Chapter Two
CHAPTER - II

EMERGENCE OF BIJU JANATA DAL IN ORISSA POLITICS: AN EVALUATION

The political scenario in Orissa presents an interesting study of a regional party, as Orissa has provided a fertile ground for the germination and growth of many regional parties. Therefore, the existence of regional parties is nothing new in Orissa politics. Regionalism\(^1\) (characterized by the rivalry between the western and coastal region of Orissa) and conflict emerging from ‘personality–oriented politics’ have predominately contributed to the emergence of regional parties in Orissa.\(^2\) Many regional parties have dominated the state politics at different period of times.\(^1\) Small regional political parties and formations have emerged and disappeared in Orissa in the last 30 years of the states political history.\(^4\) None of these made an enduring impact, primarily because all of them were tied to the limited, political aspirations of the individual who started them.

\(^1\) Regionalism in our country is essentially a product of its diversity in different party in different forms soon after independence. The historic division of the country into British Indian Provinces and Princely states before independence led to the disparities in the levels of political consciousness. The area of the princely states remain backward and under developed-socially, economically, and politically — compared to the areas under the direct British administration. This created a sense of deprivation in the minds of the people of the princely states. This is true in a larger context between the states and inside a state. We can find the uneven development situation in Orissa, where the inland districts were under the princely rule and coastal districts under the British administration. The prevalence of two different types of administrations in the two regions contributed to the uneven development situation. The operation of electoral politics in the context of planned economic development did produce a change with the decline of princely power, the division of coastal and inland areas came to an end.


\(^2\) J. K. Mohapatra, Factional Politics in India, Allahabad: Chugh publications, 1985, p. 60.

\(^3\) The states first regional party, the Ganatantra Parishad, was formed in 1950 by Rajendra Narayan Singhdeo. In 1966, Harekrishna Mahtab came out of the Congress to form the Jana Congress. Biju Patnaik formed the Utkal Congress in 1969. Nandini Satpathy formed the Jagrata Orissa in 1985. Naveen Patnaik formed the fifth regional party, the Biju Janata Dal, in 1998. The Orissa Gana Parishad, was formed in 2000 as a political forum later on became the regional party formed by Bijay Mohapatra.

\(^4\) These are Jagrata Orissa of Nandini Satpathy, and Kosala Vikas party of Premlal Dubey.
The fundamental reason, however, for the inability of purely regional political formation to grow in Orissa is that Janata Parivar Parties have over the years occupied the space that regional parties hold in many other states. The Janata Party, which emerged after the emergency (1973-77) on an alternative to the Congress (I), had a strong base in Orissa from its very inception. The vision that guided a centrist political formation like the Janata Party was not only to provide an alternative to the “National” parties such as the Congress (I) and later the BJP, but also to represent the specific regional aspirations of its support base in the state. Biju Patnaik, who gave the Janata phenomenon its early ideological moorings, was a strong votary of the federal principle and as the first non-Congress (I) Chief minister of the state, he attempted to enshrine the demand for a large share for the state from central revenue. As a leader of the Janata Party (later Janata Dal), Patnaik was for several years one of the most effective and ardent supporters of regional political discourse in the state. It is true that Biju Patnaik chose to participate in non-Congress politics at the all India level, but his state-level politics continued to be anchored in a regional discourse. The continuance reference of the Janata Dal to the politics of the state well after the demise of the Janata Parivar in other regions is primarily because of its espoused Sregional aspirations and its middle class and rural support base.

The rise of BJD, a splinter party of the Janata Parivar was earlier active as a nodal point of non-Congress and non-BJP political force. But change in political environment both at the National and the State level give impetus to a shift in its earlier stand. Regionalisation of National party system, the decline of Congress

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party and rise of BJP as a new political formation were these political development exist in 1998s in Orissa political environment It is true that the (BJD) Biju Janata Dal in Orissa was not born out of a political movement and does not have a developed cader base at the grassroots level. But it has been in power since its inception in December 1997 and has emerged as one of the prominent regional parties in the country. Unlike in the states like Tamil Nadu, Punjab and Assam, where the respective regional parties like DMK, Akali Dal and AGP established their hegemony after prolonged agitation and mass mobilization of certain linguistic / religion communities, the BJD did not have any of such past political history. It (party) is thriving on the legacy of Biju Patnaik, who had created a strong anti-Congress base in the state. The rise of the BJD as a regional party formed under the leadership of Naveen Patnaik who promptly aligned with the BJP. It would be appropriate to say a section of the founder members had initially thought of joining the BJP. The group consulted the central leader of the BJP, but could not prevent the formation of the new party.

In turn, the BJP facilitated the formation of the BJD on the condition that the new regional outfit would be its ally in Orissa. This decision was based on two considerations; one was the logic of anti-Congressism, which drove Naveen Patnaik towards the BJP and other was an inspiration to play a role in National Politics. Naveen Patnaik thus consolidated anti-Congress politics in the state with

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7 Frontline, April 23, 2004, pp. 22-23
8 Suhas Palshikar, 'The regional parties and democracy: Romantic Rendezvous or Localised Legitimation', in Ajay K. Mehra and D. D. Khanna (eds), political parties and party systems, New Delhi: Sage publications. 2003, p. 319
9 ibid.
10 ibid.
11 ibid.
himself (his party) as the main nucleus of anti-Congressism. Thus, the emergence of BJD as the end product of political development of National as well as state level.

Therefore, this Chapter examines the various factors, which were contributing directly or indirectly for the rise and growth of BJD. It also attempts to analyse its ideological position, social base and its programme to identify whether it is considered as a regionalized party or not. This also looks how the BJD has consolidated his position against the backdrop of the changing political environment existing since 1997 (post BJD formation).

**Meaning:** A party is easily identified as a ‘regional’ party when it propagates the ideology and regionalism or it thrives on invocation of regional pride. Parties like Assam Gana Parishad (AGP) or the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) or Dravida Munnatra Kazhagam (DMK) are quickly recognised as regional parties. However, yet another type needs to be incorporated in the category of regional parties. Those parties, which enjoy considerable support only in one state of the Indian Union and whose leaders have a somewhat legitimate claim over the power structure at the local and state level. Thus understood, the Trinamool Congress (TC), Samajwadi party (SP), Rastriya Janata Dal (RJD), Samata Party (SMP), would be treated as regional parties along with self-proclaimed regionalist parties.

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12 Suhas Palshikar: The regional Parties and Democracy.
13 The term ‘regional party’, as used in this Chapter means political formations, which have been, set up specifically to champion regional causes and work for the realisation of regional aspirations. It does not include parties like the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Samata Party, and Samajwadi Party, which call them all India parties even though their electoral support is confined to particular regions.
Alternatively, these parties have been referred to as state based parties\textsuperscript{15} and single state based parties.\textsuperscript{16} The case of BJD is later form of regional party. To understand the concept of using the nomenclature (Biju’s) JD, the questions may arise why party is called as BJD.

The BJD in Orissa was not born out of political movement but a regrouping of old Janata Dal splinters on December 15, 1997 with as 29 out of the 43 Dal MLAs forming a separate unit called the Janata Dal (BIJU) of BJD headed by Naveen Patnaik.\textsuperscript{17} It is interesting to observe that the breaking of the umbilical cord with the parent party was not entirely complete, and this was indicated in the nomenclature of this newly emergent regional party. According to Prasanna Acharya,\textsuperscript{18} one of the founder member of party claimed this decision was based on two considerations one was the logic of filling up the alternative image of Late Biju Patnaik, which is created a vacuum political leadership, vacuums after post-Biju phase. Another was to take the psychological advantage among the people of the Orissa on Biju-image in naming the Biju Janata Dal. The state unit of Janata Dal in Orissa under Biju Patnaik always functioned independently. This was actually only a regional outfit, which had earlier been representing the strong regional force within the Janata Dal. According to Naveen Patnaik, an attempt was thus made to tread the middle path by keeping the Late Biju Patnaik’s image intact with its Janata Dal suffix, but the same time identifying with the regional support


\textsuperscript{18} Interview with Prasanna Acharya, one of funding member of BJD on dt. 22.05.03.
base by using the Biju as its prefix. This was in a way a beautiful linguistic expression to identify the transitional phase that characterised the gradual opening up of the National political space for regional political formation.

**Genesis of BJD in Orissa:**

The emergence of a distinct state party i.e. BJD was closely linked with development at the National and the state political environment in 1990s, especially during post 1996 General Election. These developments are impact on Orissa politics in post Biju phase polity. The BJD is not a product of regional parties in the post independence period. There are many regional parties were formed in India since independence. The major impetus for the formation of regional parties in India came from one or a combination of various reasons like indifference of the union and / or a state government towards of regional needs and aspiration (e.g. AGP in Assam, Gantantra Parishad (GP) in Orissa); unjustifiable interference by the Union Government in the politics of a state (e.g. TDP in Andhra Pradesh); an attempts to preserve the separate identities of a minority religion through the use of political (e.g. Akali Dal in Punjab) ; and an attempt to organise politically one social groups against another for a due share opportunities (e.g. DMK in Tamil Nadu, Shiv Sena (SS) in Maharatra). The rise of the BJD in Orissa presents a unique example. It is a party formed by a group breaking from a mainstream party i.e. Janata Dal, and is trying to achieve legitimacy by articulating regional sentiment like Trinamol Congress in West Bengal.

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19 Interview with Naveen Patnaik, President of Biju Janata Dal and the Chief minister of Orissa from 2000 to till date, BID office, Bhubaneswar, 20 March 2003.

The Janata Dal (former BJD) continued to be the strong non-Congress dominant party in the state though it met setback due to the emergence of BJP with core value of anti-Congressism effecting a dramatic change in the power position of the Janata Dal. Due to the rise of BJP, the Janata Dal could not manage to consolidate as a strong opposition party in 1991 and 1996 Lok Sabha and the 1995 assembly elections. Thus the politics of anti-Congressism was finally brought about as the downfall of the Janata Dal in the state. There is another political development due to the death of Biju Patnaik, as a charismatic leader of Janata Dal, which created the Leadership crisis within the Janata Dal. Factionalism thereafter disintegrated the state unit of Janata Dal and resulted in disunity and further down fall in its dominance. In the state unit of the Janata Dal (Orissa) was worst effected swept the organisation in the post-Biju phase especially in post mid 1990s. In other words there was a relative decline of Janata Dal in post 1996 elections.

Before the great split of 1997, the Janata Dal at the state level had already undergone the process of fragmentation of a Rabi Ray faction from the Janata Dal formed a separate party called ‘Samata Party’. Thus the Janata Dal in Orissa had to play the role of opposition during the period 1995-2000 of Congress government. During this intervening period, the split occurred. A splinter group of

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22 The Janata Dal obtained 6 seats with 34.6 percent of the popular vote as compared to BJP’s tally of 9.5 percent with no seats in 1991, while the Janata Dal obtained 4 seats with 30.1 percent as compared to BJP’s no seats with 13.4 percent. It must, however, be pointed out that the Janata Dal vote share were decline while the BJP, has increase vote shares further. This is also one of the reasons to alliance both(BJD-BJP), after adopting an aggressive coalition building strategy, steadily increase vote shares as well as number of seats on both the parties.

23 The Samata party was formed, as early as in 1994, on the basis of mobilizing the non-congress by George Fernades, Rabi Roy, Nitish Kumar, Shahabuddin in National level was formed but later on its shift for state level. The state unit of Samata Party (Orissa) is still persisting under the Leadership of Rabi Ray with marginal role in the state politics. See The Hindustan Times (New Delhi), Dt. 29.10.2003.
the state unit of Janata Dal led by Naveen Patnaik and others who were once the dominant leader of the state unit of Janata Dal formed a separate party. This was the third split in state unit of Janata Dal since 1990.\footnote{In 1990, the State unit of Janata Dal came into existence when a group of Janata Dal was under Leadership of Biju Patnaik, opposing the decision of the High command at the state level Janata Dal on Mandal Commission Recommendation chose to establish a separate Dal at State level. Since than the Janata Dal unit of Orissa under the Biju Patnaik always functioned independently. The socialist section within the Janata Dal established the Samata Party in 1994, the second split occurred as Biju Janata Dal, and third split occurred before the 1998 General elections as Janata Dal (U) and Janata Dal (S) under the Leadership of Srikanta Jena and Ashok Das respectively.}

Factionalism in Orissa was principally organised around influential personalities. The Orissa unit of Congress has almost been plagued by factional conflict.\footnote{J. K. Mohapatra, \textit{Factional politics in India}, Allahabad: Chugh publications, Chapter 3.} This is true in case of BJD.\footnote{Factionalism in the Biju Janata Dal} Factions led by influential personalities, who felt that they were neglected by the High Command of the Party preferred to form a new Political Party. The Samata Party under the Leadership of Rabi Ray in 1994 and later the Samajwadi party under the leadership of Biswabhusan Harichandan\footnote{He was initially joined in Bharatiya Janata Party (1985-90), then joined in Janata Dal, even a Cabinet minister under the Biju Patnaik ministry (1990-1995) till the expelled from Dal in 1995 and later formed Samajwadi party in 1995, again joined in BJP, since than he was the BJP Legislator.} in 1995 were the product of such feeling of alienation. Thus these parties, which are emerged, out of the Janata Dal itself weakened it further. Interestingly these splinter parties took a strong regional stand subsequently in view of the strong influence of regional politics in the state. Thus, Naveen Patnaik, an immature politician as
political analysts\textsuperscript{28} observe has taken leadership to form the party with a view to maintain the platform of anti-Congressism.

The BJD is not a product of regional parties in the immediate post independence period. It is a product of two factors which have created regional / state level parties in the post 1980 phase. The thrust is decline of the Congress which provided space for the rise of regional / state political parties such as the Rastriya Janata Dal (RJD). Samajwadi Party, Biju Janata Dal etc. The second is regionalisation of politics, which increased the importance of the states and regional parties in the 1990s due to decline of National parties and emergence of coalition governments both at National as well as state level. The BJD, therefore, is a product of changes in the state as well as National level. These factors have been analysed in the later part of this Chapter.

**Ideological Moorings of BJD**

The nature and character of a political party can not be understood without making reference to its ideology because “Ideology constitutes mirror of the core value of political parties are said to be most important ideological carrier and interpreter”\textsuperscript{29}

The BJD policy statement stated that the Biju Janata Dal is the well being and advancement of the people of Orissa and to realise “Biju Babu’s” dream of building a prosperous Orissa with the establishment of democratic state based on equality of opportunities and provide social justice to disadvantage section of society.\textsuperscript{30} Based on the policy statement of party we have attempted to study the ideology of the BJD in Orissa. There are parties, which are personalistic and

\textsuperscript{28} Interview with Rabi Das, Political analyst and editor of the Oriya daily Paryavekhyak by Researcher at Parya Vekhyak office, Bhubaneswar, dated: 20-3-03.  
\textsuperscript{30} *The Constitution of Biju Janata Dal*.  

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centred around one leader. This is true in case of BJD. It would be appropriate to note here that its predecessor party (Janata Dal) had commitment to centrist ideology. It is also true that formation of a party requires an ideological location even it is only like a fig leaf as far as legitimisation of the party’s existence is concerned. Besides, the compulsions of electoral politics of a party presents some arguments. The regional parties frequently combine the regionalist and non-regional argument an order to explain their raison di etre to the electorate.\footnote{Suhas Palshikar, ‘The Regional parties and Democracy: Romantic Rendezvous or Localised Legitimation: in Ajay Kumar Mehra and D. D. Khanna ed., \textit{Political parties and party systems}, New Delhi: Sage Publication, 2003, p. 313.}

The regionalist arguments mean invocation of regional pride and it marks a regional identity. The regional arguments are involved with demands pertaining to regional culture, history and language. The demands for formation of a state or inclusion of certain territories into a state are potent weapons of mobilization.\footnote{Palshikar, ‘Regional parties and Democracy’, p. 314} The other aspects of regionalistic argument are the demand for more autonomy to the state and the position to take the form of demand for state’s “development”. Political Parties like the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) or Trinomul Congress (TC) emphasise the development arguments. The TDP emerged on the basis of the identity argument and the Leadership of Chandrababu Naidu has led the party quietly to the development basis in Andhra Pradesh.\footnote{ibid.}

No wonder all political parties use the Language of “development” to mobilise and get support from the people of their respective states. The agenda of “Liberalisation” in early 90s has given this Language of “Development” a new impetus.\footnote{K. C. Suri, ‘Andhra Pradesh : From populism to pragmatism : 1983-2003’, \textit{Journal of Indian School of Political Economy}, vol. XV. nos 1 and 2, Jan-June 2003, pp. 45-74.} It would be appropriate to analyse a synoptic view about the Biju’s
obsession with a second steel plant in the state is driven by this political need. In this sense, there is little difference between the Congress (1) and the (former BJD) Janata Dal. Both are “Centrist” in their persuasions. Today there is not a single social force, which the Congress or the Biju Janata Dal can claim exclusively as its own. There is stiff competition for each and every segment of society, including the SCs and STs, which constitutes 38 percent of population.35 The political fortunes of BJD or other parties will be shaped less by their ideological positions than by host of conjunctural factors.

However, it is not always necessary that a regional party would confine itself only to regionalistic argument. Many times regional parties cover non-regionalistic ideological ground. For instance, the Akali Dal tend to define regional identity in terms of religion, the Shiv Sena uses the two ideologies of regionalism and religious communalism according to the exigencies of electoral politics.36 In order to appreciate the type of social base, which the BJD enjoys, it may be repeated that the party speaks of regional pride. BJD places emphasis on Orissa’s backwardness. At the same time, the party has posed itself as opposed to Congress’s misrule and corruption. Thus, the JD (former BJD) originally combined Orissan identity with anti Congressism. By employing ‘development’ ideological resources, the BJD strengthen its claims as the main nucleus of anti- Congressism.

Social Base of BJD

The BJD had a tradition of anti-Congressism, which was one of the logic that drove Naveen Patnaik and other founder member to form a separate regional

35 Census of India, 1991
party. Their objective has thus consolidated anti-Congress politics in the state as the main nucleus of anti-Congressism. In this ground the BJD has alliance with BJP to signalled a new social equilibrium in transitional society like Orissa. As mentioned earlier the state unit of the Janata Dal quickly disintegrated after the death of Biju Patnaik and gave way to the formation of a state level party under the Leadership of Naveen Patanik who promptly aligned with the BJP. In this background, it becomes interesting to analysis the exact social territory occupied by BJD in the state.

Although Caste-based political mobilisation has been a part of Indian political reality since the independence, it has acquired a greater salience during the past decades. Historically the state has not experienced any strong mobilisation whether pertaining to class or caste or religion. This implies that there is no strong structural connection between party’s electoral base and the social groups in Orissa. In other words changes in the electoral verdict does not necessarily signify a qualitative change in the spheres of society. The presence of a weak or muted mobilisation can account for the specificity of the politics in Orissa. Hence, analysis of the relative support for BJD according to caste basis is of Salience. Figures 2.1, 2.2 & 2.3 represent the support for BJD and formation according to the caste basis.

38 Mohapatra, ‘Elections and Everyday Politics’.
39 *ibid*.
40 Researcher has not intend to suggest that there is no class / caste mobilisation in Orissa rather commenting on their intensity and depth.
Figure 2.1: Support for BJD in 1999 Lok Sabha Elections according to caste

Source: CSDS National Election Study, 1999

Figure 2.1 delineates the caste-composition of BJD. The BJD mostly supported for all social groups in the society. As analysis from caste composition it is clear that upper caste and OBCs were supporter to BJD. In contrast, BJD has a marginal social base among SCs and a weak social base among Orissa's tribal population. As it shows clearly from the figure 2.1 that the main support of upper caste and OBCs lay with the BJD and its ally BJP. Interestingly, the BJP also managed to secure a significant portion of the upper caste votes.

Thus the BJP's social and regional support basis complements the BJD's social base. The BJD is stronger in the largest and the most developed region of coastal Orissa and draws support from all sections of society in a way typical of regional parties. Orissa is now one of the few states in the country that have not witnessed any major sectional mobilization, along caste or class lines.41 The

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41 Bishnu Mohapatra, 'Elections and Everyday politics', *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 35, no. 4, 22 January 2000, p. 171
absence of a large peasant caste has meant that politics is still the prerogative of the small upper castes and that mandalisation has had no effect.\textsuperscript{42}

As is clear from these figures the main support of the middle class / caste lay with the BJD. Interestingly, the BJD also managed to secure a significant portion of the SCs votes. As expected, the Congress party had its main support base amongst the SCs. This is due to the non-existent of BSP, which is embodying the interest of the Dalits. Parties in general have played a critical role in the democratic process, especially in drawing historically disadvantaged sections of society into the political system.\textsuperscript{43}

Figure 2.1 shows that the BJD continued to be the chosen party of electoral support for middle class, especially Brahmin, Khandayat & Karan and OBCs in the 1999 elections. It does not mean that the BJD has no support form SCs and STs. As far as the caste\textsuperscript{44} categories are concerned, the BJD continued to be a middle caste / class party that is former party i.e. Janata Dal had always been. Amongst the SCs, 37 percent voted for the BJD while 16 percent of STs voters chose the BJD in 1999. The proportion of OBCs that caste their vote for the BJD was 39 percent-a figure slightly lower than the OBC support for the Congress.

In the 2000 elections, the BJD continued to be chosen party of electoral support for middle class, especially upper caste and with 45 percent and 41 percent respectively (see figure 2.2). In 2000 assembly elections, 24 percent of the SC voter supported the BJD while 31 percent voted in 1999 general elections. It shows

\textsuperscript{42} The Hindu, April 17, 2004. 
\textsuperscript{43} Zaya Hassan, \textit{Quest for power: Oppositional movement and Post Congress Politics}, Delhi: Oxford University Press. 1998, p. 6
\textsuperscript{44} In this analysis, ST has been listed as a caste category while such a comparison is useful for the study of political dynamics, there is no effort to represent the STs as a caste of the Hindu fold. In this Chapter is conscious of the fact that there are significant differences in the political mobilizations based on caste lines and those on the basis of a shared tribal culture heritage.
that the SC voter for the BJD decline 24 percent against the 31 percent voted in 1999 general elections. The support of ST voter for the BJD decline to 14 percent against the 24 percent voted in 1999 general elections. The OBCs voters marginally increase their support to the BJD to 41 percent in 2000 assembly election against the 39 percent voted in 1999 general elections. Interestingly, the upper caste and OBCs are continuing to remain in the BJD political platform. The SCs and STs marginally declined to 14 percent and 30 percent as against the 15 percent and 31 percent respectively in 2004 assembly election (see figure 2.3).

This substantial decline in the level of support from BJD-BJP in the 2004 election was a product of the large number of electoral alliance among the opposition parties in the sense the data tabulated in figure 2.2 and 2.3 shows that the spectacular success of BJD-BJP in recent year is a product of seat adjustment. As a comparative analysis from three figures were clear, the STs support for the BJD declined, which is increased for the BJP (BJP as ally of BJD).

**Figure 2.2** Support for BJD in 2000 Assembly elections according to caste

**Sources:**
1. CSDS Data Unit
2. Frontline, April 14, 2000
Figure 2.3: Support for BJD in 2004 Assembly elections according to caste

![Support for BJD in 2004 Assembly elections according to caste](image)

Source: CSDS Data Unit

**EMERGENCE OF BJD: FACTORS**

The Biju Janata Dal is essentially a regrouping of old Janata Dal splinters group under the leadership of writer turned politician Naveen Patnaik. It (party) is a product of various factors which have contributed to the growth of BJD in Orissa party politics in the post-mid 90s phase. There are various factors, which are directly or indirectly interlinked with the rise and growth of BJD in Orissa politics.

I. **Electoral decline of Congress party in Orissa:**

Before we analyse the electoral decline of Congress party in Orissa, it would be appropriate here to take a synoptic view on decline of Congress party at the National level. The Congress party has been witnessed the breakdown both at the National level and the state. The Congress's decline has complex causes. Most striking is the inability of the party to maintain the political base of its coalition especially the loyalty of the social disadvantaged groups. It is true that the Congress party continues to support across the social spectrum. From the late
1980s, however, the party has found itself hard pressed to command support for its broad consist and secular appeal in the face of a serious challenge from political formation with sectarian appeals and social bases, such as BJP, Samajwadi Party, and BSP. New parties, representing the backward and SCs, are regionally concentrated and have strengthened their position at the expense of the Congress. The main reasons for the decline of the Congress\textsuperscript{45} were:

a) Shift within the ground Congress coalition, with these rising elites becoming more powerful and more successful in imposing their strategic vision, thereby further enlarging the distance between the Congress and the downtrodden masses.

b) Rising expectations and increasing electoral volatility of the core minorities

c) The increasing lopsidedness of the economy and its inability to be the basic needs of the poor; and

d) The growing federalists pressures leading to the formulation of non-Congress regional parties, often by the disgruntled ambitious leaders of the Congress party itself.

As numerous studies\textsuperscript{46} of the Congress party clearly show the breakdown of Congress system at national level, which provide a space for the rise of regional parties and distinct competitive party systems in the states.\textsuperscript{47} The all India


opposition parties had space to build regional bases in states where Congress support begun to decline rapidly. The decline of the highly centralised Congress party has resulted in the decentring of politics and has shifted centre of gravity from National politics to the states. This has generated considerable interest in post-Congress politics in the states and in the larger socio-economic conditions and political processes responsible for these transitions.

The beginning of the decline of the old parties effectively coincided with the beginning of the historic decline of the 'Congress System' from the late

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49 In her study of the decline of the Congress and its impact in Uttar Pradesh, Zoya Hasan explores the growth of the oppositional politics of farmers, other backward classes and Hindutva that contributed to the collapse of the Congress party and the disintegration of the Congress system. Zoya Hasan, *Quest for power: oppositional movements and Post-Congress politics in Uttar Pradesh*, Delhi: Oxford University Press 1998.

50 Rajini Kothari described the Congress System as a huge, hierarchically structured Party, broadly rooted throughout the countryside, apparently providing mechanisms whereby a plurality of elites, sub-elite and groups could both voice their claims and attempts to realise them. The old Nehruvian order had also provide a unique model of integration based on a coalition of diverse interests that the Congress party had represented in the decades following independence. At the same time, the Congress could adequately mediate and settle these multiple and often conflicting claims. If necessary, the Congress High Command could intervene to seal the final bargain. Within this system, the range of social groups represented in the ruling party was considered its most positive feature, making it possible for the opposition parties to forge links with like-minded Congress factions. Furthermore, two factors that appeared to have strengthened the system were (a) the practice of intra-party democracy, and (b) socially rooted party and political leaders at the state and district levels. Rajani kothari, "The Congress System in India", *Asian Survey*, vol. 4 , no.12, December 1964, pp. 812-28.

While reviewing his model in 1974, Kothari reiterated his faith in the Congress system as the most effective means of counting 'the challenge that the country faces'. Hence, his suggestion included: rebuild the Congress party and its regional infrastructure that has become so weak of late, reinvest the electoral process with legitimacy, restore to the opposition parties their due role in parliamentary politics and at regional levels, and restructure the communication linkage between government, party units and the people, so that the system becomes more responsive and has to rely less coercion'. See Rajni kothari,' The Congress System Revisited: A decennial Review', *Asian Survey*, vol. 14 , no. 11, December 1974, pp. 1052-53.

Over a period of time, the situation however has changed radically and the Congress system has largely lost its grip over the Indian reality. In the words of kothari, built as it was around a system of one party dominance the Congress system while allowing a great deal of internal flexibility and a long period of stable democratic functioning, nonetheless produced a centralised, bureaucratic apparatus that was lacking in effective distributive policies and any sound philosophy of justice, it eventually ended up in a neo-liberal, marketised doctrine (popularly described as liberalisation and globalisation) that led to consequences which produced a sharp reaction from the people at large. An electoral democracy... broadened its social base and shown special regard for diverse types of minorities and hence gained so much legitimacy got eroded over time and forced the political managers to compromise with and ultimate become party to monied and “mafia” interests, in the process undermining the
1960s and early 70, as mentioned earlier of this Chapter. In the past-1996 elections has set in motion a process by which the regional parties have become formidable partners in the National coalition. Further more, the twelvth and thirteen Lok Sabha elections outcome have radically altered the socio-political map of India due to the regionalisation of politics (South & Northeast India); the growth of new social constituencies in North India, especially in the Hindi heartland (particularly, Bihar and UP); and the changing forms of political discourse.\textsuperscript{51}

Looking at the National perspective it would be appropriate to analyse the decline of Congress party in Orissa on the basis of Electoral and the image of Congress party. At the state level, the decline of Congress and the rise of BJP point to the emergence of a distinct regional political arena in the state which has much to do with nature of the elite and the emerging middle class\textsuperscript{52} in the state.\textsuperscript{53} The question may arise what is the need to analyse the interlink between the decline of Congress and the rise of BJP. Because the Congress party as the long dominant political fact of Orissa life now appears to have surrendered the dominance to social political parties. These are, of course the (former Janata Dal) BJD and the BJP. For the present, at least, the BJD has methodically established itself as the predominant beneficiary of the Congress’s organisational disintegration and a considerable realignment of social forces that taken place in Orissa. The other, the BJP has made itself a force to be reckoned with in certain portions of the state and


\textsuperscript{53} Mohapatra, 'Elections and Everyday Politics'.
among certain social groups, although as yet not in sufficient degree to seriously challenge the predominance of the Biju Janata Dal. The political scenario in Orissa never witnessed the 'single party dominance' of the Congress party, except in the mid-term elections of 1961, 1980-90 and again in 1995-2000 general election has not enjoyed monopoly of power in Orissa to an extent that Orissa’s political style has been predominantly coalitional, resulting in political instability. This period also witnessed a furthering of middle class consolidation in Orissa. It is largely drawn from the middle class and from three castes – Brahmins, Karans and Khandayats. The slow emergence of the middle class in Orissa, its rise to influence and power in the state are widely rated by the political scientist. The question may arise where did the middle class draw its power? How can their exercises as such influence in the state? The absence of a powerful bourgeois class and the decline of the feudal influence in Orissa played a crucial role in bringing the middle class to such a pre-eminent position in the state.

Even in the early years after independence the pre-eminence of the Congress was an all India phenomenon but in case of Orissa the Congress party was a largest political party in early years after independence and continued to be dominant in the coastal districts of Orissa. It is only in the 1970s that the Congress acquired an all Orissa presence. Looking at the electoral data, from Orissa reveal that since 1977 until the early 90s the Congress and the Janata (first the party, then the Dal and now the BJD) have been the two main contenders of

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56 ibid, p. 340
57 Bishnu Mohapatra, 'Elections and Everyday Politics', p. 172
power, both enjoying an all Orissa presence.\textsuperscript{58} Although the party improved its position in the state assembly elections held in 1995, its vote share in the coastal region was less than the votes that it got in the rest of the state. (See Table 3.7)

A cursory look at makes it clear that in Orissa, as far as the electoral performance of the Congress party is concerned, we can see new patterns in the state. As this study has focused since 1990, especially in post BJD political formation but being a clear understanding the researcher looked since 1990.

Beginning with the last phase of 1980s, where as the Congress party initially enjoyed a position of strength but shifting of middle class into new political platform i.e. the Janata Dal, its decline started. And by the close of the 1990s, it has been reduced to a very insignificant level. But it continues to be a major force in the electoral arena of the state drawing a significant degree of support from all the major communities of the state. The party is weakest amongst the more numerous and politically most important caste of the state - the middle class/caste. The strong areas of the party in the state are SCs, the Muslims & STs, but the Congress’s capacity for new forms of mobilisations, in contrast to that of BJD – BJD, has dramatically weekend in Orissa.

The Congress is a party that is neither unable nor incapable of creating new steering in the state. Even its rhetoric for development and people’s welfare lacks a sharp mobilisation edge. No wonder that the BJP-BJD combines could seriously undermine the support base of the party in Orissa. In some sense, one can’t truly gauge the decline of the Congress from its vote share in the state. The intense factional rivalry within the Congress in the state is both cause as well as consequences of its weaknesses. The future of the Congress in Orissa depends

\textsuperscript{58} \textit{ibid}, p.173.
upon how the party revamps itself and connects to the changing aspirations of the people.

The strategies and pattern of mobilization of the Congress in Orissa was same as the National level organisation. The Congress programme to mobilize various segments of the society in Orissa through various welfare schemes like welfare and development of the tribal people, eradication poverty, land reform and reservation facilities in education and employment and political representation, it brought about solutions of poorer sections from the SCs and other backward classes under the influence of the Congress. Thus, these schemes, it reconciled the interests of various classes and castes, which enabled the party to remain in power along time. The multi-class alliances achieved by Congress started cracking from last phase of 80s onwards as it can be seen in the gradual decline of electoral support to the party and consequent consolidation of opposition parties in the state.59 The following figure No. 21 explains how the Congress party with an absolute majority till 1985 has gradually lost its social support giving way JD and later on BJD since 1990 assembly elections.

Analysing the vote share and number of seats won by Congress party can give a picture of its position in Orissa party politics. It is true that Congress in 1995 got majority and form government and since then its position gradually decline (For more See Figure4.1 and 4.2 on social base). This indicates that the Congress lost substantial section of its earlier support of various sections of society. In some sense, one cannot truly gauge the decline of the Congress from its share in the state.
The intense factional rivalry within Congress in the state is both a cause as well as consequences of its weakness.60

II. The decline of the image of the Congress party in Orissa:

The rule of Congress party in the state during the period from 1980-90 was characterised by the stability of the government. But the last phase of the 1980s saw a frequent changes of chief minister, PCC (I), factionalism among different groups within the Congress for power, which resulted in the gradual erosion of the image of the Congress party among the people of the state. As this study is focussed from 1990, it would be appropriate to focus since 1990 to till date.

The perception of the people regarding the Congress party is viewed as a faction-ridden house having little autonomy ‘vis-à-vis’ the high command. This is

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60 Factionalism in the Congress party

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL. No.</th>
<th>The rival factions</th>
<th>Caste dynamic</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Pre-1936 Phase: struggle for Orissa provinces</td>
<td>Madhu Babu group Vs Gapabandhu group</td>
<td>Kshyatriyas Vs Brahmin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>1937-47: Freedom struggle</td>
<td>Satyavadi group Vs Alaka group</td>
<td>Brahmin Vs Karans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Choudhary ministry 1952-1956</td>
<td>N. Choudhary Vs Mahtab</td>
<td>Brahmins Vs Non-Brahmin upper caste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Mahatab ministry (1956-60)</td>
<td>Mahtab Vs Biju</td>
<td>Non-Brahmins Vs Non-Brahmins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Biju-Biron Rule</td>
<td>Biju Vs Mahtab</td>
<td>Non-Brahmins Vs Non-Brahmins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Nandini Period 1972-76</td>
<td>Nandini Vs Janaki-Binayak combine</td>
<td>Brahmin Vs Karan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Janaki ministry 1986-89</td>
<td>Janaki Vs Basanta Biswal group</td>
<td>Karan Vs Non-Brahmin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>1990-95 Congress in opposition</td>
<td>Janaki Vs Hemanada Biswal-Lenka combine</td>
<td>Karan Vs Non-Brahmin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>2000-2004 Congress in opposition</td>
<td>Janaki Vs Biswal-Gomango combine</td>
<td>Karan Vs Tribes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

54
perceived as a weakness, which many feel the state unit can never overcome.\textsuperscript{61} Before analysing the factionalism of Congress party, it is right to highlight the Congress political perception among people under the government i.e. from 1995-2000.

During (1995-2000) Congress government in the state many political and non-political plank change the perception towards the Congress party. This period (1995-2000) was characterised by the instability of the government as a result of frequent changes of chief ministers, factionalism among different groups within the Congress for power, which resulted in the gradual erosion of the image of the Congress party among people of the state. Within the period of two years,\textsuperscript{62} there was a change of three chief ministers in the state, the process that started with High Command during Ms Indira Gandhi. The central leadership of the Congress party has increasingly intervened in the affairs of the state government through the preposition of its own choice to the post of Chief Ministership, of these who are not even members of the state Legislative Assembly. It is created an impression in the mind of people about the inability of the elected Congress legislators to choose their non-leaders as chief minister and their total surrender to the central leadership in allowing it to nominate its own nominee as chief minister. These developments led the formation of dissident as a group who started a campaign again to remove him further lowered the image of the government in the eyes of the people. The period between the twelveth and thirteen Lok Sabha elections, witnessed some major developments in Orissa society and polity. The state witnessed the

\textsuperscript{61} Frontline March 24, 1995.

\textsuperscript{62} The three Chief Ministers were Janaki Ballav Patnaik (15-3-1995 to 22-2-1999), Giridhari Gamango (22-2-1999) and Hemananda Biswal (10-12-1999 to 29-02-2000) when Giridhari Gamango was appointed by High Command as a Chief Minister; he was not a member of Legislative Assembly.
lawlessness and saffronisation of society in the state. For instance, the murder of Graham Stains and his two sons at Monharpur village of Orissa.63

Another important incident, which sparked off controversy, is the Anjana Mishra rape case. The incident was highlighted by the regional press as an indication of the insecurity of women, lack of law or order which is generated a lot of anger among the people, which was successfully used by Naveen Patnaik, leader of opposition (1995-2000). For instance the slogan articulated by the BJD-campaign: “The Congress is synonymous with corruption, immoral conduct and of rape of women’ (Congressara tinoti nama / Durniti, bhrashtachara, naridharsana).64 These two developments have had compelled the central leadership of the Congress Party to change the Chief minister of the state. The change in the leadership in Congress has hardly brought any noticeable change in the state except the fact that the Congress saw much factionalism.65 In the meanwhile, Giridhari Gamango who had a clean image before the Orissan public untill he became the Chief minister and was dragged into controversy for his active involvement in the trust vote, moved by the Vajpayee Government.66

In addition to the two other main factors detoriate the image of Congress party. Firstly, the Congress opened its door to most of the rebel BJD leaders and provided the ticket to fight the polls.67 Secondly, the Chief of Congress Party perpetuating the Patnaik dynasty as ticket to family members. Orissa Gana Parishad (OGP) was formed as a the anti-Congress platform which was an alliance

64 *ibid.*
65 *ibid*
66 The Samaj (Cuttack),dt. 12.03.2000.
67 Prominent members who are joined in Congress party after expelled from BJD on grounds of corruption among them were Ramakrishna Patnaik, Kumudini Patnaik, Sarat Kar and others.
with the Congress Party is once again degrading the party image among the people of Orissa.

III - A History of Anti-Congressism

In the early years of Independence, the Congress because of its historic role was a national force to be reckoned with. From 1948 onwards, the Congress supremely was challenged by the emergence of a strong regional party called the "Ganatantra Parishad". The emergence of GP offered a new challenge to the Congress. It had to widen its base in western part of the provinces where regionalism had to be contained. In short, Orissa with a combination of two different types of sub-structures feelings of regionalism deep rooted fared of values and antiquated model of social organisation made the Congress task much time difficult and challengeable. It was a party, which emerged partly out of the anti-Congress attitude for feudal sections of the society and partly out of the regionalistic feelings among the people in western Orissa. Again, the next challenged to Congress Party in Orissa comes from the Swatantra Party. The Orissa unit of Swatantra party emerged after the merger of the GP with the All India Swantantra party. It is due to ideological conflict show the leftist and rightist section within the Congress. It would be appropriate to analyse a synoptic

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68 Ganatantra Parishad was formed under the Leadership of R. N. Singh Deo formed on Oct. 1950 with combination of regionalistic feelings among the people (other leaders) and the anti-Congress attitude of the feudal section of the society in Western Orissa.


70 The Swatantra Party was formed as early as in 1962 when a group of rightist within congress, opposing the majority decision in the leftist within congress developed on the issues like abolition of intermediaries, liquidation of agricultural indebtedness, etc. In other words, ideological conflict show the two sections led to the emergence of the Swatantra Party in India. The Orissa unit of Swatantra Party emerged after the merger was that of the Ganatantra Parishad.

view of non-Congress politics in Orissa to understand the nucleus of anti-Congressism.

Non-Congress politics in Orissa has often been based around localised forces. This is true in case of Ganatantra Party, which has presence only in Western Orissa. Although the Swatantra Party played an important role in state politics between 1967 and 1972, the formulation of a government depended upon the Jana Congress (1961-71) and Utkal Congress and Jharkhand Party (1971-72). Even when Nandini Satpathy or Biju Patnaik chose to participate in anti-Congress politics at the All India level, their state-level politics continued to be anchored in a regional discourse.

The real anti-Congress orientation came from Janata party both at National as well as state level. At the state level, the Janata party started in anti-Congressism and represented the coalitional interest of Hill and coastal areas, in a short period it was reduced to a personality based party with only an anti-Congress orientation.

It would be appropriate to analyse a synoptic view on Janata party, which gives a clear picture of anti-Congress politics in Orissa. A study of Janata Party would make it apparent that many of its leading followers believed in an ideology which later contributed for the emergence of Janata Dal. In early part of 1977, new political development took place at the National level when Smt. Indira Gandhi announced the election to the Lok Sabha for March 1977. On January 20, 1977, the four ‘non-Communist parties’, i.e., the Congress (O), the Jan Sangh, the Bharatiya Lok Dal and the socialists agreed to ‘work as one party’ to face the

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72 The term “personality party” was coined by Duverger in which he explained that such parties grow and develop around important leaders personalities, See M. Duverger, *Political Parties*, London, 1954, p. 290.
elections. The new party was named as the Janata Party. In Orissa, the 1967 electoral defeat of Congress and the party split in 1969 had united the opposition parties to a certain extent. With the establishment of the Janata Party at the National level, the Orissa Unit of the Janata Party came into existence.\(^\text{73}\)

In May 1977, the Congress for Democracy, Congress (O), BLD, BJS, the Socialist Party together to form the Janata Party. The formation of Janata Party evoked criticism from its opponents who commented that the party was “Nothing but the Jan Sang into which the other parties have merged”.\(^\text{74}\)

The 1970s saw the Orissa politics leading for a bi-party system. The State Assembly elections in year 1977 established beyond doubt, the advent of a two-party competitive system, while anti-Congress political parties merged into a single political party named “Janata Party” and sealed in effect the fate of regional politics, the Congress party on the other hand become able to end its isolation in the hill areas by putting a better performance.\(^\text{75}\) The extension of the regional political parties of the hill areas to the overall state politics by giving bonds with the coastal elements through the Janata Party, and the acceptance of the Congress Party by the hill voters negating the anti-coastal sentiments can be explained on the basis of politicization of society, especially SC/STs into the electoral politics.\(^\text{76}\)

During this period, the Janata Party brought the western feudal leadership and the coastal leaders as to a single platform. The Congress background of the coastal and the feudal/tribal background of upland leaders in the Janata Party started a new chemistry of assimilation at the top. While the politics of anti-


\(^{76}\) Mohapatra, ‘Election and Everyday Politics’.
Congressism occasioned their convergence, the compulsions of electoral mathematics cemented their association. Although, Janata Party started in anti-Congressism and represented the coalitional interests of the hill and coastal areas on the one hand, and the other, the Janata Party also helped Congress to get an advantage in Western regions politics. Because, there was an alternative to the Janata Party, the Congress got immediate acceptance in the hill areas as a party of opposition.

The Janata Party (later on JD) with its ‘Biju-Centric’ politics to a great extent enabled itself to remove the main contradiction and fight Congress on issued based politics. The grand personality of Biju Patnaik guided the policies, programmes and aspirations of the party in complete indifference to the party’s central leadership. The leaders pursuing sub-regional sentiments were marginalized under the shadows of Biju advocacy of great Oriya Nationalism.

The Janata Dal on a new political party emerged in October 1988 with the merger of the Janata party, Lok Dal (B), Jana Morcha and the Congress (S). Like the Congress party, the Janata Dal is an umbrella organisation. It contained many anti-Congress groups. It tries to project itself as the National alternative and took the initiative in forming a broad All India coalition of opposition party under the umbrella of the National Front.

With the establishment of the Janata Dal at the National level, the State unit of janata Dal formed before the Lok Sabha election in 1989. The Janata Party,

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78 Main contradiction: Perceived difference of interests of hill and coastal leadership.

79 Biju Patnaik denied to Implement Mandal Commission Report and went against the wish of National Leadership.

80 Oriya Nationalism: Biju Patnaik emphasised the great past of Orrisa and glory of Kalinga to invoke popular sentiment and unity among the people to fight central apathy and impoverishment of Orissa.
which later in 1989 came to be known as Janata Dal in Orissa, gave an effective electoral challenge to the Congress under the leadership of Biju Patnaik. The Janata Dal unit of Orissa under Biju Patnaik always functioned independently. It remained same as the confines of all India party primarily in order to pave the way for the regional leader to enter the National political arena.\textsuperscript{81} The State units of Janata Dal quickly disintegrate after the death of Biju Patnaik and gave way to formation of a state level party under the leadership of Naveen Patnaik who promptly aligned the BJP.\textsuperscript{82} The decision was based on two considerations. One was logic of anti-Congress, which drove Naveen Patnaik towards the BJP. The other was an aspiration to play a role at National Politics.\textsuperscript{83} With the demise of the United Front a regional party could gain access to the National Centre of Power only by aligning with the BJP. Naveen Patnaik has this consolidation of anti-Congress politics in the state where he is himself (his party) as the main nucleus of anti-Congressism.

It would be not worthy to mention the party building and working of non-Congress politics are characterised by alliances and coalitions. The Janata Party later Janata Dal is a case in point. The alliances and coalitions government between of BJD – BJP has been the future course of discourse. No doubt till date these alliances and coalition has been work a very significant role in Orissa party-building and non-Congress politics.

IV. \textbf{Regionalisation of National Party}

The party system in India has been undergoing many transformations since the late 1980s. If the Congress was the source of emergence of many parties in the

\textsuperscript{81} Suhas Palshikar, 'Regional Party and Democracy', p. 319.
\textsuperscript{82} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{83} \textit{ibid.}
1950s and the 1960s, the Janata family of parties has produced quite a few political formations, both at the all-India level and at the state level. In a sense, the decline of the Congress has facilitated many of these changes. The decline of the Congress made the party system more competitive and 'open'. Issues and interests that were obscured by the presence of a catchall party could come up and take shape as significant forces in the politics of the country. The absence of a strong national party also facilitated the rise of political forces with limited – often state level existence. These state / regional parties under mined the base of the Congress and led to the formation of regioned based multi party system in post mid 90s. This is due to the process of regionalisation.

Thus the period between 1980 and 1996 broadly characterised this kind of politics. In the 1980s, two types of two-party systems emerged, those in which regional parties formed the principal opposition to the Congress, and those in which the principal, opposition was from all India parties. This is true in case of Janata Party then Janata Dal and now BJD in Orissa politics. Since the 1970s the party system in Orissa has undergone some significant changes, which have

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84 The Genisis of Janata Dal: Break-ups and reunion.


86 ibid.


resulted into two-party competition in the state. The BJD-BJP alliance operates broady within this framework.

With the demise of National Front Government at the national level has been ushered in a process of change in the Indian party system. In a time span of about one and half years, the Janata Dal, which had been active as a nodal point of non-Congress, non BJP political forces in the country, disintegrated to the point of near extinction.\textsuperscript{89} Due mainly to mutually contradictory personal ambitions of some of its leaders, the Janata Dal underwent split into a number of smaller parties like Rastriya Janata Dal, Samata Party, Lok Shakti, and Biju Janata Dal.\textsuperscript{90} These fragments of Janata Dal were individually limited within different states, like the RJD and the Samata Party in Bihar or the BJD in Orissa. It was, thus, a case of regionalisation of a National party. The all-India opposition parties like Janata Dal had space to build regional bases in states where Congress support began to decline rapidly. The Orissa unit of Janata- Dal (former BJD) is a particular case. Before analysing the how does BJP alliance has helped to consolidate BJD support base, it would be better to pinpoint the rise of BJP in Orissa Politics.

V. \textbf{Political alliance of BJD-BJP in Orissa: A New Political Arithmatic}

The BJP’s rise to prominence has been the defining features of Orissa politics over the past one decade. The Congress as the ‘Natural’ party of governance, lost to this new political machines, these, of course, the Biju Janata Dal(BJD),and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has made itself a third political forces in Orissa and has dug in itself deeply in eight Lok Sabha constituencies in

\textsuperscript{89} Bidyut Chakraborty, ‘The Third Front or the Third Force: A political maze or an ideological oasis?’ In Ajay Kumar Mehra and D. D. Khanna ed., \textit{political parties and party systems}, New Delhi, Sage publication, 2003, pp. 244-269.

\textsuperscript{90} \textit{The Hindustan Times}, dt. 29-10-03.
north-western Orissa, mainly in the tribal areas bordering Bihar and Madhya Pradesh in 1996 General Election. The rise of BJP in Orissa politics has put forth many questions to be explained whether Congress (1) or Janata Dal fail to play their role to politicised the Tribal Community effectively? Why did Bharatiya Janata Party occupy the opposition space in Orissa politics? Why did the tribals vote for BJP as compared to Congress (1) or JD (latter BJD) in early phase of 1990s? All these questions are to be taking account for the understanding of rise and growth of BJD in Orissa politics of BJP.

To explain BJP’s rise in Orissa politics in terms of its All India growth is inadequate, because the issue of communalism has not been part of Orissa politics. “Religion is also not a major factor in Orissa elections as religious minorities do not have a decisive say in any constituency. Besides the BJP could not create a religious frenzy in Orissa during the hey day of its Ram Mandir Movements as the people were not amenable to its communal ideology. Again one should not underestimate the fact that the BJP has succeeded in wooing the tribals of hill areas, known for their loyalism and continuity.”

It has no Temple or Masjid issue to whip up passions on religious lines. The only reason that it has the loss of faith of the electorate rate in both the Congress and JD, particularly their leaders. To a larger extent the growth of the BJP in Orissa can be traced to the growing operations of the RSS and VHP during the last two decades in various parts of the Orissa. For instance, the Sangh Parivar’s activities in the field of education and culture in the tribal areas provided a fertile ground for the mobilisation and growth

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91 See for more discussion
there. The spread of Hindutva ideology certainly not enough. The larger ideology of the BJP had to be combined with the imperatives of the local issues. The party, for example, took up the cause of the backwardness of western Orissa that struck a sympathetic chord with the people of Tribal region and on the other hand with negligible presence of coastal Orissa as a remarkable political discourse. As a party, claimed to be representing upper caste it was hard to predict the performance in the upland politics.

The rise of BJP in Orissa is one of the significant features of the elections in the 1990s, and arguably this is the turning point in the history of party politics in the state. As a matter fact the increasing influence of the BJP prompted the leadership to form an electoral alliance with it. Soon after the split of the Janata Dal after the death of Biju Patnaik it appeared as if its base was being rapidly taken over by the BJP. The opposite side the BJP promptly to made an all out effort to occupy the position vacated by the Congress due to absence of coherent and cohesive political force, and it decided in 1998 to project itself as a party which was capable of providing a strong, clean and stable government. That is why, the BJP, in its resolution at Bhubaneswar announced, ‘No other formation comes anywhere near our invincible position’, claiming that the BJP is the only party which will occupy the political space being rapidly vacated by the other parties.

94 In the 1996 Lok Sabha Poll, the share of votes of the BJP were increase drastically in comparison with it share of 8 percent in the 1991 elections. The Janata Dal as won 4 seats were reduced drastically comparison with 16 seats in 1991 elections. The real gainer from the space, evolved by the Janata Dal by BJP. For instance, in the 1996 parliamentary election the BJP came second in three constituencies and in four came close to being the second party. In the election to Zilla Parishad in 1997 the influence of the BJP increased further. For details, See Bishnu Mohapatra, Complex scene, Frontline, July 12, 1996.
95 Ramashray Ray, op cit., pp. 243-44.
96 The Hindustan Times (New Delhi), December 7, 1997
97 The Hindustan Times (New Delhi), December 22, 1997.
In the second place, the "untouchable politics" at the national level to prevent it (BJP) from ever becoming a dominant force in Indian Politics in post 1996 General Elections. The 1998 election offered it the opportunity to break away from 'Political Untouchability', and the BJP, therefore, set upon forgoing alliance with regional parties. This is true in case of BJD-BJP alliance on the eve of 1998 General Elections. The Orissa unit of Janata Dal, while breaking away from the parent party i.e. Janata Dal, has made clear that its effort to align with BJP are motivated by the fact that there already exists a political environment in the state of Orissa. The later is not contender for power and the real force to fight against is the Congress. This is a phenomenon, which is already occurring at different states. For instance, Ms. Mamta Banerjee's Trinamul Congress sees the CPI-M as its opponent and hence would not mind joining hands with the BJP, which is not a force in West Bengal. The Akali Dal in Punjab faces threat from the Congress and hence would align with the BJP. Mr. Hegde would do the same in Karnataka. The late N. T. Rama Rao fought the election on this logic by reserving a couple of seats for the BJP in Andhra Pradesh. These developments have contributed to the alliance with BJP. Added to these developments, the problem of leadership and the changing structure of socio-economic and political environment at state level, reveals an impetus for regional parties and trying to articulate regional sentiment provide an anti-Congress alternative in the Orissa party politics. Therefore, the BJD-BJP alliance was due to the national as well the state political development.

**Emergence of Naveen Patnaik as the dominant Political Leader**

Naveen Patnaik's BJD took its shape in 1998. The process of growth however, would begin gradually. Naveen Patnaik entered into politics in the mid
1997 by default, in power by caliber as political observer\textsuperscript{98} claimed about him. Brahmin, Karan, Backward class, Muslims, Dalits did form his social constituency in Hinjili. In order to understand the BJD in Orissa, a short biographical sketch and social perspective of Naveen Patnaik has been made.

Naveen Patanaik, son of Late Biju Patnaik made a default entry into politics. Never groomed to succeed his illustrious father, he was inducted into politics after his father’s untimely death. He was chosen to represent the Orissa in Janata Dal (now BJD) in the by election from Aska in 1997. Though a novice, he has shown political skills and proved his mettle by winning elections repeatedly in 1998, 1999 and again in 2004 Lok Sabha and the Assembly election held in 2000 and 2004.

The BJD, of which Naveen Patnaik is the president, was founded by a group of leaders of the erstwhile Janata Dal after the death of Biju Patnaik in April 1997. It would be appropriate to analyse the feedback, which has created the platform to form a political party.

By late 1997 Srikant Jena and his group had developed difference with Naveen Patnaik. This group subsequently became very critical about the alliance with BJP. The issues of the alliance with a communal (as Jena & groups observe) party gradually widened the differences between Srikant Jena and N. Patnaik and later it took the form of serious conflict.\textsuperscript{99} The former group did stick to the secular ideology to undertake radical measures for change and the later group under the leadership of Naveen Patnaik on Dec 15, 1997 with as many as 29 out of 34 Dal M.L.A.s forming a separate party called Biju Janata Dal headed by Naveen Patnaik.

\textsuperscript{98} Interview with Rabi Das, Political analyst and editor of the Oriya daily Pryavekhyak by Researcher at Parya Vekhyak office, Bhubaneswar, 20.3.03.
\textsuperscript{99} \textit{The Indian Express} (Bhubaneswar), 7 December 1997.
Patnaik. In turn, the BJP facilitated the formation of the BJD as the condition that the new regional outfit would be its ally in Orissa. The BJD’s survival has been as dramatic as its birth, with Naveen Patnaik facing several revolts against his leadership. Each time he has won against his factional and dissident leaders from his party. With the massive electoral victory into its fourth major general elections since 1998 Naveen Patnaik finally emerged as the undisputed leader of the state and his group thereafter became dominant in the legislative as well as in the party.101

BJD under Naveen Patnaik

The BJD, the end product of a long phase of atomization of the Janata movement, is today the major regional party in Orissa, under the leadership of Naveen Patnaik. According to Damodor Rout,102 a senior leader of the BJD says that the BJD is a regional party as well as regional force. He said “Regional parties will play a pivotal role in national politics. Its will continue to exist as long as the so-called National parties do not respond to regional aspiration”. Rout describes the “Chemistry” of the social base of the BJD as a middle class and the backward classes in the rural areas. While this remains the social base of the BJD, its electoral base is wider, he argues, and draws upon the traditional anti-Congress that the Janata movement has built in the state since the 1980s under the Leadership of Late Biju Patnaik.

Under the leadership of Biju Patnaik the Janata phenomenon has taken new shape in its early phase to mid 1990s. It is Naveen Patnaik a political leader of

100 The Frontline, vol. 21, no. 8, April 10-23, 2004, p.23.
102 Interview with Dr. Damdor Rout, General Secretary of BJD, BJD office, Bhubaneswar, 20 March 2003.
different mould, who consolidated and extended the base of the party particularly for post-Mid 1990s. The Janata Dal in Orissa under the leadership of Biju Patnaik was come to power as an anti-Congress (I) wave. During it-tenure in office in the state (1990-1995) he introduced legislation as that of 27% reservation for OBC,\(^{103}\) which increased its popular appeal and helped it to consolidate its support base among the other backward classes (OBCs). This social base still persists in the Biju Janata Dal political platform.

In the end of nineties Patnaik exercised immense hold in the BJD. As president of BJD he had already increased the strength of his followers and supporters in the BJD. The entrants of 2000 assembly mostly owed their positions to him. Even a few members from the Jena group and other opposition parties were attracted by his popularity and joined the Patnaik group after election. His position in the government further helped him to consolidate his position. Having filed to counter his growing influence Jena and his supporters found themselves gradually losing power within the party. This is true in case of Bijay Mohapatra a president of OGP, factional group of BJD in post 2004 assembly elections.

In 2000 assembly elections the BJD has emerged a single largest party with a few number of seats short to form the government. Later the party was formed with BJP as a pre-poll alliance partner in the state. However, despite the electoral success, Naveen Patnaik has faced internal dissensions within the party. Each time he has won by using suspension and outster as his main weapon on political analyst observe but it is not true. Each time Patnaik did a series of calculations, which seems that he succeeded to make the right move in the chessboard of

103 Biju Patnaik's initial opposition to the Mandal Commission Recommendation lost him some OBC support. But in December 1995 of his ministry (1990-95) he implemented the mandal recommendation for 27 percent reservation in government jobs for the OBCs.
politics. It would be appropriate to analyses the various political developments with in BJD inter party democracy since Naveen Patnaik became the president of BJD.

The controversial Rajya Sabha election of 2002 and the subsequent rift in the BJD were the notable development at this time. This is the period when the new alignments group started taking shape against the Naveen Patnaik president of BJD.

Patnaik’s decision to nominate A.U. Singh Deo, Vice President of BJD for the Rajya Sabha election who is later defeated in the Rajya Sabha polls which was opposed by Bijay Mohapatra a Chairman of PAC (then), who is backed by the Union Minister of State for Coal Dillip Ray who is not the official nominee. This is the first instance where we can say Naveen Patnaik averts a split in his party but dissidents are still in an aggressive mood and determined to fight Naveen Patnaik with submissive attitude to the BJP. He has handled as a mature politician in a democratic manner.

The next leadership challenge faced by Naveen Patnaik was due to the formation of a political forum, the Orissa Gana Parishad (OGP) under the Leadership of Bijay Mohapatra. The objective of a launching forum as occupying the space of the political opposition and gave an effective opposition to Congress which can look forward for a good future. The political forum later became a party demise in 2004 assembly election when Bijay Mohapatra, a president of Orissa Gana Parishad lost to BJD in Patkura assembly segments. In the above it

105 Bijay Mohapatra was defeated in Patkara assembly constituency by Atul Sarbasachi. Nayak, a BJD candidate. As far as 8 members are contested in 2004 assembly election with alliance with Congress party. 2 seats won by Orissa Gana Parishad from Balasore, Kendrapara.
is the inter-party democracy, which were resolved by Naveen Patnaik in a democratic manner.

It would be appropriate to analyse some political issues under the leadership of Naveen Patnaik. The most important issue and challenge during his government is the demand for the Kosala state during his government.

The Demand for a Kosala state\(^{106}\) has gained momentum over 15 years with the formation of the Kosala Ekta Manch and Kosala Party. Their demand was based on regional disparities and coastal Orissa. According to Premlal Dubey, President of Kosala Vikas Party (KVP) the demand of Kosala state is due to negligence of western Orissa development. He feels that the government’s main concern is with the coastal regions which the western region has been largely-neglected. Many regional organisation (western region), such as the Western Orissa Jana Jagaran Parishad (WOJP), the Western Orissa Liberation Front (WOLF) – argued that this backward region are victim of acute poverty and deprivation which are major features of life in western Orissa. Under leadership of Patnaik, the demand for ‘special category status’\(^{107}\) to Orissa as a continuous demand to solved the problem raised by many organisations in western Orissa. The separate Kosala State was do not supported by the BJP’s Central & State leadership. The BJD rejects the idea of a separate state as demanded by Kosala Gana-Parishad (KGP) and Kosala Ekta Manch (KEM). It is true that Kosala movement if intensified few months before the 2004 assembly elections. But later

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\(^{106}\) The Demand for a separate kosala state under the leadership of Balagopal Mishra, a BJP legislator from Bolangir district, which would cover 16 of 30 districts of Orissa. They are : Bolangir, Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, Deogarh, Baragarh, Sonepur, Boudh, Koraput, Sundergarh, Nuapara and Kalahandi, Malkangiri, Rayagada, Anugul, Nawarangpur and Kandhamala have a population of 143 lakh as compared to total Orissa population of 367 lakh. Indiainfo.com (2000), 'A new state out of Orissa in 5 years? available at http://newsarchives, Indiainfo.com/2000/10/06/Kosala 6.html.

\(^{107}\) Interview with Naveen Patnaik, Chief Minister of Orissa (2000 to till date). BJD office, Bhubaneswar, dt. 13.03.03.
the movement declined because of no specific ideological commitment between the leader and lacking of awareness of people of these regions. According to Naveen Patnaik “The Demand of Kosala raj is based on narrow considerations of different culture (Katki-non-Kataki) and languages (Sambalpuri-non-Sambalpuri) of the people of the area which would be divisions within Orissa”. He added that some narrow outlook of some organisation (without naming), which would make division in the state in anti-social, anti-reform and backward looking. They were forgetting the existing reality politico-economic compulsions in Orissa might not help in its plan for the creation of separate state in near future.

Another important political issue was the maintaining of inter-party democracy within the party. As we know under Naveen Patanaik, the BJD got a new shape in Orissa party politics since the party formation in 1998. In spite of Patnaik’s dominance in the BJD some members under the changing circumstances started drifting away from him before election in 2004 assembly and Lok Sabha elections. They became vocal in their criticism of the Patnaik group. Ramakrishna Patnaik, Sarat kar are a stunch supporter of Naveen Patnaik immediately sent a strong ordent of BJD. Each time Naveen Patnaik has won by expelling those who are doing anti-party activities. The situation now was heading towards a new direction of leadership under him for some time in Biju Janata Dal in Orissa Party politics.

By the end of the 1990s increasing polarisation between the two major political parties – Congress and BJP both at the centre and in a number of states is leaving less room for smaller parties. This is seen in Orissa as well. Looking at the BJD position in party politics it may appears that the gradual growth of the party which may be consider it as the real alternative to the Congress party. It is true that
the JD (later BJD) was squeezed between the BJP and the Congress in the last phase of Biju Patnaik. As earlier mentioned that one of reasons for formation of BJD is to ally with BJP. This is only Naveen Patnaik who promptly allianced with the BJP. How does one characterise the alliance between the two? It is quite plausible to argue that political alliances with BJP bring a regional party like BJD to the forefront of politics in Orissa. It is also expected that as the dominant partner in the alliance the BJD will shape the political scene in the state in the coming year.

**Political Alliances between BJD-BJP: will this Coalition Survive?**

It is perhaps too early to answer the question. Looking at the positive and negative sides of coalition, which exists since 1998 could be to give clear picture of future political map between the two partners. In other words, the conflict of interests between the two parties cannot be ignored while assuring the efficacy of the BJD-BJP alliance. The main reasons for the efficacy of BJD-BJP alliance were:

Both the parties, given an opportunity would like to rule the state on their own. It is the compulsion of capturing power that has brought them together. As a cadre based party the BJP has a distinct advantage vis-à-vis the BJD mobilising its support base for its agenda. It is true that the common minimum programme, anti-Congressism and similar classes/groups cannot cement the relationship between BJD & BJP for a long. Despite this intense conflict between two parties we must look at the future course of political discourse.

There are many questions which arise in the mind of Researcher with this coalition survive? Which of the two parties will gain the most out of the partnership? It is perhaps difficult and too early to answer these questions.
However, the Researcher was looking at the bright sides of its survival. Both the parties have realised the competition and bargaining power politics; and maintaining their support base as anti-Congress politics both at state as well as national level; and changing political realignment among the parties which exists in last general election in the state might be take a both of them for long.

Looking at the bi-nodal politics, which exists, in the political landscape of Orissa may give relative survival of political alliance between the BJD-BJP. It would be appropriate to note here that politics in India is undergoing a dramatic metamorphosis due to the democratization of marginalized and under privileged groups through active participation. This is also true in case of Orissa. But this process is relatively mute as compared with other states. At the same time, old political equations are rapidly changing, shaking the party system from its roots. Not surprisingly, a new era of coalition politics has begun. What appears to be crucial in this process is not the ‘ideological purity’ but the exigency of the situation’. Parties with a clearly defined ideology seem inclined to form a coalition with a vowed object of challenging, it is not resisting, a worse political ‘foe’, and significantly in this configuration is the formidable presence of the regional parties which hold on occasions, the key to the very survival of the coalition. If we look at the social support and the electoral verdict it might be BJD, which has gained

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more in long term of political discourse. As many political analysts claimed that in a long run, the BJP might undermine the position of BJD as the locus of anti-Congress politics in Orissa.

In order to appreciate the type of social base, which the BJD enjoys, it may be repeated that the party (BJD) win shapes the political scene in the state in the coming year. The BJD is stronger in the largest and the most developed region of coastal Orissa and draws support from all sections of society in a way typical of regional parties.

Summing up:

During the demise of charismatic leader Late Biju Patnaik, there are two political developments existing within the inter party democracy. One is the Leadership crisis and other one is factional conflicts. In this situation of an open division in the Janata Dal the state unit would not be in a position to function effective opposition and rather play an effective role on a state party to consolidate anti-Congress politics in alliance with BJP. Naveen Patnaik, proclaiming himself as the true inheritor of Biju’s Janata Dal, he took the lead in forming the Biju Janata Dal, a regional party, with most of the Janata Dal Legislature party behind him while only 5 of them choose to stay with the parent property. His ideal was the TDP (Telugu Desam Party), which had proved to be a great success as a regional party in Andhra Pradesh (excluding 2004 elections).

The emergence of the Biju Janata Dal on the political scene of Orissa was an accidental phenomenon. It was an offshoot of anti-Congress movement both at the state as well as National level. The main reasons that went into making of this new party were growth in the wake of gradual decline of the Congress party dominance since 1990s; relative decline of Janata Dal in post 1996 General
Elections; Regionalisation of National Party and BJP emergence as a third political force in Orissa party politics and the success of many regional parties in different part of India as alliance with the BJP in strengthening the anti-Congress vote in one platform. The presence of a weak or muted mobilisation can account for the specificity of the politics in Orissa. As far as the BJD is concerned on the grounds of its social base it is a part of middle caste and has a marginal social base among SCs and STs communities in Orissa. In the ideological orientation both the Congress party and the Janata Dal are both centrist. But looking at the BJD’s emphasis it is on the ‘development’ argument as well as the main nucleus of anti-Congressism. This is true in case of Trinamol Congress and TDP in West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh respectively. No wonder all these parties use the language of development to mobilise and get support from the people of their respective states.

The personality factor has dominated in Orissa politics. This is true in case of Naveen Patnaik as a writer turned politician who has succeeded in building his own cause being a decisive factor. The ambitious Naveen Patnaik has realised very early the tenuous nature of his support base which is same under his predecessor party i.e. Janata Dal among the middle class communities at the core and appealing to dalit, minorities and women.