changes in the agrarian system, Congress contested the election, in which it won 36 seats out of a total of 60.

After coming to power, conflict started within the Congress. The Socialists criticised the Congress's decision of joining the Government. Nalichantra Das, who was then a member of the Central Legislative Assembly, wanted to assume the leadership
of the Provincial Legislature. He was opposed by the Mahtab group. In 1937, Mahtab became the president of the UPCC by defeating Nilkant Das by a margin of 13 to 12 votes. But the leadership of the Congress legislature party became a sensitive issue. Mahtab wanted Choudhury to assume the leadership of the legislative wing, while the C.S.P. did not allow Choudhury to contest the election. Finally, Mahtab faction sponsored the candidature of Kanungo while the Das faction sponsored the name of Biswanath Das. In the final found, Das won the leadership battle.

During this period, Congress politics however, had some touch of caste-colour in it. Disappointed with his failure to capture leadership in the Congress, Nilkant Das and Godavarish Mishra both Brahmins formed a separate Brahmin dominated group and challenged the non-brahmin group led by

1. Nilkant Das did not contest the election to the Provincial Assembly unlike other prominent Congress leaders like Govinda Ballav Pant of U.P., C. Baja Gopalachari of Madras, Srikrishna Sinha of Bihar and B.G. Kher of Bombay. They were all members of the Central Legislative Assembly, but opted for their respective Provincial Assemblies during the General Election.
Mahtab and Kanungo. The former group did not hesitate to align themselves openly with the feudal elements represented by the ex-princes of Orissa.

In 1936, elections to the UPCC were held and Shri Gopabandhu Choudhury was elected as its President. The Das-Mishra faction continued in their move to capture the organization. They wanted to ensure their support from R.K. Biswasray, Sadasib Tripathy and others from the southern part of the State, especially Koraput, Ganjam and Puri. In 1939, when elections to the UPCC were held, the factional feud once again came to the surface.

Mishra represented the dissident faction and Biswasray represented the Mahtab group. Thus, the final blow came to the Das-Mishra faction when Mahtab group won the organisational election. Biswasray became the President and Choudhury was elected as the General Secretary.¹ Later, the Das-Mishra group, dissatisfied and disgruntled, joined the Forward Bloc.

¹ From 1939-1945, the UPCC had Biswasray as the President and N.K. Choudhry as General Secretary. Thus, the Mahtab faction dominated the Congress in the pre-independence period.
The first Congress Ministry under Biswanath Das's leadership continued to function under great strains till October 1939, when the Ministry had to resign according to the terms and conditions laid down by the Congress Resolution, not to cooperate with the British war effort. Thus, Orissa came under Governor's rule.

In 1946, fresh elections were held to the Provincial Assembly under limited franchise. The Congress won 47 seats and formed the Ministry under the leadership of Mahtab. The internal rivalry in the Congress continued as before. For seven years from 1939-1946, Mahtab faction dominated the organisational set up. In 1946, election to the UPCC was held after a long gap. The Mahtab faction sponsored the candidature of Biswanath Das, while the dissident group supported Smt. Malati Choudhury, wife of N.K. Choudhury. In the election, Smt. Choudhury won the battle and appointed Shri Surendranath Dwivedi as the General Secretary. Mahtab and Dwivedi never had any liking for each other. The anti-Mahtab group was left-oriented and finally led to the revival of the Congress Socialist Party.
The CSP had become almost defunct after Choudhury's alliance with the Mahtab group.

Thus, factionalism was a major force in Orissa Congress before independence.

**Factionalism in Congress: 1952-1980**

Attainment of independence could not bring an end to the factionalism inside the Congress. With the newly acquired power and freedom, these leaders forgot their committment to the masses, and indulged in group politics for power, spoils and self-achievement.

There is no doubt that Mahtab was the undisputed leader of Orissa in pre-independence era. Other leaders like Choudhury, Kanungo, Das, were at one time or another, Mahtab's followers. But, after independence a group of 'young-leaders' emerged inside the party, who were close to Mahtab. Although at various stages, factions emerged within the Congress against Mahtab, yet the pattern of political development in Orissa reveals the fact that Mahtab continued to play a decisive role in the post-independence politics too.
The new leaders were the trusted lieutenants inclding Biju Patnaik, Biren Mitra and Nilomeni Routray who in later years adorned the Chief Ministership of Orissa. Routray had joined Congress prior to independence and had also taken part in the "Quit India Movement". Mitra, who was originally a member of the CPI, defected to Congress after independence. He was the leader of the labourers of Cuttack city. But, the most energetic and enterprising among them was Patnaik. He started his career as an aeronautic engineer and later became a pilot. He became famous for his rescue operation of President Sukarno and other Indonesian leaders. Biju Patnaik came in contact with Mahtab in 1946 and this brought him closer to politics and to Congress as such.

Patnaik's dream has always been to industrialise Orissa of his own without any financial assistance from any "big industrialists" of India like Birlas, Tatas or Dalmian. When rivalry began between the Mahtab group and the Young-Turks, Mahtab in his affidavit to the Orissa High Court, in 1967, wrote that
"Looking at his enthusiasm and having hopes that a person of the State would set up industries in the State, I tried to give him all legitimate help from the Government side. With such help, he set up Orissa Textile Mills and also Kalinga Airlines."

But, Biju Patnaik, while filing his affidavit in the Court, in the same year, observed:

"Mahtab wanted to utilize the organizational ability of Patnaik finding that he was successful in building up a number of industries like Orissa Textile Mills, Kalinga Airlines, Kalinga Refrigerator Corporation etc. and also the international and intra-provincial contacts of Biju outside Orissa. It is not that Mahtab helped in setting up the Orissa Textile Mills and other industries only for the sake of development of industries. In fact, he wanted to utilize the labour force and the entire resources and organisation of Orissa Textile Mills at Choudwar and other industries for his political aims, by himself purchasing some shares in the Textile Mills which was even disliked in those days by Mahatma Gandhi."

Mahtab's intention was that Patnaik should continue with his industrial ventures without nourishing any political ambitions as such. But, when Patnaik emerged as an important political force, Mahtab saw in him, one of his future political rivals. Thus, the cordial relationship between the two leaders and their groups of early forties came to an end.

1. Mahtab's affidavit in Orissa High Court, 1967.
2. Bijoyanand Patnaik's affidavit in Orissa High Court, 1957.
For the convenience of studying factional politics, we have categorised the period according to the general elections held in the province at different times, because, factionalism has led often to dissolution of Ministries, defections and political instability in the State.

1952-1957:

The first General Elections were held in 1952, in which the Congress won 67 seats out of 140. Choudhury was reluctant to head the ministry, although, he was the only acceptable candidate to all the three groups — the "Young Turks", the organisational wing headed by Biswanath Das, and the Central High Command.

Ministry making was not an easy task for Choudhury, because of the development of inter-party feud between the Patnaik and Mahtab. In the meanwhile, Mahtab was appointed as the Governor of Bombay. His alienation from the State politics was

1. He formed the Ministry with the support of the independent Peoples' Party consisting of ex-Congressmen and Milkanth Das. This process indicated a new group alignment in the Congress party in Orissa, which gave stability to it in the Assembly for sometime.
almost like a political exile for him. Mahtab had thought Choudhury would be his man. But, Choudhury developed a will of his own after assuming Chief Ministership. Differences between them grew over various issues like land reforms, Anchal Administration, Kendu Leaf Policy etc.

 Failures of the Chaudhury's Government:

On the governmental front, Choudhury failed to show his ability as an able administrator. Flood and drought made things worse. The Chief Minister was criticised for his full-time involvement in the Bhoomdan Movement in the State. The finance minister Radhanath Rath was too pre-occupied with the mobilisation of mass support for the inclusion of Sareikella and Kharaswan with Orissa.

State Reorganisation Movement in the State:

The political development in the State became worse with the publication of the State Reorganisation Commission's Report. The Executive Committee of the UPCC headed by Bamsiali Patnaik passed a resolution to the effect that the Congress could not take the responsibility of administration in view of the SRC recommendations. Resolutions were
passed asking the Ministry to resign. Movements spread in the province and the government resorted to firing, resulting in the death of students and the people.

However, things cooled down when the then Congress President U.N. Dhebar visited Orissa. Some legislators of the O.L.A. (all belonging to Mahtab group) demanded for a change of leadership in the State, in view of the approaching Second General Election in 1957. They openly asked for Mahtab's return to the province. The other faction however, made representation before the President of AICC that it was Mahtab, who had encouraged factionalism within the Congress.¹

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¹ Mahtab's out-states political role during these years to encourage factionalism within Orissa Congress and to oust Naba Krishna Choudhury from Chief Ministership is clearly perceptible from the following two letters:

(a) In one confidential letter to Dinabandhu Sahu on Sept. 22, 1955, he wrote:

"When I publish my autobiography you will know how Naba Babu betrayed me at a very crucial stage. The whole plan was to oust me completely from public life and then eliminate others one by one. Naba Babu managed the whole scheme very carefully. I got friends when Banamali (Patnaik) was ousted and Biren was disillusioned. But they were cleverly handled by Naba Babu at a 'critical
Nehru, who took notice of this incident
i.e. the rumour that the Mahtab faction was work-
ing for the establishment of a "Mahtab Party" in
the State, warned Mahtab, asking him to tolerate
the Choudhury Ministry in the State and not to
create any rift within the Congress.¹

F.N. ¹ from previous page contd....

stage'. I put into the cabinet some new
elements who were so many cogs in the wheel.
That is some safeguard now. Otherwise, the
conservative elements under the leadership
of Choudhury family would have finished all
others. Now I tell you my mistakes.....
It is really a surprising and wonderful
feat. Now these mistakes have been commis-
tated. The remedy is that some at least
must remain firm and give kicks even if they
lose at the first instance".

See, Sunit Ghosh, Orissa in Turmoil (Calcutta,

(b) The second confidential letter read (to
Biren Mitra on Oct. 11, 1955):
"My point is that nothing should be done in
an unsystematic manner, only to irritate
and not solve. If for some reason or other
no systematic effort can be made then be
reconciled to yourself and try to do as
much as you can. Then about my going-
Dhimbandhu Sahu has made out a point that
I should go now (to Orissa). First, I have
to make out a case to my friends at the head-
quartes. I should not allow them to know
that I go there to start a trouble. In
short, my present position not as the Gover-
not, but as a top rank Congressman creates
that difficulty. Next, if and when I go,
I must see things through. But, I know most
of you are not prepared that way. Next, the
techniques of starting an opposition requi-
res that it should start in the Congress Party
itself. For instance, a regular Opposition
group inside the Assembly and the PCC".


¹ Prajatantra, April 15, 1956.
Nahtar, while replying to Mohru's letter on April 15, 1956, wrote that the allegations which had been made against him were all baseless. He, however, asserted that there was unity inside Congress, but the party had incurred the unpopularity and dissatisfaction of the people in view of its poor role in the State. He also argued that he had been always loyal to the Congress in Orissa and also the Central High Command, and therefore, as a mark of respect, he would withdraw from leadership battle in favour of Choudhury. 1

Thus, on the eve of 1957 elections, Congress in Orissa was divided on the question of leadership issue. Choudhury, disgruntled, decided to quit politics 2, 3. The ministry resigned from Office in October, 1956.

3. Choudhury's decision was not acceptable by his followers like Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Surrendranath Patnaik,Madhanath Nath and others, who were opposed to Nahtar's return to state politics in Orissa.

In: Interview with Shri Brahman Mohan Mohanty, Ex-speaker, M.L.A. and president of OPCC, at present Member of Lok Sabha and Deputy Minister at the Centre.
Mahtab Returns to Orissa Politics:

This created a stalemate in the political development of the State. The Congress High Command was faced with the problem of leadership issue in Orissa. Several names like Biswanath Das, Mahtab and Kanungo were suggested. Nehru was opposed to Mahtab and Biswanath Das. Nityanand Kanungo did not wish to become the Chief Minister.

Maulana Azad, who was the AICC observer for the Eastern States, seeing no other possibility requested Mahtab to take over the leadership of Orissa Congress. Mahtab at first advised for the dissolution of the Ministry and imposition of the President's rule in the Province. But this was not accepted by Azad. On April 23, 1956, he wrote to Mahtab:

"..... You know the present position of the party and the Congress government in Orissa very well. I would like, therefore, to know from you whether you are prepared to take up the party leadership there and become once more the Chief Minister.... ... If not, we may be left with no alternative but to resort to President's Rule".¹

Mahtab wrote back that if the Prime Minister and High Command wished, then he had no other alternative than to assume the leadership of the Congress.

Legislature Party in Orissa. Nahtab thus returned to Orissa politics and assumed the Chief Ministership on October 19, 1956.

1957-1961:

The period between 1957-61, Orissa Congress experienced a fierce factional struggle which ultimately led to the emergence of Biju Patnaik as a rival leader in Orissa politics.

In the 1957 elections, Congress performance was poor, compared to 1952 elections, as it won only 55 out of 140 seats. Ministry making was not an easy task for Nahtab either, as Congress did not fight the election as a united party. The anti-Nahtab group's discontent was manifested right from the beginning. Allegations were made that Patnaik had financed the PSP candidates. Patnaik denied these charges but agreed to the fact that he had financed the electioneering of Shri Sarvendranath Deivody, an eminent PSP leader, on humanitarian grounds.

In the legislative front, the Ministry faced a series of no-confidence motions as a result of which defections took place from the Congress to
Opposition parties. 1

Coalition Government: 1959:

The Opposition camp was active in forming an alternative government on the eve of Congress downfall in the Assembly. The CPI, which had promised to support the government withdrew from it.

1. Those who defected to and from Congress were:

Defected to Congress from GP:

1. Himanshu Sekhar Panda (25.6.57)
2. Sarangadhar Pradhan (3.7.57)
3. Harish Chandra Patnaik (28.5.58)
4. Mochinan Triya (28.3.58)
5. Purushottam Panda (28.3.58)
6. Narendra Naik
7. Nalla Kurma Naikulu
8. Krishna Chandra Mohapatra
9. Krishna Chandra Singh Mandhata
10. Ram Chandra Patnaik

Defected from Congress:

1. Mrutunjay Pal (24.4.58)
2. Kalia Deheuri (23.4.58)
3. Niranjan Singh Sariha (22.4.58)
4. Shridhar Naik (24.4.58)
5. Yatiraj Prahraj (20.8.58)
6. Harinar Das (West Kodala) (27.8.59)
7. Ghasiram Majhi (6.4.60)
8. Anup Singh Deo (Independent)

On 5th May, 1958, the Congress Legislature Party decided to put up the Appropriation Bill. It won the battle by a majority of two votes only, the numbers being 60 to 66. On May 9, 1958, Nahtab realising the precarious position decided to submit the resignation of the Ministry.

Thus, from 9th May to 23rd May, 1958 a sort of political stalemate continued in the State. Opposition parties, under the leadership of R.N. Singhdeo, worked for providing an alternative government in the State. But, the then Governor of the Province, Shri Y.N. Shuktankaar, however, failed to give a proper decision, because the Congress claimed that it still commanded the support of 71 members in the Assembly. This instability came to an end when Nahtab decided to withdraw his resignation letter on 23rd May, 1958. From 1959-1961, Orissa experienced for the first time a Congress led coalition government in the State.

1. The G.P. had 45 votes, PSP 11 votes, CPI 0, Socialists 0 and Independent 0 (the total number of seats in the Assembly was 156). O.L.A. Debates, dtd. 5-5-1958.
The new government worked for land reforms, cooperative farming, state trading in food grains etc.¹

The formation of the coalition however, did not end factionalism in the Congress. A new faction emerged under the leadership of Biju Patnaik. In the contest for Presidentship of the UPCC, Patnaik was elected thereby defeating Shri Banamali Patnaik of the Mahtab faction. After capturing the UPCC, Patnaik's first move was the demand for the Congress withdrawal from the coalition Ministry. This he did to establish the Congress dominance once again in the State.

The Mahtab faction, which dominated the O.L.A. asked one of its members, Shri Pabitra Mohan Pradhan to check the activities of Patnaik. Pradhan and his group sent a telegram to Delhi and presented a letter to the Governor pinpointing Patnaik's unseemingly role in Orissa politics.²


2. The Signatories to the telegram and the letter were:
Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Durga Shanker Das (Bhograi), Akhsaya Narain Prahraj (Basta), Nilambara Das (Soro-Nilgir), Purmanand Samal (Cuttack-Sadar); Yogesh Chandra Rout (Banki), Manmohan Tudu (Udala), Nanda Kishore Jena
This resulted in a political stagnation in the State. The Central High Command advised Mahtab to withdraw Congress support from the coalition. Accordingly, Mahtab submitted his resignation to the Governor on February 26, 1961. Orissa came under the President's rule for the first time.

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(Chandbali), Ananta Charan Tripathi (Bajragn), Muralidhar Jena (Dhar Nagar); Chaitanya Sethi (Soro-Nilgiri), Mamata Sethi (Anandpur), Patma Charan Samart Singhan (Brahmagiri), Sabjanand Champatirai (Bolgarh), Raja Bahadur Ram Chandra Mandaraj Deo (Khallikot). In: Interview with Pabitra Mohan Fradhan, ex-Minister and M.L.A. of Orissa.

1. From the beginning, the Congress High Command did not take any prompt action against this political uncertainty in the State. In a letter to Mahtab on February 16, 1961, Sanjeeva Reddi, who was then the President of AICC, wrote:

"The coalition Government was formed in your State with specific approval of the Central Parliamentary Board. Therefore, the CPB will have to take a decision regarding the dissolution and the time of dissolution. Till you receive specific instructions from the CPB, the Government will have to carry on its legitimate functions, like passing the motion of thanks to the Governor for the address, presentation of budget, etc."

The Congress Working Committee and the CPB met in a few days and decided that the Ministry should be continued till the end of the budget session as a care-taker Government. The stand of the Congress High Command made the Fazilahad leaders suspicious of the intentions of the Congress and then suspicions deepened following a statement made by Biju contd....
In June, 1961, mid-term elections were held to elect a new government and bring an end to the President's rule in the State. The Congress, under the dynamic leadership of Patnaik won the election with a thumping majority. Mahtab, however, did not contest the election for reasons known to him. Patnaik, thus, became the unquestionable leader of the Congress, not only in the province, but, he also had the support of the Congress leaders at the Centre.

Patnaik had always wished to industrialize Orissa and to pull the state out of poverty and economic backwardness. And this he did with the support of the Congress from the Centre. Several

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Patnaik on February 19, 1961 that the High Command was agreeable to an alternative ministry in the State.


During this period, therefore, there were clearly two divisions within the Congress - Mahtab group and the Patnaik group. It can be said that there was also a mini-group headed by Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, who held an indifferent attitude towards either factions in the organisation. However, he was more pro-Mahtab group, and this led to the emergence of Jan Congress, few years later in Orissa's political development. In 1961, election, he had defeated two princes - Dhenkanai Raja and Pal-Lahara Raja.
large and small-scale prestigious projects were set up in the State.¹ Planning Board, public corporations were set up to carry on and execute the policies and programmes of the government.

Ruling the State with confidence was no problem for Biju Patnaik, but, soon he fell a victim to the Kamraj Plan.²

Biren Mitra's selection as the leader of the Congress Legislature Party was not easy. Pradhan and his faction were opposed to it.³,⁴

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¹ Pradip Port, Sunabeda MIG factory, Talcher Thermal Power Plant, Balimela Hydel Project, the Express High Way, Cooperation and Panchayat Industries, etc. Under this scheme in 1962-63, seven sugar mills, 21 tile-making units, ten carpentry shops, etc. were launched in the State.

² Many Senior Congress leaders were asked to give up their offices, in order to strengthen the party organisation. Thus, on August 1961, Biju Patnaik, who had taken a special interest in the implementation of Kamraj Plan stepped down from office, in favour of his successor Biren Mitra.

See: S. Dwivedi and G.S. Bhargav, Political Corruption in India (New Delhi: Popular Book Service, 1967), Ch. IX and XI.

³ They had suggested names of Biswanath Das, Hare Krishna Mahtab, Naba Krishna Choudhury, Nityanand Kanungo and Radhanath Bath.

⁴ Other prominent leaders who had identified themselves with the dissident group were Surendranath Patnaik, Banamali Patnaik, contd.....
Hence, the Patnaik faction once again dominated inside the Congress.

The new Chief Minister did not find the political atmosphere favourable to him, nor did he possess the leadership quality of Patnaik. Corruption charges were levelled against him.²

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Santanu Kumar Das, Upendra Mohanty, Muralidhar Jena and Manmohan Tudu. They were all members of OLA. Mahtab who from the beginning nurtured an anti-Patnaik feeling, became the guardian of this group. Being a member of the Parliamentary Board at the Centre, he could present the demands made by these dissidents in the CPB from time to time. Amongst these seven dissidents, Bimal Patnaik was twice the President of UPCC, Surendra Nath Patnaik its General Secretary; Upendra Mohanty and Muralidhar Jena were its secretaries. Later they formed the Jana Congress group.

1. An ex-member of the Communist Party, Nitra tried to put into practice his pro-left land reform theories first at home. He agitated for the abolition of zamindaries in his father's estates at Naghumathpur in his students days. He was jailed a couple of times. Towards 1946, he joined INC and later became a staunch supporter of the Patnaik faction.

2. On July 28th, 1964, a memorandum was submitted to the President of India by 63 members of the O.L.A. (all belonging to the Opposition group) under the direction of Shri R.N. Singhdeo. They complained against the misuse of administration by Patnaik and Nitra for personal gain. The matter was then referred to the CBI which submitted its Report on November, 1964.
The student agitation of 1964 further made things difficult for Mitra. Finally he resigned from the office on February 1, 1965.

Sadasib Tripathi who succeeded Birendra Mitra, assumed leadership of Congress Legislature party on February 21, 1965.\(^1\) One of the major problems which Tripathy faced was the ministerial crisis. The decision was taken in the CLP meeting that it would not be proper to make any change in the ministry in view of the elections in 1967. Both Patnaik and the then Congress President Kamraj had agreed to this plan.\(^2\)

But on 4th September 1966, a number of important changes were made in the Cabinet, leading

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2. In a letter to Biju Patnaik, Kamraj wrote about the "continuous pressure" brought on him by the leading members of the Orissa Congress and Chief Minister, that Patnaik should lead the government again. "Since you were of the opinion that it was not proper to change the Government so frequently, particularly in view of the general elections, being so near had to agree to with your views". dtd. *Hindustan Times, 26th August, 1966.*
to discontent among the members. While answering the Press, Tripathi told that he had made changes with a view to lessen his burden of work and also for the "efficient running of the administration." Dissatisfied with this move, the 12 ministers and deputy minister out of 13, resigned from the Cabinet on the plea that the Chief Minister did not take them into confidence while making re-allocation of

1. 1) Mr. Satyapriya Mohanty - Revenue & Excise, Education;

ii) Nilomani Routray, Dy.Chief Minister - Home, Political & Services, Supply, Labour, Employment, Commerce, Forestry;

iii) Ram Prasad Mishra - Agriculture, Cooperation, Public Relation;

iv) T. Sanganna - Tribal & Rural Welfare;

v) P.V. Jagannath Rao - Health;

vi) Banamali Babu - Law and Local Self-Govt.;

vii) Saraswati Pradhan - Dy.Minister for Education;

viii) Chittaranjan Naik - " " " Industry & Commerce;

ix) Santosh Kumar Sahu - " " " Geology & Cooperation;

x) Chandra Mohan Singh - " " " Revenue & Excise;

xi) Madan Mohan Pradhan - " " " Agriculture;

xii) Prahlad Mallik - " " " Irrigation & Power.

dtd.


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portfolios. They sent a letter to the Congress President Kamraj complaining against the untoward move of Chief Minister. These dissidents, under the leadership of Routray, met at the residence of Mitra to discuss the future course of action. It can be recalled that Routray was a trusted lieutenant of Patnaik. It was thought that Patnaik had manoeuvered this move to oust Tripathi from the leadership of the CLP. Whatever may be the reason for the ministerial crisis, nevertheless it directly

1. The thirteenth minister for Community Development and Panchayati Raj, Anup Singhdeo was away from the State capital.

2. This was a serious sign of tidal drift towards disunity and disintegration of ruling party in the State. In a letter to Kamraj on 1st September, however Tripathy sought permission to resign as the Chief Minister on account of differences with certain members of the State cabinet.

3. Commenting on the 'Congress Crisis' in Orissa, Mr. P.K. Deo, an eminent Swatantra M.P. from Orissa observed: "There is nothing new in their modus operandi to put pressure on the Centre and the High Command. There is a set of people in my State who are in the habit of extracting undue favours from the Government and whenever their interests clash, they have not hesitated to strain"

*Sunday Statesman, 11-9-1966.*
affected the Congress performance in the 1967 elections. Such "act of discipline" had proved adverse to the Congress interest and performance in Orissa on several occasions.

1967-1971:

The Fourth General Elections proved disastrous for the Congress. For the first time, a non-Congress coalition government led by Swatantra-JC came to power in the State.\(^1\) The achievement of the new ministry was manifested in the appointment of two Inquiry Commissions, headed by Justice H.R. Khanna and Justice Sarjoo Prasad. The coalition government was a success in the early phase of its

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1. The Parliamentary Board of the Swatantra Party reported that - "the Board had a very useful report from R.N. Singhdeo, leader of the Orissa unit for the Party, regarding the discussions with the Jana Congress and other Opposition groups in the State. R.N. Singhdeo was authorised to continue these discussions in the object of capturing power in the State. If they did not get a clean majority, they would strive for a Swatantra led coalition".

*Indian Recorder and Digest*, Vol. 12, No. 8, (Delhi, August 1966), p. 9.
existence. 1

The Congress crisis and party split at the national level had its repercussions on the States too. The Congress in Orissa was also divided on the issue of presidential poll. Patnaik and his group voted for the official candidate, Sanjiva Reddi, while the dissident group voted for Indira Gandhi's candidate, V.V. Giri. The Swatantra voted for the Independent candidate C.D. Deshmukh. The pattern of Orissa vote was - Giri (67 votes), Deshmukh (46) and Roddy (15). Thus, Patnaik lost the goodwill of the Congress High Command. He wanted to patch up his differences but failed to win back the confidence of the central leadership. Dissatisfied, he organized the "Utkal Congress".

1. The mid-term Report of the Swatantra Party observed:

"The Swatantra Party in Orissa is in coalition Government with the Jana Congress since the last General Election. The Mid-term Report of the Swatantra Party reveals the performance of the Swatantra Party in Orissa. It also highlights the achievement of the Party in considerable detail and also brings out its short comings and failures. This part of the report is worth detailed study by students of politics in the achievement by the future of the Party.

Because of the defections, and merger of PSP with the Congress, the latter's strength in the O.L.A. increased to 94/140. Leadership question once again became a delicate issue within the UPCC, but, this time the crisis was averted by appointing Smt. Nandini Satpathy as the Chief Minister of the Province. Satpathy continued in Office for a period of 8 months, when two ministers, Nilamoni Routray and Gangadhar Pradhan resigned from the ministry. On 1st March, 1973, the Chief Minister announced the dissolution of the O.L.A. and President's Rule was imposed in the State for the third time on 3rd March, 1973.

1974-1977:

In the third mid-term election, held on 22nd February, 1974, the Congress won 69 seats as compared to 57 seats won by the Pragati Party. The CPI and Jharkhand assured the Congress of their support to form the government. Satpathy assumed Chief Ministership for the second time in the State.

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1. She was later elected to the O.L.A. in a bye-election in November, 1972.
But, the Congress was not free from the factional feud. The possibility of a Bihar type of movement in the State, arranged by the Opposition and Sarvodaya leaders, created a psychological fear among the Congress leaders. In order to contain these activities and to strengthen the Congress organisation, the Congress organised the "Narora type Camp" on Gopalpur-in-sea. Shri S.N. Dwivedi was not invited to this camp. This showed that the socialist element within the Congress were not given equal respect. The anti-PSP attitude was manifested when in a letter to Mr. Dwivedi, Smt. Purabi Mukherjee (Gen.Secy. of the AICC) wrote on Oct. 22, 1974:

"The Congress President's attention has been drawn to a recent statement purported to have been given by you about the flood situation in Orissa in which you have criticised the State Government." 2

Mrs. Mukherjee also reminded him that

"The Congressmen are not to go to the Press to ventilate their private views about the State Government which is run by the Congress." 3

1. The Camp was held for three days (Jan. 21-23), which was attended by D.K. Barooah, Raghunath Reddi (ex-Labour Minister), Nandini Satpathy, Banka Behari Das, Binayak Acharya, Chintamoni Panigrahi (MP) etc.


3. Ibid.
Mr. Dwivedi, however, refuted such charges and observed that his actions were meant for the best interests of Congress.¹

Again, the Congress-CPI alliance also encouraged factionalism in the Congress. The pro-CPI attitude of Smt. Satpathy was attributed to her CPI background of earlier years.

The cleavages in Orissa Congress became clear with the Konark incident. Furore in O.L.A. took place over the presence of four Russian dignitaries at Konark Congress training camp. Another group in Congress, led by Sailen Mohapatra, Chief-whip of the O.L.A., raised a campaign against Jadunath Das Mahapatra (the then Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs) and the Chief Minister for corruption and favouritism leading to purchase of books worth of several lakhs of rupees from a private

¹ In a letter to the Chief Minister, he wrote: "On the whole, I think my statements are in the best interests of the Congress and have strengthened the stand of the Congress.... I do not think one should get alarmed unnecessarily on touching over such matters. It will be unfortunate if the highest office of the organisation gets involved in petty local matters".

Hindustan Standard, dtd. 18.1.1975,
firm and postings and transfers of offices in the education department on caste basis. Smt. Satpathy was also criticised for heading both the organisational and legislative wing of the Congress in Orissa.¹

Factionalism reached its climax when B.B. Das and some others accused Smt. Satpathy openly for failing to ensure collective responsibility to the Cabinet by her constant interference over the head of the ministers. Mr. Das disclosed that he had written to the Prime Minister on April 27, 1975, expressing his unhappiness over the functioning of party and government in the State. He also informed of his intention of resigning from the party.

Smt. Satpathy, accepted the resignation of Das when the latter refused to issue a statement as desired by her "to dispel the impression of discord within the government ascidiously promoted by certain elements."²

¹ Mr. Das who was a member of her Cabinet and ex-FSP man, was opposed to Satpathy as the PCC President in violation of the one-man-one-post convention supposed to be followed by the party.

² The Times of India, dtd. 25th May, 1975.
This action of the Chief Minister was condemned as "undesirable, arbitrary and unfortunate" and it led to political instability in the State.

The Congress High Command, however, did not want to remove Satpathy from either of the posts. In June, 1975, a resolution was passed in the PCC supporting Satpathy to lead both organizational as well as legislative leadership. In the meanwhile, because of defections from other parties, the Congress strength increased to 83/147.

1. Mr. P.K. Bal, a member of the Executive Committee of the PCC, commented that the Chief Minister's action had made the State politics more fluid than the party could have provided at such a juncture. Thus, he was expelled from the party for a period of 6 years on the charge of anti-party activities. Diary of Political Events, Vol. II, No. 10, (October, 1975), p. 15.

Mr. Trilochan Kanungo commented that, "..... by asking Mr. Das to resign, Mrs. Satpathy was driven by personal whims and animosity than by reasoning of political and administrative necessity." Indian Express, dtd. 26 May, 1975.


Emergence of New Faction Under the Leadership of Binayak Acharya:

Soon a new faction, led by Binayak Acharya, emerged inside Congress. He sought Indira Gandhi's intervention in Orissa politics on certain specific issues. Matters came to a head when Smt. Salpathy reshuffled her ministry without the prior approval of her colleagues. The Acharya faction took up this issue as a "matter of humiliation" to the members of the Cabinet. They also observed that the Chief Minister had by her action, launched a "policy of confrontation with Central leadership" without taking prior approval of the Prime Minister and the High

1. The issues were:
   i) The Yuva Chhatra Sangram Samiti and the National Socialist Corps had begun to function as organisational parallel to the Youth Congress;
   ii) The Chief Minister's Baripada speech which led to the resignation of the Agriculture Minister, Mr. Laxman Mullick, causing obstruction to the developmental work at a time when Orissa was suffering from the effects of a severe drought.
   iii) The Chief Minister had lost confidence on her colleagues which needs the immediate attention of the Prime Minister.
Command. This faction demanded for the immediate intervention of the Prime Minister in Orissa Affairs. The Yough Congress also made demands on similar ground.

Satpathy, in the mean while denied any coercion charges against the colleagues and any signature campaign initiated by her to counteract the Acharya faction. Acharya along with eight members of the

1. In a letter to the Prime Minister, they observed, "Whosoever supports this action directly or indirectly, is a party to the confrontation with the Central leadership..... We hope the Congress Committee will be conscious of this game of Mrs. Satpathy and will not fall a prey to this move". "Indian Express, dtd. 6th December, 1976.

2. The Union Minister for Defence, Mr. J.B. Patnaik, told the Governor of Orissa, Mr. S.N. Sharma that the consensus among the Congress MLAs, MPs and AICC members from Orissa was that the crisis in Orissa cannot be solved unless the Prime Minister intervenes.

3. Indian Express, dtd. 6th December, 1976. These views were expressed after Sanjay Gandhi's visit to the State in December, 1976.

4. The Chief Minister, denied in a press statement that there had been any "forcible collection" of signatures from legislators at the State dinner at her residence. "I gathered to-day that a report is being published that at a dinner yesterday at my residence, signatures were collected under coercion. I am sure that this denial of mine will be published, but I feel it is my duty to say that this is a mischievous lie. A number of MLAs including some members of the Parliament and some press representatives were present. There was no anti-social elements in my premises and there was contd.....
Cabinet and twelve MLAs met the Governor and informed him that Smt. Satpathy had lost the majority support of 87 members in the CLP. They claimed the support of 47 Congress legislators in Orissa, signature campaign had been resorted to off and on, since 1952, resulting in toppling of ministries. But this time, it suggested a clear vertical division in the ruling party on the leadership issue.

The Centre finally brought an end to the Orissa crisis by imposing President's Rule in the State on December 16, 1976. Smt. Satpathy resigned from the Office.¹

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coercion whatsoever. If stories such as this are allowed to be circulated, it is obvious that truth has been a casualty. Any one from anywhere in the country who hopes that such utter falsehood will not be allowed in this country".

Indian Express, dtd. 11th December, 1976.

1. In her letter of resignation to the Governor, she said: "I am hereby resigning from office and I will be guided entirely by the Prime Minister, the Congress High Command and the opinion of my party colleagues in my future course of action. I am anxious that there should be cohesive and business - like government so that the drought stricken people of Orissa are given meaningful relief instead of acrimonious vertriage".

The Assembly was kept under animated suspension. Acharya was appointed as the next Chief Minister. When the Janta Party formed the government at the Centre in 1977, the political development in the Congress-led provinces took a different turn.

Cracks in Orissa Congress came to the surface after the Lok Sabha poll in 1977. A dissident group made Acharya responsible for the election defeat and wanted to dislodge him from power. Mr. Gangadhar Mahapatra, a senior Congress leader and minister in the Satpathy's Cabinet held Acharya responsible for the creation of an atmosphere of uncertainty in the State. He said that it was Acharya and his associates who had taught Congressmen how to destabilise a Congress government, and had successfully done so to dislodge the Satpathy ministry. This group should

1. A.R. Antulay, General Secretary, justified on December 29th, the Central intervention in Orissa resulting in a change of State leadership. He said Mrs. Satpathy had become a faction leader because of infighting in the party. Development activities had come to a standstill and persecution and high-handedness had been resorted to. In such a situation, the Prime Minister, who was answerable to the people, had to intervene. He asserted that a State leader was elected because of the backing of the Central leadership, irrespective of the support he or she enjoyed in the State.

be taught a lesson. He also said that his aim was to bring unity inside Congress and to fight the reactionary elements. The ex-PSP elements in the Congress also blamed Mrs. Gandhi for Congress debacle throughout the country.

Thus, a careful study shows the magnitude of factionalism in the Congress in Orissa. Factionalism is manifested as a struggle for power both in the legislative and organisational wings of the party. The parliamentary wing of the INC was weak as compared to its organisational wing, during the pre-independence days. But, in the post-independence years, a different pattern emerged when Nehru and other prominent leaders occupied the top level leadership in the legislative wings. Thus, the organisational wing was left in the charge of second rate leaders. This is also true in case of Orissa. In the pre-independence days, the UPCC was stronger in comparison to the legislative wing of the party. In the post-1947 years, as we have seen, factionalism centred around the split between the organisational and representative wing of the party.
However, the problem of a cordial relationship between the organisational and parliamentary wing of a party is of great relevance. Sometimes this is not so acute since the principal leaders hold both the positions in the party. 1 Democratic functioning of party system requires that parliamentary representatives should take precedence over party leaders and members of the electorate constitute a large group than party members who are moreover included in it. 2

Thus, several conclusions can be arrived at:

1) Weak party organisations often result in strong factionalism within the political party.

2) Congress performance has been best in Orissa when factional conflict inside the party is less. This was true of Congress in Orissa in 1961 and also in 1980.

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1. This is more relevant in case of the Congress leaders at the Central level. When Nehru was the Prime Minister, he was also the President of the Organisation. In Orissa, Smt. Umdini Satpathy had held together simultaneously both the positions during the emergency. This had later led to serious political crisis in the State. In other cases, the Chief Ministers had been Presidents of the PCCs not simultaneously but at a different time.

2. Maurice Duverger, Opuscit., p. 182.
3) Factionalism at times strengthens a political party as in the case of the Congress party in Rajasthan. In Orissa, factionalism in the Congress has encouraged Opposition parties, defections and political uncertainty in the State.

4) Factionalism has given little opportunities to Congress leaders to give a whole-hearted attention to the problems of the State. Interest of the people has been first casualty of party dissidence. Group and regional considerations outweighs the interest of the State as a whole.

5) Factionalism has led to sizeable defections from the Congress. The JC and UC parties are examples of such defections resulting out of factionalism within the party.

Thus, the parties worst affected in this dirty play of "defection" and "horse-trading" are those which had followed an "opendoor policy" for admission of members without caring for any commitment to any programme on the part of its members. Parties with a programme, discipline and inner
democracy can face the challenge of defection much more than parties without any programme of commitment.

The further conclusions can be derived as:

a) Defection politics in Orissa is concentrated to the "middle" of the ideological spectrum. The Communist Parties on the left were not seriously affected in the defection game. The rightist parties like Jan Sangh is absent in Orissa. But, Swantantra is equally a partner in the game of political bargaining. This reveals that there is both disintegration and re-alignment of the political control, i.e. between Congress men and ex-Congressmen in Orissa. The PSP, the SSP, the JC, the UC all have their recent roots in the Congress. Many independents too were ex-Congressmen denied party tickets.

b) Further, this "intra-party divisiveness," "locunolos" and "fluidity" has directly affected party discipline. Loyalty to party is secondary to "personal gain and achievement" of a party member.

c) Parties are mostly organised on the basis of personality of different leaders. Even top leaders
of the Congress have paid scant regard to party loyalty. This is equally true of Opposition parties, in Orissa.

The Congress Chief Ministers like Mahtab, Patnaik, Mitra, Routray and Satpathy are all defectors. This ideological dishonesty among the Congress leaders is partly responsible for political instability in the State.

1. An idea about the change of party affiliation of Congress Chief Ministers can be had from the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Chief Minister</th>
<th>Name/Names of Parties which they have joined from time to time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Biswanath Das</td>
<td>Congress, Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Hare Krishna Mahtab</td>
<td>Congress, Jan Congress, Congress, Swadhin Congress, Pragati Party, B.L.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Biju Patnaik</td>
<td>Congress, Utkal Congress, Pragati Party, B.L.D., Janta</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(He had tried to return to Congress, but was refused membership by the Congress High Command).</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Biren Mitra</td>
<td>C.P.I., Congress, Utkal Congress, B.L.D.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Sadasib Tripathi</td>
<td>No defection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Nandini Satpathy</td>
<td>C.P.I., Congress, C.F.D., Janta, Congress-U.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Binayak Acharya</td>
<td>Congress-R, Congress-U.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Nilomeni Routray</td>
<td>Congress, Utkal Congress, B.L.D., Janta.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Corruption in India is a major instrument to displace leadership in the party system. The working of party system in Orissa shows that corruption has played an important role in the politics of the State. Writing on corruption in India, N.C. Choudhury observes "..... in recent decades the common people of India have seen people acquiring immense fortune by going into politics. They could not just believe that politics is not a more efficient and less laborious and risky means of making money than even the black market".

Kendu leaf scandals are nothing new in Orissa politics and almost every Chief Minister of the State has attracted to himself the bargain of

1. Corruption charges has been levelled against Kairon of Punjab, Buxi Ghulam Mohammed of Kashmir and others in different provinces. There are also instances that corruption charges has not been levelled against leaders who had strong party support. For example, no corruption charges were levelled against Nehru and even B.C. Roy of West Bengal. But, political corruption has become a part of factional politics in the various States and has been used to displace the dominant faction within the ruling party.

of this notorious leaf which is used to roll bidis.\textsuperscript{1} Naturally enough the Kendu leaf scandals have provided steady employment to various Commissions of Inquiry starting with the Khanna Commission, the Mudholkar Commission, the Sarjoo Prasad Commission and the Mitter Commission. The era of Commissions began soon after the 1967 elections. In fact, the 1967 election was fought on corruption issues in Orissa.

Corruption charges against the top leaders started with the CBI report of 1964 which created a storm in the Parliament. This was followed by

\textsuperscript{1} Kendu leaf grows mainly in Orissa and the sale of Kendu leaves is one of the major source of revenue to the State. It has also played a significant role in the politics of the State. In 1933, N.K. Choudhury, the then Chief Minister of the State, openly admitted that the traders in Kendu leaf contributed to 12 to 13 lakhs of rupees every year to the Congress. Nahtab, who succeeded Choudhury as the Chief Minister, was also deeply involved with the politics of Kendu leaf. Choudhury wrote: "The Kendu leaf merchants are outsiders. It has so happened that these merchants have virtually taken possession of the Congress organisation in many areas and by this means, they have upsurged political power to a great extent".
the Khanna Commission in 1967. The Commission took two years to submit its report to the Government (January 15, 1969). It, however, found that neither Patnaik, nor Mitra were guilty of any impropriety. In effect, the Commission pointed out the economic achievements made by the Patnaik administration. It reported that the per-capita income in Orissa increased from Rs. 254.99 in 1960-61 to Rs. 290.78 in 1963-64; while the net revenue of the State went up from Rs. 39.32 crores to Rs. 74.97 crores during the same period.

1. The Khanna Commission was set up by R.N. Singhdeo under the Commission of Inquiry Act of 1962 with Justice H.R. Khanna as the Chairman. Writs were filed in Orissa High Court praying to restrain the Commission to Undertake any inquiry against political leaders. But the writs were rejected by the Court. Accordingly, the Government Notification of October 14, 1967 and a subsequent amendment of December 14th had named 15 Ministers and Deputy Ministers, including three Chief Ministers, who held Office during the period from 1961-67, as accused and listed 70 charges against them. The Chief Ministers were Biju Patnaik, Biren Mitra and Sadasib Tripathi, the Ministers were Nilomani Boutray, Brundaban Nayak and T. Sanganna, the Deputy Ministers were Prahalid Mallick, Santosh Kumar Sahoo, Anup Singh Deo, Chittaranjan Naik and Chandra Mohan Singh.
The Report read —

"Patnaik did a commendable job in certain spheres by introducing an element of dynamism in the administration and the work he did by translating the idea of a port at Pradip into a living reality is bound to make an impact on the history of Orissa and its future development. The irony, however, is that Patnaik allowed such a sway to the pecuniary and business interest of the companies, which had been started by him and with which his family members were associated, in dealings with the State government, that within two or three years of his stewardship, his public image became tarnished and the hopes which were built around him, were shattered to pieces.

Memorials and representations, some of them not without substance, were submitted against him, The architect of the party's victory in 1961 lost even his own election in 1967. The fall of Patnaik was not merely a loss for himself, it was a shock and disillusionment for the people who had pinned their hopes and reposed their confidence in him and with that had linked the future of Orissa."

The Government referred the matter to the police for taking "necessary actions" against the Ministers who were held guilty by the Commission. The police carried on its investigation and submitted its report finally towards the later part of 1971, when the UC-Swatantra-Jharkhand Coalition was in power. But no actions were taken against Patnaik.

As a consequence the entire charges of corruption against the ministers were dropped.

The Second Commission of Enquiry in Orissa was the Sarjoo Prasad Commission. With decision of the Orissa Government to appoint another Commission of Inquiry to probe charges of corruption against such ministers who were in power between 1961-67, Justice Mudholkar was appointed to carry on the investigation, although he had no legal sanction for it. Accordingly, he made private inquiries on and submitted its Report on September 26, 1968, and affixed his signature as the "Special Judge". The Swatantra-Jan Congress government demanded for the publication of the Report and its presentation before the O.L.A. Singh Deo had wanted to take action against the Report, but the Jan Congress partner did not agree to it. Finally, the Report was placed before

1. In June 26, 1967, Shri Sadasib Tripathi and 24 MLAs of O.L.A. submitted a memorandum to the President making 26 allegations of corruptions against ministers who had been in office since 1947. The prominent among them were Mahtab, Singh Deo, Choudhury, Suresh Nath Patnaik, Santanu Kumar Das and other.

2. Mahtab was the leader of the Jan Congress then and was involved in the Mudholkar Report.
the O.L.A. in 1970 and became a major instrument for the collapse of the coalition government.

On January 6, 1971, the Swatantra Party decided to appoint a Commission of Inquiry to be headed by Sarjoo Prasad, a retired Chief Justice of Rajasthan and Assam High Courts. The government gave legal sanction to the Sarjoo Prasad Commission, which made inquiry into the corruption charges against ministers since independence. In its report, the Commission exonerated all except Mahtab in respect of four allegations, i.e., grant of Commision to Kondu Coal contractors, grant of Chromite lease to Scraajaudin, rapid acquisition of wealth by Mahtab and withdrawal of criminal prosecution against iron and steel dealers of Cuttack.

The report was made public on May 25, 1972, but the coalition ministry ended in June 1972. This was replaced by a Congress government under the leadership of Smt. Satpathy. In the meanwhile, Mahtab had defected to Congress from JC. As a result, no action was taken against him. But, when he defected again from Congress in 1973 to form
"Swadhin Congress", the matter was referred to the CBI. However, inspite of these developments, Mahtab won the election in 1974 to the O.L.A.

Thus, Mahtab was found guilty by both the Mudholkar and the Sarjoo Prasad Commission. The Commission wrote:

"The fact that a man of the ability and calibre of Shri Mahtab, who was held high offices and rendered many valuable services to the State should be found guilty of accepting illegal gratification in order to show favour to the Kendu leaf contractors unmistakably indicates that there is some serious malaise in the body politics and the political system under which we are living. Shri Mahtab has, of course, been exposed. But there may be many more on high places who have sufficiently enriched themselves and are still enjoying their positions of power and authority".

Soon afterwards, Smt. Satpathy set up the Mitter Commission to probe "the Shady Kendu Leaf deals" of 1970 and 1971. Mr. Singh Deo commented that the proposed Commission should embrace "shady Kendu leaf deal of Smt. Satpathy's ministers too". The Mitter Commission held Singh Deo, H.P. Mahapatra and A. Sahoo (both forest ministers in 1970 and 1971 respectively) guilty of charges of

corruption and acts of misdemeanour for which the State had to incur a loss in the revenue to the tune of Rs. 60 lakhs in two years.

In its Report, the Commission stated that

"There can be no doubt that the action of H.P. Mohapatra and R.N. Singh Deo in order to grant rebate in purchase price to the purchaser and waivers of shortfall compensation to agents and reduction in the figure of bags stipulated for, were unlawful and improper. The deal resulted in a loss to the tune of Rs. 40 lakhs to the State exchequer."1

However, the Commission of Inquiry in Orissa have been of little value. No actions have been taken against those who have proved guilty. Instead political corruption continues to be a major factor for political uncertainty in the State.2

Shri N.K. Choudhury, analysing the root cause of political corruption and financial dishonesty among the members of various political parties observed that the election law providing

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2. Of course, the Kendu leaf trade was nationalized by the Satpathy ministry in 1974, thereby bringing an end to the scandalous Kendu leaf politics involving senior Congress and Opposition party leaders in the State.
for expense ceiling of Rs. 7,500 per candidate in an Assembly Constituency was the main cause of corruption.¹ He had raised this issue in 1955 before Nehru, B.C. Roy, Morarji Desai and other senior Congress leaders, but was rebuffed as "childish and silly". In order to win the elections, huge amounts are collected from big mine owners and businessmen for which no detailed accounts are kept. Thus, the person who collects such money on behalf of the party makes money for himself after giving some portion to the candidate and the party.

Choudhury wrote that:

"As the businessmen have to pay taxes, they do not show these amounts in the actual account book which they show to the Income Tax Department. They keep note of these amounts in their personal note books. The whole thing is done on trust like the affairs of big "Matha" (temple). This pattern is followed in every state in India".²

1. Choudhury observed that "If a Congress candidate is opposed by a rich or influential person, he has to spend more money. But where from will so much money come? . . . At such times a bigger amount has to be spent and the actual expenditure is kept in a separate account book while the account within the allowed limit is kept in another book".

This proves the inside story of party finances of the Congress. They lead to financial dishonesty among the party members. However, these Commissions of Inquiry did not end with the nationalization of Kendu leaf trade. The next victim was obviously Smt. Satpathy. On Sept. 6, 1977, in simultaneous raids in different places of Orissa and Madras, men of the Orissa Government's Vigilance Department searched the residence of Smt. Satpathy, her family members and close associates. The findings included a registered sale deed in respect of a flat costing Rs. 1,05,000 and an account book with a credit balance of Rs. 32,324 in a Madras branch of a foreign bank. Both the sale deed and the account book were seized from the Madras residence of Nachiketa Satpathy, elder son of Smt. Satpathy.

Smt. Satpathy was granted anticipatory bail by S.N. Mishra, District and Session Judge, Cuttack in the two cases registered against her, on the charge that she had acquired assets disproportionate to her known sources of income. She was arrested within minutes after her return from a tour abroad in Sept. 17, 1977 and also released on bail instantly.
She claimed that she had been victim of the
"politics of terror, humility and character assas-
sination".  

The Orissa Cabinet appointed Baj Kishore Das, a retired judge of Orissa High Court as an "inquiring authority" to go into certain charges against Smt. Satpathy. It later accepted the Report of Das and ordered the police to take "appropriate follow-up action" on the Report.

Thus, corruption has become a major instru-
ment in Orissa to displace a dominant faction inside

1. Times of India, dtd. 7.9.77, 14.9.77, 8.9.77; 15.9.1977
2. Times of India, dtd. 2.6.77.
3. According to the Chief Minister Nilotmani Boutrary, the four cases on which Das had submitted the report included:
   a) Financial loss caused to the Orissa Government by Smt. Satpathy by giving lease to forest areas for collection of Sal seeds to a private firm.
   b) Undue favour shown to a tyre-trading firm (a son of Smt. Satpathy was allegedly connected with these firms).
   c) Promotion of former Executive Engineer of the Public Health Engineering Department to the rank of Superintendent Engineer, and
   d) Appointment of a person as the Managing Director of a State owned Corporation.

Times of India, dtd. 11.9.1977.
the Congress. Almost all Chief Ministers of the State like Mahtab, Patnaik, Mitra, Tripathy, Singh Deo, Choudhury, Satpathy and other prominent leaders have been victims of the Commissions of Inquiry set up from time to time by the Orissa government.

Political corruption leading to financial dishonesty and administrative impropriety have been one of the major causes of political instability in the State. It has also resulted in instability in the party system itself.

Section 4: The Role of the Central Leadership and the Congress in Orissa:

An analysis of the Congress can never be complete without referring to the role of the central leadership in moulding the politics of the State.¹

¹. The Congress party had ruled at the Centre uninterruptedly for 30 long years. Till 1967, the Party had the privilege of ruling simultaneously in the provinces as well as at the national level. But this pattern underwent a change after the General Election of 1967, when the series of non-Congress coalitions were established in various provinces of India. This, however, did not lessen factionalism in the Congress. The "tall leadership" of the Congress ended after the death of Nehru and the post-67 period was characterized by group defections, factionalism and split in the Congress Party.
The involvement of the Central leadership in making and unmaking the governments in the provinces has become a definite pattern in India. As we have seen in the previous section,

"At the States, individuals who had risen to power in the Congress organisation sometimes constituted the chief opposition to the government, provided an alternative leadership, exercised controls and pressures on it and in many instances overthrew it from power and replaced it."

In Orissa, the replacement of Mahtab from Congress and Patnaik's ascendancy to power in the 1960s serves as an example to the above quotation. Choudhury was appointed as the Chief Minister in 1952 because Mahtab was not acceptable to Nehru. Mahtab was sent to Bombay as Governor, which was almost like a political exile for him. The Congress Chief Ministers in Orissa have always been acceptable to the Congress High Command. In 1957, Mahtab returned to Orissa politics, because there was a crisis of leadership in the State. Choudhury refused to take part in active politics and other leaders like Biswanath Das, Nityanand Kanungo etc.

were not suitable according to the Central High Command to lead the Congress in Orissa. Thus, Mahtab was the obvious choice.

When Patnaik entered active politics, he was given the responsibility by the Central leaders to organise the Congress and steer it through mid-term elections of 1961. He made exit from power with the Kamaraj Plan, but his successors Mitra and Tripathi, were appointed as Chief Ministers. However, he lost the confidence of the Congress High Command and was expelled from the Congress and formed the Utkal Congress.

The appointment of Smt. Satpathy as Orissa's Chief Minister in 1973 speaks for the role of Central leadership in making and unmaking of governments in Orissa. With the exit of Mahtab, Patnaik and several other prominent leaders from Orissa Congress there was crisis of leadership in the party. Thus, Smt. Satpathy who was then the State Minister of Information and Broadcasting at the centre, was sent to Orissa to head the party in the legislature.

However, Smt. Satpathy was relieved from Chief Ministership because of her "confrontation with the Prime Minister" and also because of the
"cabinet crisis". The appointment of Mr. J.D. Patnaik as the Chief Minister of Orissa, after June elections in 1980, is also a case in point.

Therefore, whenever there has been a leadership crisis in the Orissa Congress, it has been solved by the intervention of the Congress High Command and the man who heads the Congress is undoubtedly the one who is acceptable to the Congress High Command.

Summary

Thus, in the previous sections we have discussed the Congress in Orissa. And it will not be incorrect to say that the Congress is undoubtedly the most important party in the pro-independence as well as the post-independence period. It had the opportunity to be in power for the longest period of time.¹ Thus, it is clear that the Congress has been in power for 19 years out of 20 years (from 1952-1900).

¹ The Congress was in power from 1952-1957; 1957-1959; 1959-1961 (Congress-led Coalition); 1961-1967; 1973-1975; 1975-1977. It has again been elected to power since 1980.
2. The Congress has always been ceased with the problem of leadership. Since independence, three important Congress leaders have dominated the political scene in Orissa, at different times. They are, Mahtab, Patnaik and Smt. Satpathy. However, none of them have adhered to Congress in Orissa. They are defectors and have defected from the Congress not on ideological grounds, but because of personal reasons. Both Mahtab and Patnaik have tried to return to the Congress, but they were not granted the membership by the Congress High Command and UPCC. The politics of instability in the State is partly an outcome of the leadership conflict in the Congress.

3. With the exist of leaders like Mahtab, Patnaik, Satpathy and others, there has been the emergence of new leadership in the party.

4. Corruption has been a major issue with Congress leaders and the practice of establishing Inquiring Commissions to destabilise the government has become quite common in Orissa.

5. Inspite of its many shortcomings, the Congress has been able to implement various socio-economic measures in the province. The Orissa Estates
Abolition Act of 1952 and the Orissa Land Reforms Act of 1960 were the major legislative achievements in the post-independence years. As a part of its commitment to the ideology of socialism, the Congress in Orissa moves along slightly to the left of the Centre. The Congress achievement lies in the field of the historic Land Reforms (Amendment Act) of 1973 which came into operation from October 2, 1973.¹ The nationalisation of Kendo Leaf Trade², the implementation of various five

1. Under this programme, each family of five members is entitled to own not more than 10 acres of first, 15 acres of second, 30 acres of third and 45 acres of fourth class lands. It aimed at abolishing all estates including trust estates, and the surplus land were distributed to the landless people.

2. It brought an end to the ugly politics in the State. The nationalisation was undertaken by the Nandini Satpathy's government, with a view to ensure increased revenue to the exchequer by eliminating middlemen in the trade. The government took up departmental operation of the trade in January 1973 as a joint venture with Forest Cooperation. As against the anticipated production of 3.50 lakhs quintal during 1974, 247,504.20 quintals of processes and phal leaves were produced. By the end of October 1974, the Orissa Forest cooperation had sold 70,217.20 quintals of processed leaves and 7,815 phal bags at a total cost of Rs. 1,98,74,542.64 paisa.
year plans to bring about a socio-economic change in the society; several welfare legislations like the Orissa Secondary Education Act, Orissa Mining Areas Development Fund Act (1952), Orissa Maternity Benefit Act, Orissa Bhodan Act (1953), Anchal Sasan Act and Orissa Tenant's Relief Act (1955), Orissa Shops and Commercial Establishment Acts, the Orissa Prohibition Act (1956, etc. have been undertaken by the Congress government. It has also enacted several important legislations for the welfare of the backward sections of the society.

Thus, having discussed the Congress Party in Orissa, we now proceed to study the main Opposition parties in Orissa, namely, the Gantantra Parishad, the Swatantra, the Jan Congress, the Utkal Congress, the Pragati Party, the Bharatiya Lok Dal and finally the Janta Party.