CHAPTER V
INDEPENDENCE AND AFTER

Country's goals on Independence:

Achievement of independence was a momentous event in the History of India. Its significance was aptly expressed by Jawaharlal Nehru on the day of Independence itself. In a message to the press he said, "... whither do we go (from here) and what shall be our endeavour? To bring freedom and opportunity to the common man, to the peasants and workers of India; to fight and end poverty and ignorance and disease; to build up a prosperous, democratic and progressive nation, and to create social, economic and political institutions which will ensure justice and fullness of life to every man and woman". On the 26th day of November 1949 when the constitution of India was adopted it candidly reflected the independence day aspiration of Pandit Nehru. In its "preamble" the sacrosanct document resolved to secure to all Indian citizens "justice, social, economic and political..." Equality of status and opportunity and to promote among them all fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation.

Clearly, the goals before the country after independence were (1) a thorough democritization of its
polity, (2) rapid development of the national economy and (3) establishment of an egalitarian social order. The key approaches which were chosen for the realisation of these goals were (1) the adoption of the system of parliamentary democracy and (2) perspective economic planning. The first approach based on the principle of universal adult franchise gave every citizen a sense of dignity and participation in the nation building process. This also initiated a process of social transformation by facilitating regional and intra-regional democratic politics. The second approach led to the institution of the National Planning Commission with the Prime Minister as its Chairman. The incipient ideas for having such an institution had been groomed during the days of struggle for freedom itself. In 1951, the immediate objectives with which of was created were (1) industrialising India so as to catch up with the advanced countries of the world and (2) creating at the same time a more equitable social order. The purpose, in short, was to weld together economic and political democracy. Sincerely it was hoped that an effective combination of these two approaches would enable the country to attain the goals of independence.

The Orissa Situation:

In Orissa the long aspiration of having a United province was realised through bold political initiatives after the country’s independence. As early as 1938 the
Congress had organised the Orissa States’ Peoples Conference (Orissa Praja Mandal) to integrate the Sarhjats with the “British Orissa” much to the displeasure of the states’ rulers. In 1929, when Hanekrushna Mahatab as the Chairman of the non-official committee of the All India States’ Peoples Conference openly recommended for such merger the rulers adapted all kinds of repressive measures to put down popular agitations in their states. Even a few days prior to independence they went to the extent of floating the Eastern States’ Agency to retain territorial status quo. But the step further fomented the states peoples movement. This opportunity was seized forthwith by the Congress Ministry in Orissa. At the instance of the Dominion Government in its first move on 14th November, 1947, the Collector of Balasore marched into the Nilgiri state and took over its administration. A month later, in a conference held at Cuttack in the presence of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, rulers of 25 out of 26 states signed the document for merger with the Indian Dominion which in turn delegated to the Government of Orissa the power of their administration” in the same manner as the districts in that province”. The states of Seraikela and Kharswan lying on the northern extremities of Orissa were, however, retransferred on 18th May 1949 by the Dominion Government to Bihar on fresh public demand. But
Mayurbhanj, which had opted out of the agreement earlier under the pretext of having its own “popular Government” conceded to merger with Orissa on 17th October, 1948. With this the cherished territorial alignment of Orissa became complete.

On the interim Government of the State headed by Prime Minister Harekrushna Mahatab it placed an unenviable task of administering the new province which had become twice as big in size as with the addition of fifty per cent more people to its existing population. Governor M. Asaf Ali put the significance of the merger candidly as it posed a formidable challenge before the provincial administration. In his address to the Legislative Assembly on 1st March, 1950 he said, “The inclusion of twenty four Eastern states within the territories of the State has added a great deal to the burden of the Government’s cares and responsibilities. Every effort has to be made to bring the administration of the new area upto the level of general administration of this state”. This was in addition to the outstanding work of reconstruction and development that was lying heavy in the hands of the Government.

But what the governor highlighted was about the usual responsibility of a government. He did not hint at
the possible fall out that the merger would effect on state politics. The merger brought about a swift territorial integration of the princely domains. But due to historical reasons emotional integration of people of the two areas could not be achieved as such. The people from the coastal belt working on different capacities in the hinterland part of the province had already earned on ill-reputation for the whole region as "exploiters". After the merger the native rulers as a combine exploited this existential sentiment politically. The seeds of regionalism thus sown grew into a dominant feature of state politics eventually. The formation of Ganatantra Parishad, as a Political Party was an outcome of this development.

Experience of Electoral Politics, 1947-'65:

For the state, the experience of electoral politics during the period under study was not a very happy one. It was a dominated by the carry over influences of factionalism within the main political party in the state affecting these by the very grain of the goal of independence i.e. rapid economic development for the establishment of an egalitarian social order.
In total the period witnessed the coming and going of five ministries and three elections to the State Legislators.

At the time of independence Harekrishna Mahatab’s ministry was already in office. The effective manner in which his ministry had got the ex-princely states merged in the province of Orissa had undisputedly bolstered up Mahatab’s political stature. The pre-independence surging of socialist-communist influence on the state’s polity was contained by this enhanced public image of the congress leader. Other visible achievements like putting the Hirakud multi-purpose irrigation project on rail, shifting of the state capital to Bhubaneswar, taking up of the Salandi major irrigation project, setting up of the State Financial Corporation and a number of other industrial works in the newly merged districts over an uninterrupted rule for four years were additions to his political success.

But success or otherwise in administration and carrying out effective developmental works was not the criterion on which the stability of state politics depended. Factionalism within the congress which had its origin in the 1930s had become the standard phenomenon in guiding state politics. A fresh chapter in factional feuds within the congress was added to the old legacy in
the post-independence period as well. In 1950 upon his moving to the Union cabinet at the invitation of Pandit Nehru, Mahatab left behind such a trail of inner-party squabbles for office in which unfortunately he became a tacit party.

In the immediate context, Nabakrishnan Chaudhury, an old congress socialist, assumed the mantle of Chief Ministership. But that did not seem to have had any impact on the political prospects of the congress. A qualitative change had come about in the political domain of the state after the merger of the feudatory states. The emergence of Ganatantra Parishad comprising mainly of the ex-ruling chiefs had quite upset the rest-while political agenda. Under the circumstance the Congress had its first shock in the first General Elections to the State Assembly conducted on the basis of universal adult franchise in 1952. Out of a total of 140 seats, the party managed to win 67 seats with 3 seats short of working majority in the Assembly. The Parishad distinguished itself by winning 32 seats, all won in the areas of princely influence. The Communist Party of India with 7 seats and the Socialist Party with 10 seats remained largely confined to small pockets in the State.

Despite not having a majority on its own the congress, under the leadership of Naba Krishna Chaudhury,
however, formed the Government with the active support of some independent members. The Independent Peoples Party consisting chiefly of former congressmen and headed by Nilakantha Das also backed the congress ministry. But the ministry making exercise could not remain free from the usual round of behind the scene maneuvering centering around personal interests of leaders. Differences cropped up among top leaders on important issues such as on land reforms. These differences promoted further dissension and cliques in the party. On Chaudhury’s part his administration did not compare well with that of his predecessor. The multi-purpose hoyden project taken up by the state Hirakud in Sambalpur District drifted due to alteration in its proposal effecting thereby the entire five year plan. Administrative inefficiency was also noticed in the lapse of crores of rupees every year for lack of effective spending Rural roads construction works and flood relief measures suffered seriously. The Chief Minister personally showed greater concern for the success of Bhoodan movement while a separate department headed by his Finance Minister Radhanath Rath busied itself in creating the necessary public opinion in favour of inclusion of Saraikala and Kharswan in. The issue took its own toll on the creditability of the Chaudhury government when the State’s Reorganisation Commission recommended for the continuation of the merger of those two outlying Oriya-speaking tracts with Bihar. Tempers
let loose both within the outside the government ultimately created problems of law and order. So at the instance of the Congress Working Committee when the government in a delayed action cracked down the agitation it incurred more unpopularity. Finally a midst changes and counter changes for fixing responsibility for the failure of the first post-independence Congress Government Chaudhury laid down office on 18th October 1956. This created opportunity for Harekrishna Mahatab to return to state politics after a gap of six years.

The second General Election in the State Assembly in 1957 showed an actual decline in the Congress Party’s support base. In comparison to the previous election one per cent less vote and won only 56 seats. Ganatantra Parishad, the main opposition party on the other hand, improved its political stock vastly by pulling fifteen per cent more votes. The Parishad won 51 seats as against its tally of 21 in the last election. This time, the party also extended its base to the coastal strip winning one seat each from Cuttack and Puri. The Communists and the Socialists too improved their performance marginally. But, on the whole, the election results were a clear indication of the fractured shape of the Congress in Orissa.
With Harekrushna Mahatab at the helm, the Congress still formed the Government. The feat was achieved by engineering deflation in the opposition rank and partly by winning the support of the Jharkhand Party and the independent members of the Assembly. But the period from 1957 to 1961 when Mahatab had to relinquish office because of the untenability of the coalition which he had chartered out with the Ganatantra Parishad in 1959, did not produce either political stability or economic development. "This period was one of the markiest in Orissa's political history - a period that witnessed intense politicking and furious horse-trading, and rampant political corruption..." Unfortunately for Orissa, this period synchronised with the implementation of the Second Five Year Plan (1956-61).²

Intra-ministerial differences between Mahatab and his Industries Minister, Dinabandhu Sahu, effected the Congress' poll prospects for the Rajya Sabha. The party with a strength of 70 including the Speaker out of 137 members in the Assembly contested for two seats but only secured one. There were clear signs of cross-voting among Congress members. On the eve of passing the budget another defection by a Deputy Minister, Anup Singh Deo, embittered the party. The immediate provocation for this defection was said to be the motive to forestall the bill for assessment of the lands of rulers. Though a swift
patch up saved the Appropriation Bill in the Assembly yet the hiccup in carrying forward the taxation measures provided for in the budget to mobilise funds for the plan induced Mahatab to resign and plead with the Governor to dissolve the Assembly. The opposition Ganatantra Parishad, Praja Socialist Party and the Communist Party of India though agreed to work together on the basis of a common program, could not offer tangible evidence of forging a viable political alternative to the congress in the state. Eventually the Governor did not accept the Ministry’s resignation and asked it to continue in office.

The short drama, however, laid bare the emergent political pattern in the state while the coastal districts largely supported the congress, the hill districts remained the Parishads fort. It followed, therefore, that a meaningful coalition between the two evenly placed major political parties could provide the essential political stability to the state. The unexpected finally happened and the first coalition Ministry in Orissa headed by Mahatab assumed office on 22nd May, 1959. Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo, the leader of the Parishad, joined the cabinet as the Finance Minister. To its credit the new ministry passed the comprehensive Orissa Land Reforms Act of 1960. The act imposed a ceiling on land to be possessed by a land-owner and also
provided for the distribution of the ceiling surplus land by the state. In several ways the passing of the Act which was hanging in balance since 1957 showed the fructifying effect of a working combination of political focus. But there were unresolved questions too. The issue of sharing of portfolios between the coalition partners apart, the open revolt of the second line of leadership within the congress against the Chief Minister forced the coalition to demit office on February 24, 1961.

Just before the coalition ministry put in its resignation the younger elements in the congress had already taken over the provincial party organisation under its control. Bijayanand Patnaik had been elected the Pradesh Congress Committee President on February 13, 1961 trouncing the candidate of the incumbent Chief Minister, Banamali Patnaik. In a way Biju Patnaik's victory, as he was popularly called, was an unambiguous signal for the coalition to discontinue.

In the ensuing mid-term election to the Assembly held in the middle of June, 1961, despite grave doubts expressed on the chances of the party's success, the congress under the resourceful leadership provided by Patnaik achieved a signal victory by capturing 82 seats in a house of 140 polling nearly 47 per cent of the
popular vote. In comparison the Parishad won only 37 seats in what can be called a steep climb down in its support base. Though there was no change in the Socialist Party’s fortune, the Communist Party of India was reduced to four. There were seven independent members returned to the Assembly of whom four within a few days of the election joined the Congress raising its strength to 86. Thus for the first time after the independence, the congress secured a genuine absolute majority in the Assembly. The party’s advantage was chiefly derived from the failure of the opponents to form an electoral alliance. On another front the Jharkhand Party, which used to gain its success from the northern tribal belt of the state, was completely wiped out.

The new congress ministry, the fifty from the time of independence in Orissa, on assuming office on 23 June, 1961 headed by Biju Patnaik sought to expedite the pace of economic development in the State. In an organised bid to industrialise Orissa the state level Planning Board was set up and also were brought into being the Orissa State Electricity Board, the Orissa Industrial Development Corporation and the Orissa Small-Scale Industrial Development Corporation among others. The State Governor, A.N. Khan himself an engineer drafted a ten-year plan for the integrated development of river basins of Orissa. The perspective plan covering the
period from 1963-1973 was called the Orissa’s ‘Decade of Destiny’.

However, within the short period of his stay in office Patnaik laid great emphasis a number of high profile projects. Considered as keys to Orissa’s economic regeneration these projects include the Paradeep Port and the Express Highway connecting the Port with the mining areas, Balimela and Talcher Power Projects and the MIG Factory at Sunabeda. To give a fillip to small-scale industries at the Panchayat level also in 1962-63 seven sugar mills, 21 tile making units, 10 carpentry shops, 10 small foundries, one agricultural implements factory and a paper mill were launched. This beginning was noteworthy in the event of Orissa having had no such industry prior to this date. Besides, with an obvious bias towards technical education in the first financial year of the government itself, 20,000 scholarships for school and college students who secured above 60 per cent marks in mathematics were created. The largesse was described by the Chief Minister as “an investment of Rs.7.5 million to accentuate a precision mind”. However, agriculture and irrigation, two most vital sectors of Orissan economy languished for want of funds. Besides tantrums of corruption also clouded the Patnaik government. The Socialists particularly unleashed a political tirade against the ruling party and urged the Prime Minister to
take appropriate action. The insinuation campaign coincided with the implementation of the Kamraj plan. In the charming process within the congress Patnaik bowed out of office leaving the chair to be occupied by his trusted friend Biren Mitra on 2nd October, 1963. A former member of the Communist Party, Mitra tried to devote himself to land reform issues. But amidst changes of "administrative impropriety" he too went out of office on 20th February, 1965. Sadashiv Tripathy, who succeeded him continued in office for about two years. During his Ministry the Orissa Land Reforms (Amendment) Act of 1965 was finally brought into force on 1st October, 1965. The new Act amended the Act of 1960 relating to resumption of land for personal cultivation, ceiling on agricultural holdings and disposal of the ceiling surplus lands. But all the three ministries ensuing from the mid-term election could not fully translate the aspirations of the massive mandate. Internal dissension continued to hunt every government on the saddle. The political instability which resulted consequentially was not so much because of a spilt verdict as it was because of the congress’ failure to remain united. In the years to come factionalism within the party only deepened.

Other than the general instability of the successive ministries, charges of corruption and in some cases the indication of such charges also took its toll
on the credibility of the political leadership. Tendencies towards buying votes and support in the Assembly by using the more honorific terms of "patronage" and "political bargaining", became rampant specially after independence. From 1967 to 1974 as many as three Commissions of Enquiry were set up against Chief Ministers and a score of other ministeres who had held office during this period to probe into charges ranging from corruption to moral turpitude. The Commissions established that many of these prominent leaders in whom people had reposed faith were not free from the "guilt of illegal gratification", "impropriety and abuse of power" "causing substantial loss to the Government of Orissa".

Radical political movements started by the socialists and the communists despite having strong ideologies and organisations did not succeed in the state's electoral politics. The leaders who guided these movements in Orissa were essentially congress deserters who believed that the Congress policies would not secure social and economic justice to the people. But the gradual incorporation of their demands mainly pertaining to land reforms by the congress into its own policies and programs took the minds out of their sails. As such most of them hailed from the dominant castes in the state some of whom were co-opted into the congress fold in course of time. Those who remained committed to the respective
causes suffered from a credibility gap due to their "bourgesisic origin". Besides, it was not easy for either party to find enough space in a sharply polarised political atmosphere between the congress and the Ganatantra Parishad. Predominantly feudal as the social set-up was in Orissa it were personalities rather than party ideologies which significantly influenced the voters. Under such circumstances the Socialists and the Communists could acquire their spheres of influence in certain pockets only. Nilgiri in Balasore was one such pocket of communist influence.

Social Base of Electoral Politics:

Electoral politics in post-independence Orissa vividly reflected the pattern of dominance of the ritually higher castes over all other caste groups in the state. Not only that most of the influential leaders hailed from either the Brahmin, Karan or Kshatriya castes but members belonging to these castes also filled the top layer of the state bureaucracy. Even the parties professing radical political ideologies, as it has already been pointed out, were being invariably led by members from these castes. It is a different matter that many of these leaders had 'decasted' or 'declassed' themselves in the process. But, nonetheless, the significant fact remains to be noted that despite being a multicastrate society the power-structure in the state
continued to be dominated by the upper castes. A perusal of the social background of persons who held different ministerial offices under various ministries during the pre-independence and the post-independence periods as indicated in table-IX below, would further elaborate the point.

Table IX

Caste analysis of Ministries of Orissa Castes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Ministries</th>
<th>Brahmin</th>
<th>Karana</th>
<th>Kshatriya</th>
<th>Khan-</th>
<th>SC &amp;</th>
<th>Muslims &amp; others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>dait</td>
<td>ST</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937 (i)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1+1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1+2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1+1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1+2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1+3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many caste-based associations came up in the state after independence while some such associations formed during the colonial period continued to survive. But these associations primarily strived to bring about socio-cultural reforms in their respective castes. The intention was to raise the social status of the concerned castes which was not always attainable due to the existence of wide disparities among their various sub-castes inhabiting disparate localities. The caste associations' occasional efforts at improving the economic conditions of their members were also limited to raising routine demands on the Government for favourable actions rather than trying to achieve the designed objectives by mobilising their respective castes at a political level.

It was only among the Khandayatasth at certain degree of politicisation of the caste took place after independence. It was manifested in the number of Khandayats who found representation in the various post-independence ministries. The rate of success among Khandayat candidates to get elected to the Assembly also
improved significantly towards the sixties as the Table X\textsuperscript{13} below shows.

Table - X

Caste analysis of elected representatives from some political parties to the Orissa Legislative Assembly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Brahmin</th>
<th>Khatriya</th>
<th>Karan</th>
<th>Khandayat</th>
<th>SC &amp; Other party</th>
<th>ST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figures for the year 1961 of)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17+9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.P.I. &amp; C.P.M.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Party</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ganatantra Pasrishad’s Figures for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1952</th>
<th>1957</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, the percentage of Khandayat representation was still small in relation to the proportion of their total population. First of all they were too numerous.
to be a cohesive political force. At the social level they were divided into many groups with local names and cultural trails peculiar to the concerned localities. Secondly, the caste was mostly comprised of small farmers who could be swayed by attractive pro-former slogans. In case of the coastal districts it was often the congress which moved them by such assurances. On their own they lacked financial resources to become politically assertive. The electoral scene for gullible castes and the weaker sections of the society had become too prove to the influence of high money after the independence. Biju Patnaik reportedly won an overwhelming majority in the 1961 interim election due to dominating financial clout\textsuperscript{14}. Finally the status cleavage between the more progressive sections and the rest of the caste members prevented an effective politicisation of this largest caste group in Orissa.

On the contrary, the Brahmin and Karan politicians enjoyed strong patronage at the center from their respective caste allies. Within the state also they received wide support from the bureaucracy which was overly dominated by the members from these two castes. Even the bureaucrats coming from the Khandayat caste in an obvious bid to move up the social and professional ladder tended to be closer to the Karana politicians\textsuperscript{15}.
The election of a large number of Harijan and Adivasi candidates to the State Assembly as shown in the Table-X could be possible due to the constitutional provision of reservations bestowed upon them. Otherwise the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes remained miserably backward. The small elite group which emerged amongst them by availing reservation facilities were co-opted by the omni bus political parties like the Congress and the Ganatantra Parishad. Such co-option made them willing instruments of political exploitation of their respective communities by these parties. Under such circumstances autonomous politicisation of the Scheduled Castes and the Tribes could not be made possible. The process also effectively stopped any alternative movement from taking place. As in case of the various caste associations, the Harijan and the Adivasi organisations also concentrated their attention mostly to socio-cultural priorities. Their politicisation was limited to occasional mobilisation by their respective castes and communities' leaders to get personal grievances redressed "within the party".

Thus absence of politicisation among the numerous castes, failure of radical political movements and the near total hold of the congress and the Ganatantra Parishad on the people because of historical reasons, on the whole allowed the continuation of dominance of the
Karan and the Brahmin castes on the political firmament of Orissa. But there was often a tacit struggle going on between these two higher castes for political supremacy. Such inter-caste rivalry at the top level was not only responsible for much of the factionalism within the congress, but also sometimes affected the state bureaucracy. Though from outside the factions looked composite in form yet one could discern a dominant caste complexion in their modus operandi. The Oriya language press itself controlled by members hailing from the Brahmin and Karan castes purposively catered to the factional interests. The overall loser in this game of political brinkmanship was the state of Orissa. With the political elites engaged in Machiavellian designs and concerns of self-promotion, the more urgent issues like economic development of the state and securing an equitable social order received shortsighted.

Political Situation in Balasore

The political situation in the district of Balasore largely conformed to the overall pattern of the state. The district had a double-member parliamentary constituency i.e. Balashwar, in the general elections of 1952 and 1957. In these two elections the district was represented by 12 and 11 members respectively in the
state legislature. For this purpose, the district was divided into two double-member and eight single-member assembly constituencies in the election of 1952 and two double-member and eleven single-member constituencies in the 1957 election. Out of the one double-member parliamentary constituency, the Bhadrak segment was reserved for the scheduled caste candidates. Similarly in the first general election to the State Assembly, out of the two double-member constituencies one segment each in Nilgiri and Chandbali were reserved for the scheduled caste candidates. In the 1957 election to the State Assembly again out of the two double-member constituencies one segment each in Soro and Chandbali were reserved for the scheduled caste candidates. In 1961 all double-member constituencies were ultimately converted into single member constituencies in pursuance of clause 3 of section 4 of the two-member constituencies (Abolition) Act. Hereafter the Chandbali and the Simulia assembly constituencies and the Bhadrak Parliamentary constituency were reserved permanently for scheduled caste candidates. Vital information regarding the elections to the Lok Sabha (Lower House of the Parliament) and the Vidhan Sabha (State Legislative Assembly) held in the district between 1952 and 1965 can be gleaned from the Table XI given below:
Table - XI

Results of elections held in the district of Balasore between 1952 and 1965

(A) Elections held for the Lok Sabha

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of election</th>
<th>Total No. of seats</th>
<th>No. of Seats won by whichever party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (Congress)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (Congress)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 (Congress)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(B) Elections held for the Vidhan Sabha

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of election</th>
<th>Total No. of Seats won by whichever party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>11 (Congress) 1 (Independent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>8 (Congress) 2 (Praja Socialist Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>6 (Congress) 3 (Praja Socialist Party)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the table indicates, the Congress held sway over the entire district in the first general election. In this election, the party conceded only Bhograi to an
independent candidate. However, from the second general election onwards non-congress parties began to make a dent in this congress bastion. From among these contending non-congress parties, the Praja Socialist Party wrested Baleshwar and Saleswar seats from the Congress in the second general election, while Bhadrak went to an independent candidate who again retained his seat in the 1961 midterm election to the State Assembly. The Ganatantra Parishad made its first inroad into this coastal district in this mid-term election by winning the Nilgiri seat. The Praja Socialist Party also maintained its base by winning the Basta, Bhograi and Jaleshwar constituencies. Thus towards the end of the period covered by this study the district was displaying increasing signs of political will to exercise its electoral choice. But that the congress nevertheless retained its dominant position in the district was too obvious.

In the ultimate analysis one could, however, say that the period between 1952 and 1965 was very much a transitional phase in the history of the state’s electoral politics. The shreds of colonial mind-set woven around the patron client relationship still permitted the social set-up in large measure. For such a mentality to give way to a more democratic political culture, the time was indeed short. But from the point
of view of the present study, political culture harboured during this period showed definite partends towards the future which could not have been any better.

Planning and the State Economy:

Prior to the introduction of planning the economic condition of Orissa was characterised by backwardness, undiversification and extreme poverty. "The State had practically no power, hardly any irrigation, no industries worth the name, an extremely inadequate system of railways and roads, unsatisfactory public health conditions and total absence of facilities for education, especially in technical subjects. The extremely low level of urbanisation was marked by the absence of commercial banks and business houses, resulting in lack of facilities for modern financial and commercial practices" 28 A great majority of the productive segment of the population was engaged in agriculture which thrived on the exploitation of the mass of the peasant cultivators and the agricultural labourers. Only a fraction of the population i.e. 9.6 per cent, was engaged in mining and manufacturing activities. The State Administrative machinery was oppressive in approach and was primarily geared to subserve the colonial interests.
Under such circumstances two Five Year Plans were fully implemented while the third plan was introduced in the state during the period between 1951 and 1965 following the national agenda of planned economic development. The broad objectives of these plans were to exploit the untapped resources of the state for securing a quantum jump in the state's income and to raise the standard of living of the people. Also inherent in the plans were the objectives of (1) reducing the disparity in the levels of development in different regions of the state, (2) reducing the inequalities in income and wealth among the different income groups of the community and (3) to afford greater employment opportunities for the people. In their financial outlays the plans apportioned investments in such priority sectors as (1) Agriculture (2) Co-operation, (3) Irrigation, (4) Power, (5) Industries, (6) Transport and Communication, (7) Education, and (8) Health.

As the Table X-III below indicates the total plan outlays by the first and the second Five Year Plans between 1951 and 1961 were respectively rupees 1,841.82 lakhs and rupees 8,659.17 lakhs. These sums as they stood were quite moderate in relation to the targets set by the respective plans.
In view of these planned expenditure the progress made in different sectors were significant in some way. Agriculture as the most important sector of the state’s economy absorbing almost 80 per cent of the working population and accounting for about 70 per cent of the state’s income naturally received greater attention. Its
result was witnessed in an increase in the net outrun of food grains and non-food grains alike in the state. This result was achieved despite unfavourable weather conditions which continued to afflict the state in the forms of periodic floods and droughts. The first five Five Year Plan particularly enabled an extension of the area under cultivation while the next plan’s emphasis was in enlarging the supply of additional inputs into agriculture. The second plan also invested nearly a crore of rupees to help the agriculturists by providing them with short and medium term loans through the Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS). The PACS operated at the Gram Panchayat level and facilitated such works as construction of dug-wells for irrigation, dairy farming and distribution of consumer goods to the rural farmers.

In the field of irrigation the most eye catching achievement was the completion of the multi-purpose Hirakud Dam Project during the second plan period. Two other major irrigation projects i.e. Mahanadi Delta Project and Salandi Irrigation Project along with seven medium sized irrigation projects were also taken up for execution during this period. However, only the Mahanadi Delta Project was completed during the period under study creating an additional irrigation potential of 7.06 lakhs acres in the state.
Another significant achievement was in the area of power generation. By the end of the second plan, the installed capacity in the state jumped from a meager 9.6 megawatt in 1950 to about 260 megawatt. This substantial increase in the generation of power enabled the state to achieve as much as 31.7 KWA of per capita consumption of electricity by the people. In addition the gains on the energy front and the establishment of the public sector steel plant at Rourkela provided as the much necessary impetus for the setting up of quite a number of ancillary industries both in the public sector and the private sector in the state. In this respect the Orissa State Financial Corporation played a catalyst role by providing institutional finance to small and medium sized industries. Increased power generation, setting up of industries and the expansion of road communication because of the planned effort thus built up a base for future economic growth of the state.

In relation to the social sector, the plan investments gave a push to the expansion of general education and health services facilities in the state. By the end of the 2nd plan, there were as many as 20,280 Primary schools with an enrollment of 12.63 lakh children including 4.03 lakh girl students in the state. The Middle English Schools numbered 6,240 and High English Schools 447. By this period also a viable health infrastructure was created with 383 Hospitals and
dispensaries and 111 Primary Health Centers with a total bed strength of 4,690 all over the state. The doctor population ratio as a result improved to 1:17:713 by the end of the Second Plan. Besides, since the beginning of the first plan, the community development scheme contributed substantially to the developmental works mainly at the block level. Under this scheme the government assisted the various programs especially promoting agriculture, animal husbandry, irrigation, health and rural sanitation, social education, rural arts and crafts and communications.

Perceptual assessment of the plans' achievements:

However, away from the official verbosity, a perceptual analysis of the plans' achievement would not allow much room for optimism. In view of the enormity of the task at hand it was but obvious that there would be short falls in the achievements. But set against the immediate goals, even what was achieved was not adequate. After ten years of progressive planning Orissa continued to remain at a very low level of development. This was revealed in the low per capita income, continued existence of a larger segment of population below the officially defined poverty line and acute unemployment problem.
First of all, the trend in the occupational pattern of population in the state did not indicate any significant change. Agricultural sector was still over crowded and there appeared to be little prospect of reducing the pressure of dependence on this sector due to lack of a thorough industrial orientation of the economy and higher rate of population growth. Even the data willed from the census of 1961 suggested a substantial increase in the proportion of the non-workers to total population in comparison to such proportion in the state prior to independence. Whereas the proportion of workers to total population in 1931 was 45.71 per cent it decreased to 37.36 per cent in 1951. Though the figure slightly increased to 43.66 per cent
1. Extract from the message of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru given to the Press on August 15th, 1947 at New Delhi.
2. Extract from the "Preamble" of the Constitution of India.
8. Ibid., P.88.
11. Ibid., PP. 172-183.
13. Ibid., PP. 223-224.
16. Ibid., PP. 89-90.