The Problem:

Ever since the individual started struggling for democracy, rights, liberties and such other liberal values, the thinking segment of the population of different states, more or less, chose to side with such values. It went so far as to make people say "give me liberty or give me death". Death became the only alternative to such freedoms and there was no compromise on this score. The recent change in U.S.S.R. after Gorbachov's Perestroika and the changes in almost the entire eastern Europe bear testimony to it. Liberal democracy which promotes such values depends, for its survival, on some essential points, the most significant among which is formation of public opinion. Formation of public opinion is based on the expression of the people's mind through some dependable agencies. The most important among the media of expression is the Press. Press survives only in a democratic society.
Thus, the Press, public opinion and democracy are intimately connected with each other. A student of political analysis finds enormous interest in the role of the Press.

This investigator's decision to study the Press in Orissa is guided by certain factors. He wants to examine the role that the Press in Orissa has played in the first two decades after independence of the country. The period of study (1952-1970) has a rationale. The first General Election, after the adoption and implementation of the constitution of India, was held in 1952 it was followed by elections to the Orissa Legislative Assembly in 1957, 1961, 1967 and 1971. The government formed in Orissa on the basis of the election results of March, 1967 came to an end in December, 1970. Therefore the period under study covers the period of functioning of the first, second, third and fourth Houses of the Orissa Legislative Assembly. Besides during this time frame, Orissa had, apart from congress governments, a non-congress coalition government also.
This study has, more or less, been limited to an analysis of the role of the Samaj. It is because the Samaj alone was the only Oriya daily that had a continuous life and circulation in Orissa. A few more dailies which either were created before 1952 or after that, either discontinued in a short time or revived after being stopped for sometime. Besides, with every change with their change of editors, there seems to be significant variations in the political attitudes and opinion of these short-lived newspapers. The Samaj, except for a brief period after 1952, was edited by Dr. Radhanath Rath. Rath continued to take interest and have his voice in the management of the Samaj even when he was a Minister in the Government of Orissa and was not the editor of the Samaj. This nonagenarian Journalist continues to be editor of the Samaj even now. This newspaper has the special distinction of being under the control of the servants of the people society founded by Lala Lajpat Rai (the lion of Punjab). It has never been under the control of any power-seeking politician. Because of its continuous publication right from the day it started coming out as a daily, the role
it has played in both the pre and post independence days in Orissa, and the objectivity and commitment the daily has displayed through out the last fiftyeight years (since 1931), the people of Orissa take the Samaj as a Synonym of a newspaper and the Samaj seems to have taken all the responsibilities of spreading the truth in the way of facts. It has acted as an instrument of building public opinion and promoting political development.

Roots of democracy seem to have been stronger in India and, for this analysis, in Orissa. In the initial years of independence, the problem of democratic institutionalisation increasing capacity of the newly created system to face the challenges, creation of a rational and responsible government, promotion of national integration, creation of administrative and legal processes and inculcating the values, ideas and norms conducive to growth and development of democracy seemed to be insurmountable. The role of the Samaj in this connection seems to be significant. Hence this investigator's decision to
study "the Press and Political development in Orissa (1952-1970)".

Overview of literature:

The Press in Orissa seems not to have attracted the attention of the academic political analysts in a very significant way. Except for a few articles written in Oriya¹, Political Scientists have sparingly chosen to work on the Press. Professor Sukadev Nanda² has dealt with the Press in Orissa in a limited way. He has analysed the coalition governments of Orissa as viewed by the Press. Nanda does not analyse the role that the Press in particular played in the political development of Orissa. He

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2. Please see his "Coalitions from the Press Gallery" in coalitional Politics in Orissa, Starling, 1979, New Delhi.
has also made very limited study of The Samaj. B.B. Jena and J.K. Baral while studying the impact of the Oriya dailies on the electorate in the village Gopalpur of the Dura Assembly constituency, in 1984, have made a very brief study of the press. Their analysis is confined to a very small area and a very limited period of about two months. Thus, the present work is a new effort and it is likely to add new knowledge to political research in Orissa.

Methodology:

This researcher has based his analysis on the writings in the Samaj made from time to time. Taking the broad principles of political development, he classified the contributions of the Samaj. Needless to mention here that he had to spend quite a good length of time in the Gopabandhu Library of the Samaj. It is true that this researcher did not have any

3. See their Government and Politics in Orissa, Print House (India), 1988, Lucknow.
financial assistance from any agency or source. He, however, did not mind for the financial hardship he experienced during the period of his research in view of the type of help and cooperation he received from the Librarian and staff of the Gopabandhu Library and the enormous quantum of pleasure and of his satisfaction in reading the old issues of the Samaj and in understanding details in the process of political development in Orissa.

Frame work of analysis:

The entire analysis in this work has been spread over in five chapters. Chapter-I in the nature of an introductory on the Press and its role. The Chapter-II deals with the Journalist, his role and responsibility. The Chapter-III deals with the editors of the Samaj, and makes a peep into their life and activities with a view to throwing light on the background in which the Samaj was started and managed by them. The Chapter-IV, gives a brief introduction of Orissa, the stage and it also throws some light on
the newspapers in Orissa. The Chapter-V, apart from dealing in brief, the essential ingredients of Political development, discusses the role The Samaj played in Orissa and contributed to the process of political development.

The chapters are followed by the conclusion.