

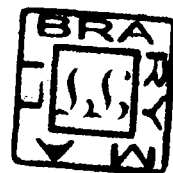


FACTIONAL POLITICS IN ORISSA SINCE 1975

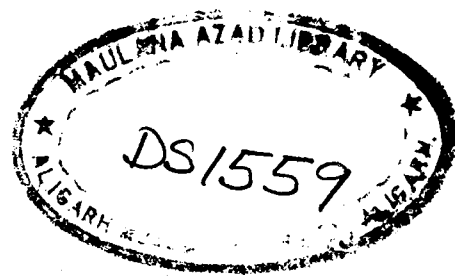
Dissertation Submitted for the Degree of
Master of Philosophy
IN
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BY
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"Factional Politics in Orissa Since 1975" under
my supervision. The work is original.*

*I feel that the dissertation is suitable
for submission for the degree of Master of
Philosophy in Political Science.*

A.F. Usmani

(A.F. USMANI)

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J. Ahemmed

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PREFACE

Political Science as a Social Science deals with man in relation to politics. The prime concern of a student of politics must be to make an objective analysis of political process with a sense of pragmatism. In this context reference may be made to factional politics which have posed serious threat to the normal functioning of the political systems, especially in the developing societies like ours. I have tried in the present study, to probe into the process of political factionalism in Orissa from 1975 to 1985.

The work is spread over six chapters. Chapter I deals with an analysis of Orissa in its historical, economic, geographical, cultural and political setting. The next Chapter deals with the hypothetical framework of factional politics in general.

The third Chapter is devoted to a brief account of factionalism in the state covering a period of fifty-five years (from 1928 to 1975). In Chapter IV analysis of factionalism during Mrs. Satpathy's Ministry has been made in detail. Factional conflicts during Janata period has been discussed and probed in Chapter V.

The sixth Chapter deals with the return of the Congress system and factionalism during J.B. Patnaik's Ministry. This Chapter is followed by the concluding chapter which includes findings and observations in relation to our hypotheses in the Chapter II.

I. Ahmed
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INTRODUCTION

ORRISA: THE STATE AND ITS PEOPLE

In the hoary past, the tiny Kingdom of Orissa had dazzled the entire sub-continent of Indian peninsula by her bold and commendable action, thereby permanently quenching the thirst of sanguinary chanda-Asoka and turning him into a venerate Dharma-Asoka. It is a land whose tapestic culture and history mirrors a "living testimony to the speculative daring and artistic sensibility of a race that once knew how to live, love and worship and create in heroic proportions"¹. Its dance - the Oddissi - a reflection of the aesthetic connoisseurship of the race has been woven around the sculptures seen in its temples where; as Tagore has succinctly and aptly remarked, "the language of man is defeated by the language of stone."²

GEOGRAPHICAL AND ECOLOGICAL PROFILE

Orissa is situated in the north-eastern section of the Indian peninsula. A maritime state with a coast line of 482 kilometres along the Bay of Bengal, its precise location is between 17° - 50' and 22° - 34' of North Latitude and between 81° - 27' and 89° - 99' east of Greenwich. It

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1. Khanna, H.R.(Justice): "Report of the Commission of Enquiry", 1967 Government of Orissa (Home Deptt. 1969) p - 810.
 2. Rabindranath Tagore's comment when he visited Konark temple. Quoted in the Khanna Commission Report, op.cit.p-807.

is bounded in the north by Bihar, in the west by Madhya Pradesh and in the south by Andhra Pradesh. The area of the state is 155, 707 square kilometres which is slightly bigger than the total area of England and Wales put together. Areawise it occupies tenth position among Indian states. 67.461 square kilometres of the state is covered by forests.

MORPHOLOGY

The physical features of Orissa are widely different from one part of the state to another. There are alluvial plains, wide tracts of arid hills and dense and extensive forests. Broadly speaking, the state may be divided into four regions (1) Northern plateau (2) The Eastern Ghats, (3) The Central tracts and (4) The Coastal plains. The territories comprising Orissa come under the last two divisions. The Coastal division covers the districts of Balasore, Cuttack, Ganjam and Puri plains which come under the category of Eastern Ghats and Coastal regions in the All India Physical declaration. The rest of the state may be described as Orissa inland division, coming under the category of peninsular hills and plateau regions.

The Coastal plains are the gift of six major rivers, which by bringing silt from their catchments, have reclaimed this area from the depth of the Bay of Bengal. The

rivers are the Mahanadi, the Subarnarekha, the Brahmani, the Baitarani and the Rushikulya. Thus the Coastal plains can be termed as the land of "six deltas".³

The mountainous region of Orissa covers about three-fourth of the area of the state. This region is a part of Indian peninsula. Here deep and broad valleys are cut by the Mahanadi, Baitarani and Brahmani rivers. The subdued plateaus reveal all the peculiarities of peninsular India.⁴ They are almost flat and monotony of arography is interrupted by the river valleys. These features are commonly met within the upper Baitarani and the Sabari basin of the Keonjhar and Koraphut districts respectively.

CLIMATE:

Orissa enjoys a typical climate. Although rainfall is wide spread during the monsoons, some local variations are experienced due to orography. Rainfall in Orissa varies from a maximum of 191.2 cms. at Bhadrak to only 107.5 cms. at Krishna Prasad in Puri district.⁵ In general the Eastern Ghats, due to the high relief receive more rainfall than the Coastal plains. The late monsoon are primarily cyclonic and bring in enough rain to northern Orissa during the months of September and October.

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3. Sinha, B.N: The land and the People of Orissa: Indian History Congress Souvenir 1977. Bhubaneswar. (P.G. Deptt. of Vani Vihar. Utkal University).
 4. Economic Survy of Orissa 1976.
 5. Tripathy, p.: Orissa Review 1976.

The mean annual temperature is influenced by its latitude, elevation and proximately to sea. The temperature rises from 20.5°C in the Coastal plains to 21.4°C in the inland areas. Almost the whole of Orissa, with some minor exceptions, has got a mean annual temperature of 21.4°C to 26.6°C.⁶

DEMOGRAPHY

The population of Orissa, as per 1981 census, is 262,72,054, ranking eleventh in India. 47.34% of the States populations live in the four Coastal districts which constitute nearly about 25% of the total area of the State, while the hill regions, which covers 75% of the area have got only 52.66% of its population. The density of population is 169 per sq. km. as compared to the all India average of 221. The average density of the population of the Coastal district and hill regions is 317 and 143 respectively.

Linguistically, Orissa is largely a homogeneous state in the sense that nearly 84.11 percent of its inhabitant speak Oriya. The second largest linguistic minority - Telgus constitute only 2.28% followed by a host of tribal languages. Urdu is spoken by 1.31% while only 0.88% speak Hindi.

6. Tripathy, p.: ibid.

Orissa has the distinction of having the highest percentage of Hindus in its population (96.25%), followed by Christians (1.73%) and Muslims (1.49). In spite of such a preponderance of Hindus, communalism is virtually non-existent in the state and the state has an impressive track-record of communal harmony.

The literacy rate in Orissa is only 34.22% while the national literacy rate is 37.38%.⁷ This low literacy rate can be explained in terms of high SC and ST population constituting 38.20% of the population.

Orissa is a state of villages. Nearly 88.18% of the population live in 50,806 villages and 11.02 percent in 108 towns and four cities of Cuttack, Raurkela, Bhubaneswar and Barhampur.⁸ The low urbanisation is due to the fact that the land is predominantly agricultural. Nearly 77.4% of the people are engaged in agriculture. Most of them are marginal farmers or landless labour.

Orissa is a sad symbol of man's ingratitude to nature. She presents paradox in plenty. It is very poor in industrial front.

7. Census of India 1981; Orissa. Series 16, provisional population table.

8. Jena. B.B. opcit. p-11.

CULTURE

Orissa is a confluence of two streams of Indian culture. Orissa's language, culture, art and architecture bears incredible marks of Aryavarta (Northern) and Dakshinatya (Southern) civilisations.

Orissa has a very rich and glorious history. The people of Kalinga (as they were known 2000 years ago) were seafaring, making it a prosperous maritime state. Till the early part of 19th Century, the Oriya seamen kept the maritime flag of the country flying in the waters of South East Asia but the Portuguese pirates and enterprising British dealt a death blow to the prosperous maritime trade of Orissa. In this connection, it may be mentioned that ancient Orissa had an overseas empire.

Through centuries Orissa has been a land of peace and religion that have got strong appeal for the Oriya people, who are simple Unsophisticated and well-intentioned. Its culture is catholic in out look. The Tantra culture of Kamroop, the Dravidian culture of Gandwara and the Aryan culture of the South have all gone to evolve the cult of Jagannath, the Cult of love and tolerance.

Orissa culture is often termed as Jagannath culture. Oriyas have great faith in and respect for Lord Jagannath, who

controls and regulates every sphere of life of Orissa - political, economic, social and spiritual. The religion and diety are the product of the mental and spiritual development of the people. All religious, social customs and cultural activities in Orissa veer around Jagannath. He is sovereign, fathere, redeemer of the poor and cosmo-politan. In short, Orissa Culture means Jagannath and the vice versa.

The Sun-God temple at Konark - known as the Black Pagoda - is seven hundred years old and is being regarded by experts (in architect) as one of the World-class classic in perfect architectural design. Rabindranath Tagore so commented when he visited it: Konarks is "a living testimony to the speculative daring and artistic sensibility of a race that once knew how to live, love and worship and create in heroic proportions". Where one gets feeling that "the language of man is defeated by the language of stone". All through the ages Orissa has retained a cultural identity much more prominent than her political identity, while developing itself within the characteristics syndromes of Indian civilization, the Oriyan culture nevertheless acquired some distinctive traits of its own to enrich that multifaced Indian panorama."¹⁰

9. Jena. B.B. - ibid. p-199

10. Banerjee, R.D: History of Orissa - Vol - VII (Calcutta-1931). Quoted by Nidakantha Das in the Memorandum to Orissa Committee - 1931.

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

With a recorded history of nearly 3000 years, Orissa civilization is one of the oldest in India. If we peep into early history of Orissa, we find that the name of Kalinga is found in Brahmana Mahabharat composed in circa 1100 B.C. refers to Kalinga, Odra, and Utkal. Thus Orissa, comprising Utkal, Odra and Kalinga, enjoys long enduring existence, since the Puranic ages and it is one of the citadels of ancient Indian civilization.

The East India Company came to Orissa 47 years after its conquest of Bengal in 1757. On 14, October 1803 Cuttack fell to British army. Balasore and Sambalpur fell to the British on 2nd January 1804. After their final defeat at Wargaon the Bhonslas of Nagpur signed the treaty of Deogaon in 1804 with the British and ceded the province of Cuttack including the port and district of Balasore to the East India Company. Orissa from then onwards was administered from Calcutta in Bengal.

GROWTH OF POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

In Orissa, as elsewhere in 19th Century India, social movements as well as the growth of national consciousness were facilitated mainly due to two factors; first, the rise of a middle-class intelligentsia due to the spread of the Western education and secondly, the growth of mass-media and

communication system like press railways and postal services etc.¹¹ The establishment of the English medium Schools, Colleges and Universities led to the spread of Western ideas and slowly but steadily a new class intelligentsia with novel hopes and aspirations appeared on the Indian scene. The growth of railways, postal services and the press, both native and English provided the required media for giving necessary fillip to the growth of national consciousness. The report of the Inspectors of Schools, South-West Bengal for the year 1957-58 gave the following picture. There were three Zilla Schools in the head quarters of three districts: Balasore, Cuttack and Puri. There was an Angovernacular school at Bhadrak. Besides, there were only 16 vernacular schools in the whole province.¹² Soon after the famine in 1867, the Govt. declared that the Cuttack Zilla School would be raised to the status of a 'High School' (Inter College) affiliated to the Calcutta University, and on 20th January 1868, the High School classes were started only with six students.¹³

11. Patra. K.M. : 'Orissa under the British' History Congress Souvenir 1977.

12. Op.cit. p 321-22.

13. Utkal Dipika - Cuttack 25 Jan 1868 (Oriya).

FIRST UNITED MOVE

In April 1903 the Ganjam National Conference was held under the auspices of Ganjam Jatiya Samity. In this Conference the Oriyas of Ganjam led by the Raja of Khallikote expressed their desire for a united Orissa. Madhusudan Das, who was present in the Conference, proposed to convene, another Conference on a much bigger scale to press the demand. Thus Utkal Sammilani or "Utkal Conference" was born in December 1903. "The moment was unique in that it embraced all - the high and the low, the literate and the illiterate, the official and the non-official - all were in it," wrote L.M. Patnaik.¹⁴ The Sammilani was ushered into existence by Madhusudan Das, the "Grand Old man of Orissa", and provided a platform where the then princes like Krushna Chandra Gajapati Dev, the Maharaja of Paralakhemundi, Sreeram Chandra Bhanja Deo, the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj and many other aristocrats of the time rubbed shoulders with the commoners for the realization of their demand - perhaps the earliest demand in India for a homogenous linguistic state.

The first flicker of hope for the fulfillment of "this deepest dream and the most potent aspirations of the

14. Patnaik L.M.: Resurrected Orissa. Cuttack 1941. Quoted by Ghosh. S. in Orissa in Turmoil - Bhubaneswar 1979. p - 12.

Oriyas" as Mayadhar Mansingh has put it,¹⁵ spurred activities in various fields. Gopabandhu Das, who in the words of Subhas Chandra Bose, was the "father of national movement in Orissa", founded at Sakhigopal, near Puri, the Satyabadi open air school, on the model of Deccan Education Society of Poona. With the help of his able associates like Nilakantha Das, Godavarish Misra, Lingaraj Misra, Krupasindh Misra and Harihar Das, all leading intellectuals and educationists of the time, he brought about a cultural renaissance in Orissa. Gopabandhu who is hailed as "Utkalamani" (Gem of Utkal), swayed the masses as never before by his poetry, prose and oration and his passionate feelings poured out through the columns of weekly the SAMAJ and the monthly SATYABADI he had founded.

The school was, for about a decade, the main cultural centre of Orissa. The process, however, was set by their forebearers like Gourishankar Roy in whose journal, Utkal Dipika, modern Oriya prose began to take shape. Fakir Mohan Senapati, Radhanath Roy and Madhusudan Rao - the great trio who along with Gangadhar Meher gave a distinct character to the modern Oriya language and literature drawing on the rich literary heritage left by Sarla Das, Balaram Das, Jagannath Das, Upendra Bhanja, Dinakrushna Das,

15. Quoted in Ghosh. S. op.cit. p-15.

Abhimanyu Samanta Singhar, Gopat Krushna Patnaik, Brajanath Badajena, Bhim Bhoi, and a host of others.¹⁶

IN THE MAINSTREAM

Soon with the growing Congress influence and rising spirit of new nationalism the old structure of the Utkal Union Conference Callapsed. Hopefully, and happily, the horizon was widened. The struggle for India's freedom naturally found its echo in Orissa. Hundreds of students including Harekrushna Mahatab, Nabakrushna Chaudhury and Jadumoni Mangaraj left schools and colleges without completing their educaitional career.

Gopabandhu Das resigned his membership of Bihar - Orissa Legislative Council and gave up his legal practice. It is at this time that Gopabandhu Chudhury, then a Deputy Collector, resigned his job and plunged headlong into the freedom struggle.

Cogress Committees were formed in each district. Swaraj Ashram at Cuttack and Alakashram at Jagatsingpur became training camps for congress workers. Gopabandhu invited Gandhiji in the Nagpur session to visit Orissa Gandhiji had accepted the invitation and come to Cuttack on March 23, 1921. From Cuttack he trekked to Puri and Barhampur.

16. Op.cit. p-15.

It was during this tour that Gandhiji exclaimed", Orissa is the epitome of India's poverty"¹⁷ and took vow that he would not wear a full dhoti till every Indian had got food and clothing for himself, a decision which earned him the sobriquet of 'Naked Fakir'. By June 1921 about 40,000 people had enrolled themselves as Congress workers.

It is exactly during this time that the clarion call of non-cooperation movement swept the country. C. Rajapalchari and Motilal Nehru visited Orissa in the August 1921. The message of the Congress spread like a wild fire. Two tenants were killed in the police firing. Gopabandhu Das and Bhagirathi Mohapatra were arrested on May 31, 1922. While referring to this unprecedented success of the movement Subahas Chandra Bose recalled once: "This was something new in Orissa and the result of Gopabandhu's Courage and sacrifice was to install into the heart of young Oriyas a spirit of sacrifice and fearlessness."

However, the move for a separate Orissa did not died down in the nascent nationalistic fever. Ways back in the Nagpur Session of 1920, Gopabandhu Das successfully persuaded Gandhiji and the Congress to accept the formation of linguistic provinces as the congress programme of reorganisation and a resolution was passed to that effect.¹⁸

17. Quoted in Ghosh. S. - ibid - p-20

18. Ghosh. S. op.cit.

It was in the Round Table Conference, in London in January 16th, 1931, the question was again raised and Maharaja of Parlakhemundi, K.C.G. Narayan Dev, presented the case of Oriyas forcefully. It was recognised that a "separate province of Orissa would perhaps be the most homogeneous province in the whole of British India both racially and linguistically, the communal difficulty is practically non-existent and its claim appears to have the support and sympathy of all parties in India.

The White Paper was prepared by the India office on the basis of RTC recommendations. The Joint Parliamentary Committee which has also gone into the matter enlarged the boundaries by including Jeypore and Parlakhemundi: Parliament accepted the recommendations of the JPC. Orissa was given the independent administrative status as a province under the section 289(i)(b) of the Government of India Act, 1935. The draft order in the Council constituting Orissa was placed before the Parliament on January 21, 1936 under the title "The Government of India Order (constitution of Orissa) 1936". Thereafter, in February both the Houses of the Parliament presented an address to His Majesty praying that an order be made. Accordingly, His Majesty passed the Order on March 3, 1936 which came into effect on 1st April, 1936.¹⁹

19. Ibid. p-24.

The province as constituted consisted of six districts of Cuttack, Puri, Balasore, Sambalpur, Ganjam and Koraput. The province comprised an area of 32,695 square miles with a population of 80,43,681. Sir John Austen Hubback was sworn in as the First Governor of the Province. The formal inauguration was held on April 1, 1936, at a meeting at Ravenshaw College, Cuttack amidst unprecedented jubilation of the people.²⁰

POLITICAL AWAKENING IN PRINCELY STATES

In Orissa, political awakening in the princely states took place as early as in 1931 in consequence of political agitation going on in the British Districts adjoining the states, in the form of 'Garjat Praja Sammilani'. It remained almost dormant till 1936 when Congress took up the causes of the people of the states. In 1937, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramaya, one of the organising members of All India States Peoples Standing Committee, paid a visit to Orissa, and presided over a meeting of Praja Sammilan which was thereafter named as Orissa State Peoples Conference.²¹ The meeting was held at Cuttack on 24 June, 1937. An Enquiry Committee consisting of Dr. H.K. Mahatab, Lal Mohan Patnaik and Late Balwant Rai Mehta (a member of Servants of the People's Society) was

20. Ibid - p-24.

21. Orissa Review 1952-53 - Orissa on 1937. Ed. Chapter II.

constituted in the second meeting of the Conference held in June 1938. This Committee conducted its inquiry from June 1938 to August 1938. The Committee examined 2000 witnesses in several sittings and published its Report in two volumes in 1939.²² This reports deals exhaustively with the maladministration then prevailing in the States and contains the evidences given by the people.

In 1938, the people of some States of Madhya Pradesh and Bindhyachal carried on mass agitation against maladministration in these states. This news served as a great feeder to the prominent workers of Orissa States People Conference. Political units known as 'Praja Mandals' were formed in many States. Each Praja Mandal prepared its 'demand sheets' containing the demands of the people like civil liberty, responsible government, rationalisation of assessment of the revenue and abolition of all illegal taxes, and that of contributions like forced labour etc.²³ Thus the freedom fight started in the states of Orissa in an organised manner in the year 1938.

In the same year, the people of Nilgiri, Dhenkanal, Talcher, Ranapur, Gangpur under the leadership of the Prajamandal organised agitations which shook the confidence of

22. Pradhan, P.M. "Liberation Movement in Orissa Review 1950-51. p-32.

23. Patnaik, L.M. Op.cit. p-8.

the ruler. They roused from their age-long slumber and could not be put down by force. They (Princes) had to concede to the demands of the people, although partially. So temporary peace was established.

The out break of the Second World War strengthened the hands of the rulers by Defence of India Rules. Almost all leaders of Prajamandals in the States were arrested. This resulted in the temporary lull in the movement.

Then came the historic "Quit India" Movement of 1942 which caused an un-precedented upsurge in the country. People in some districts like Talcher and Dhenkanal rose on rebellion against the State authorities. The movement assumed such proportion that the authorities has to resort to arial bombing and machine gunning. It was ruthlessly supporessed.

After India gained independence in 1947, the fudatory States assumed the attitude of independent soverign states. Their rulers neither granted popular government nor were willing to merge their States with Orissa. The merging of the fudatory States with Orissa has been advocated in the report of the Congress States Enquiry Committee in 1929 and was no doubt in the minds of some of those who led the pre-

war Prajamandal agitations.²⁴ But at that time the issue seemed remote; it took second place to independence.

By 1946, with the arrival of the Cabinet Mission, it was clear that the British were about to leave and that this was the time to stake out claims in the area of power left vacant.²⁵ Dr. Mahatab often pleaded for the merger with the Congress leaders. The matter was discussed with Gandhiji on 5th April 1946 and on 6th April, with the Cabinet Mission. At last Nehru on 10th June agreed in principle with Dr. Mahatab that small states particularly Orissa States should be amalgamated with the province.²⁶

On the other hand, the people were determined to wrest power by force if the Chief did not grant them freedom voluntarily. This preparation on the part of the people created panic among the Rulling Chiefs who approached Mahatma Gandhi for solution.²⁷ Gandhiji referred the matter to Sardar Patel who visited Orissa on 13th December, 1947, and asked the leaders of Prajamandals to remain restrained. He advised the rulers of the States to merge their States with Orissa and warned them about what would happen to them if

24. Mohanty, K.C., Why Darkness in Orissa? (Orissare Andhara Muluka Kahinki?) Oriya Booklet, 1946.

25. Ibid.

26. Jena. B.B. "Orissa. People, Culture and Polity, (New Delhi 1980) p-274.

27. Pradhan. P.M. opcit. p-32.

they fail to accept his advice. The Chiefs gave in. Twenty five states including Saraikala and Khaswan, signed the Instrument of Accession on the 14th December 1947, and merged with Orissa on January 1, 1948. Only Mayurbhanj did not joined the other states. However, it signed latter on and merged the same day i.e. 1st January 1948, with Orissa. Saraikala and Kharswan were transferred to Bihar in May 1948. As a result of the merger seven new districts were created totaling the number of districts to thirteen. These new districts are Bolangir, Phulbari, Dhenkanal, Kalahandi, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Sundargarh.

Dr. Mahatab played a key role in the merger along with the 'Iron-man of India'. To quote Patel himself "I am happy that I helped him (Mehtab) to realise what was not only his dream but the ambition of all Oriyas. I am happier still that, it was that backward province, as they call it, which led the way for the rest of the India to follow."²⁸

28. Quted in Jena. B.B. op.cit. p-276.

TABLE 1: GEOGRAPHIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF ORISSA
(DISTRICT WISE)

S. No.	Name of the District	Area in Sq.km.	Population	Density per sq.km.	Literacy Rate in %
1		2	3	4	5
	COASTAL DIST.	40,191	12,435,257	317	40.91
1.	Cuttack	11,142	4,617,748	414	45.33
2.	Puri	10,182	2,911,720	286	45.71
3.	Balasore	6,311	3,253,090	357	41.84
4.	Ganjam	12,556	2,652,699	211	30.78
	HILL DIST.	115,516	13,836,801	143	27.75
5.	Mayurbhanj	10,418	1,576,987	151	25.47
6.	Keonjhar	8,303	1,109,746	134	29.89
7.	Dhenkanal	10,827	1,576,569	146	36.70
8.	Phulbani	11,094	712,772	64	26.61
9.	Bolangir	8,913	1,452,675	163	25.78
10.	Kalahandi	11,772	1,329,780	113	19.35
11.	Sambalpur	17,516	2,274,125	130	34.02
12.	Sundargarh	9,712	1,336,818	138	36.17
13.	Koraput	26,961	2,467,329	92	15.83
	TOTAL:	1,55,707	26,272,058	169	34.21

SOURCE: Census of India, 1981. Series 16, ORISSA (Provisional).

CHAPTER - II

FACTIONALISM

HYPOTHETICAL FRAME WORK

Factionalism is an intra-group phenomenon. Faction refers to a "group with an articulated set of goals, operating within a larger organisation, but not created by or with approval of the parent body".¹ In the context of political parties, factionalism refers to the conflict and competition between or among several groups within the party to capture its organisation or acquire a dominant position. The objective of such conflict is to hold power. One faction seeks to over-power the other (or others) so that it can dominate party and thereby capture the power at that stratum of the ladder where it is located. For example, a faction of the Congress party at the state level would seek to capture power at the state level while a congress faction at the district level would aim at dominating the district unit of the party e.g. Zilla Parishad, co-operative Banks and district level trade unions affiliated to the congress Party.

Factionalism runs vertically either way. It may spread from the top down to the lowest level in the ladder and vice versa. A factional conflict at the state level

1. Wainer, M; Party Politics in India; The Development of a Muti-Party System (Princeton, New Jersey, 1957) p-237.

will have its impact felt in the lower level of the party organisation as the state level leaders would tend to mobilize resources to win over the lower units at districts and village levels. Similarly factionalism may also run in the reverse order. A factional showdown at the district level may spread to the higher level as the rival leaders at the districts will seek the support of the state-level leaders. But if there is already a division in the party at the higher level, the lower level split of the party would mesh in with the higher ups. Thus, Dr. Mohapatra points out that "it would be easier for the leaders of village factions to gain the alliance of higher level leaders who are already placed in charge of rival factions".² It is thus apparent that factionalism would tend to run faster from the top to the bottom than the other way round.

Factionalism has also the inclination to spill over horizontally. As the conflicts intensify, each leader, in order to tilt balance of power in favour of his faction tries to dominate the sister organisations of the party at the same level.³ For instance, a factional conflict in the congress party at state level would engulf the state unit

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2. Mohapatra, J.K, Factional Politics in India (Chugh Publications Allahabad 1985) p-3.
 3. Carras, MarryC, The Dynamics of Indian Political Factions: A Study of District Councils in the State of Maharashtra (Cambridge University Press, Blackie & Son, Bombay 1972)p-185.

of the INTUC, the party's Lawyers' Association and the women front which are important pressure groups within the party.

According to Brass⁴ the main sources of factionalism in a political party are power and prestige. No doubt, the most powerful contributing factor for factionalism is the lust of power. Factional leaders consolidate their hold over the party organisations by organising powerful groups inside the organisations for the sole purpose of gaining the absolute control over party mechanism and hence over the government which then will be helpful in carving out a place in the sun. Social prestige also plays an important role in the formation of a faction as Brass cites the examples of Raja of Mankapur, who rebelled against the Congress of Gonda district because it gave Assembly ticket to a person who was his old rival. However, it is the lust of power which is the prime source of factionalism, for power is the currency which can be used for gaining many material benefits both to the faction leader as well as his followers.

Defferring Brass who espouses the predominantly personal nature of factionalism Mary C. Carras concludes that

4. Brass, Paul.R., *Factional Politics in an Indian State. The Congress Party in UP* (Oxford University Press, Bombay 1966) p-238.

sometimes ideology do also play a role in the intensification of factionalism. "Ideological preferences", she points out, "do play a role in political behaviour in so far as they are interlinked with considerations of personal interest". To Carras, however, it is the economic interest which bears more weight to the ideology as a determinant of factionalism. "Ideology derives its salience when it is buttressed by economic interests."⁵

Heterogeneity and incongruity is another major cause of factionalism in the political parties. The "allurement of power" compels people from different socio-economic groups with different (and even often with diametrically opposite) interest to join the dominant political party of the time with the hope of gratifying their private interests. Thus, in the process, the party is reduced to a 'conflict system' in which different groups compete and fight among themselves not only to dominate the party but also to perpetuate their dominance by killing each other. Ray aptly remarks: "... if the freedom struggle was a powerful integrative force within the Congress, the lure of power generated several equally powerful divisive forces which led to the generation and accentuation of factionalism."⁶

5. Carras, Marry. C., op. cit. p-185

6. Ray, R., "Intra-party conflict in the Bihar Congress" in Asian Survey, Berkeley, Vol. VI, 1966 p-707.

Factionalism tends to flourish more in a single party dominant system. The members of a political party would tend to be bound by strong ties of unity and solidarity in the face of creditable opposition. But their sense of one-ness would slacken and they would be inclined to indulge in political wrangling in the absence of any formidable challenge from outside. This situation further accentuates when the party does not adopt or follow a well-defined ideology on permanent basis. Thus "an organisation here a political party - has the propensity to crack within if there is no apparent threat from outside. Absence of external stress tends to induce internal strain in a party. This would largely explain why of all the parties in India the Congress has been most affected by factionalism."⁷ Thus we can hypothesize that the more predominant a political party is in a particular state, the more it would be affected by factionalism and vice-versa.

Factionalism transcends important socio-political categories.⁸ Of course, at the lower rung of the politics i.e. village etc., factional alliances are made on primordial lines like cast, and community, but at the higher level

7. Mohapatra, J.K., Op.cit. p-8.

8. Sisson, Richard, The Congress Party in Rajasthan, Political Integration and Institution-Building in an Indian State (University of California Press, Delhi 1972).

in the state factions are multi-caste in composition and represent different regions (coastal and hilly regions in Orissa), language groups etc.

In factionalism the leader and the followers have a cyclic relation i.e. give-and-take relation between them. It is a reciprocal relationship, both need each other and neither can thrive at the expense of other. Thus Sisson observes: "Factional coalitions are contracts of mutual benefits and can be broken by either supporter or supported when benefit appears more attractive through an alternative alignment, although these coalitions have usually existed over a fairly long period of time with marginal adjustments"⁹. Similarly in the words of Brass "... a factional leader is not expected to be an ascetic. The leader is expected to try to advance himself in every way possible. The only condition which his supporters will insist upon is that when he advances himself, the leader must take his followers with him."¹⁰

Emergence of new and fresh leaders is facilitated by factionalism. In the event of circulation of elites (through factional fights) the winner-side's not-so-important

9. Ibid. p-314

10. Brass, Raul R., Op.cit. p-237

or political light-weights get chance to advance themselves and turn political heavy-weights. Thus it is seen that many such pigmies of the winner faction zoomed into prominent positions where as their counterparts of the loser faction stripped of their power. In addition to this it would be worth noticing that, inspite of defeat, some youth activists of loser side also manage to gain prominence and recognition by dint of their organisational and fighting capabilities demonstrated during the factional combat.

Factionalism is propitious for new political recruitments. Many new recruitments are made by both sides in order to enlarge their support base and increase their control over the party organisation. Brass also corroborates this fact. Many new elements are not only recruited but also get hard and rigorous training under the able guidance of the faction leader during the intense factional ordeal. This training proves valuable for future roles in more important political arenas. Thus factionalism acts as a catalyst for vigorous political mobilization and also broadens the bases of political mobilization and of political participation.¹¹

Factionalism intensifies political communication.

11. Ibid. p-237

The fighting factions, in their frantic bid to win, try to convince and cajole high commands as well as the lateral groups, thereby causing a political information-flow in a big way and also in a criss-cross fashion.

In developing countries there is a very close link between the media of mass communication and the factionalism. Factional leaders often deliberately make friendship with communication elites, especially proprietors, editors and columnists of newspapers for the sake of propaganda in their favour. Sometimes they themselves launch a newspaper/weekly for the purpose. At the time of factional fight not only his newspaper will support his stand, but also vehemently criticise the views and positions of the rival faction and its leader. When the leaders of both the factions have direct or indirect linkage with newspapers there ensures a headon clash between the two newspapers supporting the rival factions.¹²

It is a well known fact that factionalism is an intra-party phenomenon and factional leaders, in their aim to rule the roost, are expected to be within the limits of party discipline and should not waver even to the slightest extent

12. Jena, B.B. and Barala, J.K., "Oriya Dailies as an Agent of Political Communication in the Assembly Election, 1977 in Indian Journal of Politics (Aligarh) vol.xv No.3 1981. p-69-85

in their royalty to the party. But time without numbers, it has been observed that the warring sides fails to oblige by the rules of the game and behave as if they belong to two hostile political parties. No wonders the vanquished side seldom takes defeat in its own stride. Either side put so much stake in the outcome that whoever loses tends to prefer to leave the party. This suggest that factional interest is accorded primacy over the party's interest.¹³

Factionalism in Orissa - as else where in India largely centres around a leader whose personal political ambition count exclusively in forming an alliance or organising a split or defection. Each group in the party will have a leader, the chief Minister or his trusted lieutenant from the ruling faction and the aspirant for the post in the rival faction. These groups are often called by the name of their leader, e.g. Biju Patnaik Group or the Mahtab group etc.

Factions in political parties in Orissa never have had a monolithic unity. Through the gradual accretion of supporters, most of whom switch allegiances for personal reasons, the minority or the dissident faction some times becomes a majority or dominant faction. Often it so happens

13. Brass, Paul. R., op.cit. p-234.

that if these peripheral members do not get benefits as expected by them, or if the leader, after being installed in Gaddi, ignores their claim, they either defect to the rival faction or out of frustration form a new faction which is out to pull their former leader down to dust. Exactly this happened in the late fifties in Orissa, when Mahtab succeeded and installed himself as the Chief Minister, his trusted lieutenants - Biju Patnaik, Biren Mitra and Nilamani Rautray who were instrumental in bringing a downfall of N.K. Choudhry ministry, hoped for a birth in the Ministry. But they were side tracked by their boss. Thus, with the fraustrated hopes and blasted emotions three youth leaders formed a faction and decided to teach and Mahtab a lesson. And it was due to their anti-Mahtab activities that Dr. Mahtab had to resign and quit the party a few years latter.

A quantum rise in the factionalism haralds with it the possibility of cross- party alliances (in most cases the tacit agreement). For instance; during the first ministry of Sri J.B. Patnaik, the minority faction in the state Congress (I), led by K.C. Lenka, seemed to work hand in glove with the collaboration of the apposition Janta Party to the detriments of the rulling faction led by the C.M. During the first half of 1960s a defeated Dr. Mahtab faction tried clandestinely with the help P.S.P. and Swatantra to dethrown

the Biju faction, but Dr. Mahtab's bid ended in a failure which resulted in his desertion of the party and the formation of the Jana Congression 1966.

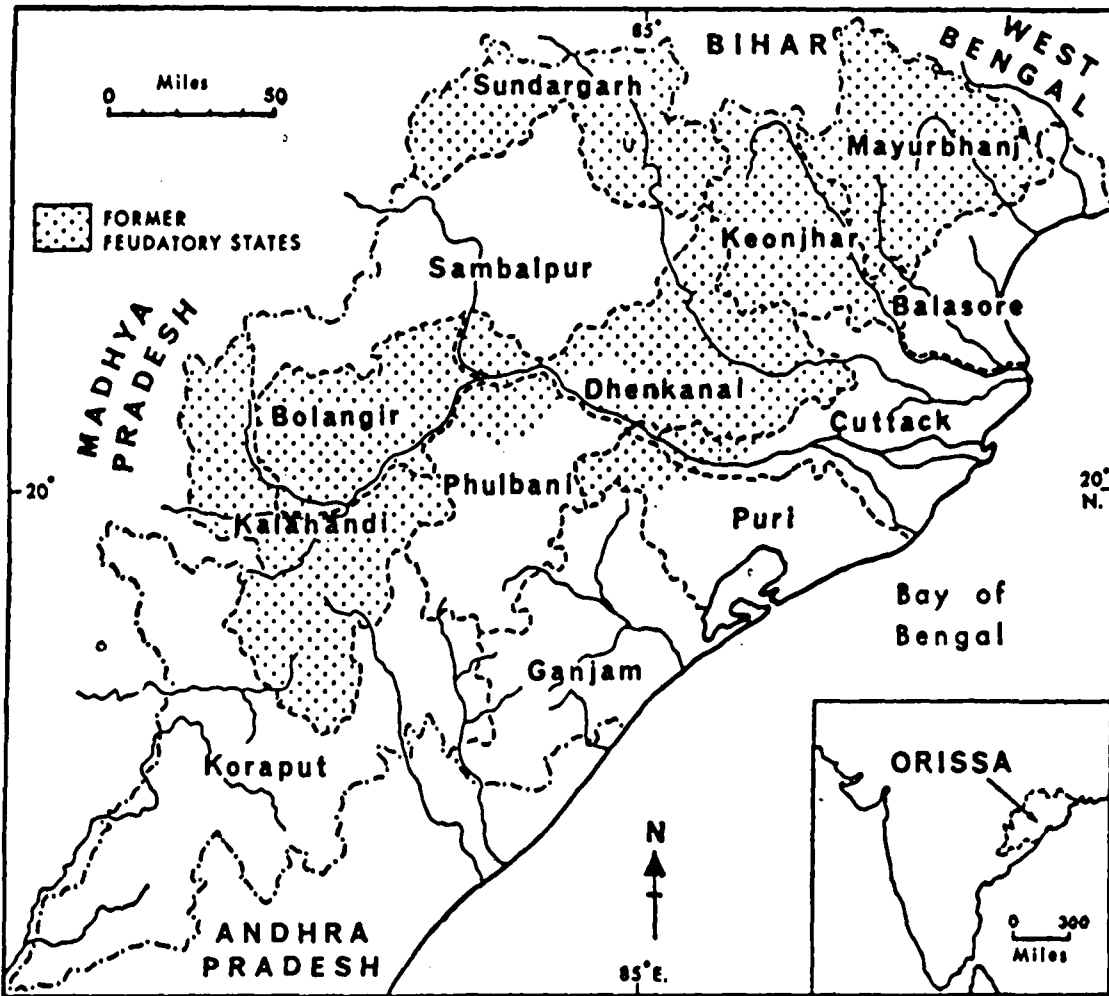
With the help of above discussion, we can construct a typology of the factional dynamics, First is the 'one-dominant faction system', in which factions other than the dominant one are ~~signies~~ ~~pure and simple~~ and act as pawns in the chess board of state politics. The second one is the 'bi-factional' system whose main characteristics is the existence of more or less two equally powerful factions vying for the power often each at the cost of other. It corresponds exactly to the "two-person zero-sum game" of the Games Theory where the loss of one is the gain of the adversary. The third type of factional conflict is the 'amorphous' factional system. In such a system there exist more than two factions and none is decisively powerful to the others. Such a system is characterised by a high degree of fluidity and uncertainly. Actors often changes side there by altering the balance frequently. We may call it a "n-person zero-sum game" in the language of the Games theory.

To sum up the above discussion it can be said that factionalism is an intra-group phenomana whose main causes are the personal or caste prestige, economic benefits personal gain and views. And beneth the exterior of all these

factors lies a strong and passionate desire to acquire power. It has a multi-dimensional flow i.e. horizontal, vertical and in criss-cross fashions (even sometimes transcending the boundary of the party itself). Factionalism increases political recruitment and encourages youth leadership. It also to some extent trains or socializes the new recruits. Factional groups have a reciprocal relationship between its leaders and the lead. Factional conflicts have its marked impact felt in the fabric of the polity e.g. to administration, the media and the minds of the voters.

METHODOLOGY

As regards the methodology I have pursued a combine of descriptive (Historical) and empirical method. One source of data collection is the published materials in the library a vital portion of which is the newspaper clippings. The second is the official publications of the state government such as election statistics, official reports etc. And the last but not the least, is the data gathered on the basis of personal interview and questionnaire which cover a cross-section of the political as well as non-political community ranging from the Ex. Chief Ministers, Office bearers of the party and other highly respected political observers and political scientists down to the ordinary party workers and voters in the villages.



MAP 1. THE DISTRICTS OF ORISSA

CHAPTER - III
FACTIONALISM - A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The genesis of factionalism in Orissa dates back to the fagend of twenties of the present country. On 17th of June, 1928 Gopabandhu Das - known as Utkalamani (Gem of Utkal) - passed away, ushering in the era of bitter factionalism. There is no denying the fact that there was no group conflict during or under the leadership of Gopabandhu Das in the Congress party, but the gorup rivalry mostly lay hidden under the surface due to the leadership of his towering personality. Inspite of his having affinity with Styabadi group, the other side did not dare defy him. But no sooner did he pass away than the group conflicts in the party became public and neither side was prepared to yield to the other. Consequently, two factions emerged on the scene. One was known as Satyabadi group having its main bastion at Puri and the other anti-Satyabadi group was based in Cuttack. The dichotomy was clearly on caste lines. Whereas the Satyabadi group was deminated by Brahmins the Karans and Kshyatriyas (including Khandayats) dominated the other anti-Satyabadi group. Thus Lalmohan Patnaik wrote:

".....Misunderstanding grew. Puri being the stronghold of Brahmins and Cuttack of Karans their differences quitely ushered in the noxious Brahman - Karan problem. Gradually, it develop into a merace to the society."

Similarly, Sunit Gosh writes, "In passing, casteism in Orissa politics was manifest in the twenties when a group of non-Brahmin Congress workers mainly belonging to Cuttack and Balasore districts had set up a new political centre named Alakashram at Jagatsinghpur in Cuttack district which was a rival to the Satyabadi group of Brahmin politicians led by Gopabandhu Das."¹ Thus, casteism was a powerful feature of factionalism even during the pre-independence days. Among the important members of Satyabadi group were Nilakntha Das, Godavarish Mishra, Lingaraj Mishra, Krupasi-ndhu Mishra, and Harihar Das all of whom were close colleagues of the Gopabandhu Das. The other group included Dr. H.K. Mahtab, N.K. Chaudhury, Nityananda Kanungo, Jadumani Mangaraj, and Raja Krishna Bose who belong to Balasore and Cuttack districts.²

As a result of the birth of the new province of Orissa on 1st April 1936, Orissa politics gained its separate identity. The Orissa Congress decided to participate in the election to the state Assembly as per AICC decision. But the very thought of contesting against the combined strength of resourceful Zamindars sent shivers down the

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1. Ghosh, S: Orissa in Turmoil: Bookland International, Bhubneshwar 1979 p-21-22.
 2. Interview with an old social worker, D. Ali on 26.12.88 at Jagatsinghpur.

spine of many congressmen. At this critical juncture the young Kishan Sabha leaders came to the rescue of the Congress and its leader Nilakantha Das. Nabakrishna Chaudhry a leader of Kishan Sabha - was appointed by Nilakntha Das as the General Secretary of the UPCC. With an election manifesto that promised radical agrarian reforms Das, depending entirely on the Kishan Sabha leaders, steered the party through the first battle of ballot. In the election, out of 56 seats to which election were held, Congress contested for the 37 seats and captured 36 polling nearly 80% of the valid votes. National Party of Rajas and Zamindars secured only 13 seats and others secured seven.³

NILKANTHA DAS Vs DR. MAHTAB

The Congress Party suffered from factionalism before the election process had started. The bitterness between Nilakantha Das, the then UPCC Chief, and Dr. Mahtab came to the surface when the latter was not granted a meeting with Pandit Nehru during his election tour to Orissa. On the other hand Das faction poisoned the ears of Nehru against Dr. Mahtab. However, after the elections, the issue of UPCC Presidentship came to the fore. This provided a golden opportunity to Dr. Mahtab and his group to fish in the trouble

3. Mohapatra, J.K; Factional Politics in India, Allahabad 1985. p-107

waters. Dr. Mahtab came up in a big way to challenge the leadership of Das. The first trial of strength was over PCC election in 1937. Mahtab contested Das for the office of the President and defeated him by 13-12 votes. The outcome was rather curious. Eye-brows were raised even in the Congress Working Committee. To quote Nityananda Kanungo, "there were doubts in the Working Committee that we had manaeuvered to capture the PCC."⁴

The defeat of Nilakantha Das was symbolic because it marks his steady decline in the politics of the State. Soon after that both groups started for a head-on clash in the contest for the legislative party leadership. The supporters of Das were confident that in the final contest their leader will win. But they were all unaware of the sly foxes gnawing at the very root of their leader - Nilakantha Das. It so happened that on the day of election of the leader, the C.L.P. had two sessions - one in the morning and the other in the evening. The followers of Das taken over, so to say, by a supreme complacence about the prospect of their leader, did not care to attend the mornning session whereas the supporters of Mahtab had subtly adopted a party constitution that debarred a non-member of

4. Ghosh, S. Op.cit. p-33

the Assembly from contesting the CLP leadership - an obvious move to eliminate Das from the leadership race. The evening meeting ended in a pandemonium as Das's supporters came to know about the cunning move of Dr. Mahtab. However, Mahtab won his first round in the chequered politics of Orissa.⁵

Then began the hectic activities and dialogues among different factions for an amicable settlement of the issue. Finally, Biswanath Das was elected as the leader of the CLP. In fact, he enjoyed the unique position of being backed and owned by both groups - each seeking to serve its own political ends through him. But Biswanath Das was too clever and intelligent for them.⁶

But Biswanath Das, a pragmatic politician, once chosen as leader of the CLP, preferred to lend his ears more to Dr. Mahtab. There arose a difference of opinion on the formation of Ministry which was solved after the intervention of the High Command. The conflict between Mahtab and Nilakantha Das again came to light before the UPCC President election of 1938. Dr. Mahtab was again elected as the UPCC Chief, much to the chagrin of the rival faction. The anti-ministerial group, headed by Nilakantha Das, tried to dis-

5. Ibid. p-34

6. Ibid. p-34

credit the ministry and brought allegation against it before the Congress High Command. Other notable leaders of this faction were Godabarish Mishra and Dibakar Patnaik. These charges were examined by Sardar Patel and Rajendra Prasad and found to be baseless upon which Sardar Patel issued severe strictures to the Das-Mishra faction. But the yawning gap between the two factions gradually came to a breaking point.

However, on the advice of the Congress Parliamentary Board Dr. Mahtab resigned from the Presidentship of the UPCC and was succeeded by Gopabandhu Choudhury on April 1938. In 1939 January election of the UPCC Nilakantha Das and Godavarish Mishra were elected as President and Secretary. Factional fight between the Ministry of Biswanath Das supported by Dr. Mahtab and N.K. Chaudhury and organisational wing of the party (UPCC) under Nilakantha Das and Godavarish Mishra was intensified. Pandit Nilakantha Das publicly criticised the Ministry and tried to pass resolution to that effect in the UPCC was restrained by the CWC which directed that the UPCC could not take any action against the Legislature party without its permission.

Meanwhile in 1940 UPCC election Dr. Mahtab's faction gained control with the election of R.K. Biswasray who defeated Godavarish Mishra in the contest. From 1940 to 1945 the

UPCC with Biswasray as president and Nabakrushna Choudhury as General Secretary, was practically under the thumb of Dr. Mahtab.⁷ And this was the Waterloo of Das - Mishra faction after which both decided to leave the Congress and joined hands with the oposition parties of Orissa.

DWIBEDY - MAHTAB ESTRANGEMENT

Political forces in Orissa forged fresh alliances in forties, and important outcome of which was the emergence of Mahtab as the undiputed leader of the Congress party. Nabakrishna Chaudhury dissociated himself from the Congress Socialist Party and came closer to Mahtab. 1946 provincial Assembly elections were hovering in the offing. Mahtab was the obvious choice to take the lead. In March 1946, election to Orissa Provincial Assembly was held. Interestingly, former Chief Minister, Biswanath Das could not take part in the election as he was disqualified for six years from contesting any election.

The Congress, under the stewardship of Dr. Mahtab, own 47 seats, followed by Muslim League, communist and independents with 41 and 4 seats respectively. In the afternoon of 23 April, 1946, the new Ministry headed by Dr. Mahtab was sworn in.⁸

7. Ibid. p-38

8. Mahtab, H.K., Sadhanara Pathe, (Oria Autobiography) Cuttack - 1972, p-255.

The tussle between the 'Young Turks', headed by S.N. Dwivedy and the ruling group headed by Mahtab intensified over the election of the PPC President in 1946. The former set up Malati Chaudhury, wife of Naba Krushna Chaudhury, against Biswanath Das who was the candidate of the ruling group. Malati Chaudhury defeated Das. As the President she appointed Dwivedy as the General Secretary of the Congress. Mahtab was special invitee to the PCC, and Das was also persuaded to be a member of the Committee.⁹

Mahtab Ministry was afflicted by internal dissensions in the Congress Party of Orissa on some general issues like the Construction of Hirakund Dam and the site for new capital etc. In July 1948 N.K. Chaudhury and R.K. Biswas resigned from the Ministry. Naba Krushna Chaudhury had a personal bereavement in the suicide of his only son and retired to his Angul Ashram. Intrigues started in the party to oust Mahtab. Key personality in the move were Gopabandhu Chaudhury and Nityananda Kanungo. To break this combine Mahtab tactfully included Kanungo in his Cabinet. It was at this time that Dr. Mahtab was offered a berth in the Central Cabinet after a visit of Prime Minister, Nehru. He saw in this offer a great opportunity to get out of the State where the situation, notwithstanding all his good work, had become

9. Ghosh, S. op.cit. p-55

uncomfortable for him. Summing up the entire development Mahtab himself says:

"When I found the intrigues too hot for me. I managed to get away to the Centre and placed Naba Babu, who was all along a progressive, to fight the battle. I thought it was a great manoeuvre".¹⁰

Dr. Mahtab succeeded in installing his man as the Chief Minister inspite of sharp reaction of the Legislature party against Chaudhury who had virtually retired from politics since July '48 and was working as a teacher at Angul. Thus on 12 May 1950 Chaudhury became the Chief Minister. It seems that Dr. Mahtab sponsored the candidature of N.K. Chaudhury with the intension of keeping his hold over Orissa Congress from Delhi. He had hoped that Chaudhury would be loyal to him. Moreover, Dr. Mahtab might have also calculated that by making Chaudhury the C.M. he could carry favour with Nehru who had a special liking for Chaudhury since the Congress Socialist Party days.¹¹

THE FIRST GENERAL ELECTION and The Politics of Remote Control:

After two years of assuming the Chief Ministership Chaudhury led his party in the first General Election of 1952

10. Ibid. p-77

11. Mohapatra, J.K. op.cit. p-112.

For the Congress, the result of the Assembly election was dissappointing. Out of 140 seats, Congress was able to win only 67 seats. However, Congress with the support of independents (who were chiefly former Congressmen) formed the Ministry as a reluctant N.K. Chaudhury at the helm of affairs. One of the factors attributed to this Congress reversal is said to be the fielding of many 'parallel' candidates by factional leaders of the party.¹²

TABLE - I

1952 ELECTION TO THE ORISSA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Name of the Party	SEATS			Valid rate in %age
	Contested	Won	%of Seats	
1	2	3	4	5
Congress	130	67	48%	39%
Socialist	78	10	7%	11%
Ganatantra Parishad	58	31	22%	20%
Communists	33	7	5%	5%
Independents & others	218	25	100%	100%
TOTAL	517	140	100%	100%

Mahtab's tenure in the Central Cabinet was brief.

12. Pradhan, P.M., Muktipathe Sainika (Oriya) Vol. II (Cuttack, 1973), p-81.

Nehru was not satisfied with his performance. So he was dropped when a new cabinet was formed after 1952 election. In 1955 he was appointed as Governor of Bombay. Being stripped of power Mahtab found himself in the lurch. Living in distant Bombay Mahtab grew apprehensive as Chaudhury stabilized his position in the organisation. In this he saw the prospect of his political future in Orissa being hermetically sealed. For him Bombay Governorship was like political exile which actually it was. He was, therefore, intently looking for the first opportunity to return to his home state. Mahtab wanted Chaudhury to work as his dummy. But Chaudhury soon developed a personality of his own and on many matters refused to toe Mahtab's line.

Once Dr. Mahtab made up his mind to come back to Orissa, he began preparing ground for the same. His strategy was to create instability in the state and tension for the Chief Minister. In the personal column of his Oriya daily (The Parjatantra) Mahtab continued to criticize Chaudhury Ministry and also started a tirade against the Ministry from public platform in the State forgetting that he was a Governor.¹³ A few young political figures in the party, like Biju Patnaik, Biran Mitra, Nilamony Rautray,

13. Gosh, S., op.cit. p-77

Dinabandhu Sahu, Banamali Patnaik came in handy. They were eager to serve the purpose of Mahtab as they had their own political axe to grind. All this he did to oust Nabakrushna Chaudhury.

As an administrator Naba Babu was not a great success, at least he did not compare well with Mahtab on this score. Administrative deficiencies during his tenure gave ample opportunity to his opponents to raise a storm against him. The failure of the Govt. in handling the devastations caused by the unprecedented flood in Mahanadi in 1955, and the agitations against the decision of the Govt. of India on the state reorganisation commission's recommendations giving Saraikala and Kharswan to state of Bihar provided issues on which Mahtab constantly pinned down the Chaudhury Ministry.

Faced with crises like the disputed economy of the state, bitter disaffection of the people and above all divided party loyalty, Chaudhury decided to resign from the Chief Ministership. In spite of Nehru's whole hearted support, essentially a retiring type Chaudhury intimated the High Command about his firm decision to resign and retire from the politics.

The High Command started searching for the successor of Chaudhury. Mahtab was the obvious choice. Nehru had to

content with Mahtab although willy nilly. On 18 October 1956. Naba Babu resigned and Mahtab took over on the following day.

FACTIONALISM AFTER SECOND GENERAL ELECTION

Dr. Mahtab led the congress through the second General Election of 1957. But his Calculations went awry. The Congress won only 56 seats out of 140 seats in which it contested. Its formidable challenger, Ganatantra Parishad won 51 seats.

1957 ELECTION TO ORISSA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Name of parties	Seats			Valid votes in %age
	Contested	Won	% of seats	
Congress	140	56	40%	38.21%
Ganatantra Parishad	108	51	37%	28.37%
Communist	42	9	7%	8.93%
P.S.P.	43	11	8%	10.39
Independents & others	171	13	8%	13.10%

The Congress did not fight the election as a united house. The anti-Mahtab faction tried its level best to sabotage the election coampagn from within. At the same time

Dr. Mahtab tried to ensure the defeat of a few official congress candidates like S.N. Patnaik and P.M. Pradhan who had opposed his return to Orissa politics.¹⁴ There were allegations that Biju Patnaik himself gave funds to the P.S.P. leader S.N. Dwivedy to fight the election which Patnaik admitted latter on 'humanitarian grounds',¹⁵. However, when the question of Ministry-making came up Biju Patnaik and Biren Mirta did all to secure the support of Jharkhan Party, the CPI and others. Thus, manipulating an aritifical majority through methods not always eithical, the Congress came to power again. But the promised stable Government remained a far cry.¹⁶

This period was one of the murkiest in Orissa's political history - a period that witnessed intense politicking, furious horse - trading, and rampant political currup-tion - a period which was perhaps excelled by a degree in 1972-73. It is said that during the budget session the 'supporters' of the Congress had to be made 'happy' every-day in cash or kind. The "Ministry showed disproportionate tenderness, " to quote F.G. Bailey, "to even the least of

14. Both leaders alleged this in their interview (cited in J.K. Mohapatra op.cit. p-135).

15. Ghosh S., op.cit. p-88

16. Ibid. p-88.

its supporters."¹⁷

For Mahtab, housekeeping was not that easy a job because of growing tension in the party for which Mahtab himself was mainly responsible. The strong Pro-Chaudhury group was there to cause much trouble for him. Disenchantment soon grew among some of his trusted lieutenants like Biren Mitra and Dinabandhu Sahu. At this critical juncture election to three Rajya Sabha seats were held. The outcome was a serious setback for Congress and also for Mahtab. Due to cross-voting only one Congress candidate could win. On April 24, a cut motion was moved by Harihar Das of CPI. In the voting the Government had a hair-breadth escape by a majority of only one vote.

Another threat in the shape of non-confidence motion against the Deputy Speaker was hanging like the 'Sword of Democles' Heavy odds were loaded against Dr. Mahtab. His ministry was stormed as if it were another Bastille. A few days later Mahtab thought it fit to resign because of the Futility of running the administration with such a slender majority. The Central Parliamentary Board of the Congress also favoured the resignation move. Sending his

17. Bailey. F.G. : Politics and Social Change, Orissa in 1959. (University of California Press, Barkeley, 1963).

resignation letter on the May, 1958 Mahtab asserted that his Ministry still commands majority in the house. The move was very cleverly initiated. On the other side of the fence Singh Deo - the oppositon leader in the House - was there to place his claim for a majority support and hence his demand that he be called upon to form a new alternative Ministry.

But the Governor, who was in constant touch with New Delhi, remained unmoved by Singh Deo's pleading. The atmosphere was cleared with the help of the Governor and Dr. Mahtab was asked to continue in office as the Chief Minister - Govern's partiality was openly criticised. And thus the curtain was wrung down on the fortnight - long episode that brought about a political uncertainty in the state. But the drama was further to unforld itself sooner than soon.¹⁸

It was very difficult to run a ministry with such a slender majority. Therefore, Mahtab and his lieutenant Biju Patanaik veered round the idea that a merger of the Congress and the Parishad would be in the best interest of the state. As a first step towards the merger

18. Ghosh. S. op.cit. p-102.

of the two rival organisation, the idea of coalition government of the Congress and the Parishad was mooted by the State Congress leaders. Mahtab and Singh Deo, both pragmatic politicians, had certainly their own ideas about the prospect of such a coalition and the advantage to their respective parties through such an arrangement. The AICC also approved the Coalition proposal. The coalition Ministry came into being on May 22nd, 1959 with Mahtab as the Chief Minister and Singh Deo as the finance Minister and virtually the number two in the Ministry. Strangely, the Coalition government was bedevilled from its very birth by an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust inside Congress. Mahtab was suspicious of Biju's intentions and was jealous of his increasing influence with the High Command, especially with Nehru.

The Coalition came into being with many unresolved disputes such as question of ratio of ministers in the cabinet, inclusion of Mr. H.S. Padhi (a turn-Coat) in the Cabinet etc.¹⁹ All these issues came up within a month of the formation of the Cabinet and embittered the relations between the Congress and the Parishad. Strong rumours were afloat that Biju Patnaik was trying to form an alternative ministry through horse-trading. Relations between Mahtab

19. Patnaik, B.K. op.cit. p-103

and Singh Deo further deteriorated. Ultimately, Dr. Mahtab resigned on Feb. 24th, 1961 and Orissa came under President's Rule for the first time.²⁰

Rift between Dr. Mahtab and Biju Patnaik, which started from the beginning of the Coalition Ministry widened. It resulted in the isolation of Mahtab in the course of time. The dismal state of affairs of the Congress made Dr. Mahtab pessimistic about its future in the mid-term elections of 1961. The person, who had dominated the organisation for three decades, was conspicuous by his aloofness. He did not even contest for the State legislature as he was sure that the Congress would be beaten hollow in the poll. On the eve of poll he told newsmen that "for another ten years the Congress can not get on without a Coalition."²¹

There came the 1961 mid-term Assembly Election. Biju Patnaik's bubbling political ambition and organisational capacity was on the acid test this time. Fortunately he was in the commanding position. During the poll campaign he posed himself as peoples champion—the saviour of Orissa. In fact he was riding the high tide of public acclaim during those days. The poll outcome was full of surprises. The Congress under

20. The Samaj, Cuttack, dt. 25.2.1961 (Oriya Daily)

21. Ghosh, S. op.cit. p-120

Biju was not only able to cut a clear mark in the post, having successfully capturing 82 seats but also succeeded in clipping the wings of some over ambitious rivals such as the Ganatantra Parishad, the PSP and the CPI.

1961 MID-TERM ASSEMBLY ELECTION RESULT

Party	Seats	Valid votes%
Congress	82	43.28%
Ganatantra Parishad	37	22.34%
P.S.P.	10	11.40%
Communist	4	7.98%
Others	7	15%
TOTAL	140	100%

Biju Patnaik and six other ministers took oath of office and secrecy on 23rd June, 1961. A campaign of canard against Biju and his deputy Biren Mitra, was soon started by Mahtab group in-side the party. However, Biju succeeded in controlling his detractors by his sheer ability and his closeness with Nehru.

Meanwhile, a qualitative change took place in the All India Congress under Kamraj Plan. Although Biju was not actually a target of Kamraj Plan, but he volunteered to

step down so that no aspersion was cast on Nehru that the plan was meant to get rid of the unwanted. But Biju Patnaik had to reconsider his decision because once out of office he was out for ever, however he might have tried to return to power several times. But he continued to be the 'strongman' of Orissa Congress and the 'Kingmaker' of Orissa.

MITRA MINISTRY 1963-65

Patnaik was succeeded by his lieutenant Biren Mitra, the redoubtable 'Dada' (brother) of Cuttack. But his election was not unanimous. Pabitra Mohan Pradhan was a claimant for the leadership. He contested but lost in a secret ballot. Mitra got 68 votes as against 15 polled by Pradhan. The outcome, no doubt, was a foregone conclusion, but the contest only proved consolidation of a small but determined rival faction in the party.

TRIPATHY MINISTRY (1965-67)

On the resignation of Mitra in February 1965, Biju Patnaik, regarded as the 'Super Chief Minister' and the King-maker of Orissa, installed Sadasiv Tripathy, a senior cabinet Minister in Mitra Ministry and a senior congress leader also, as the new chief Minister of Orissa. Pabitra

Mohan Pradhan again threw his gauntlet and got 15 votes against 66 by Tripathy. Thus Tripathy was sworn in as the Chief Minister, incidentally the fifth Chief Minister since Independence.

JANA-CONGRESS

Encouraged by the exist of Mitra Ministry in which they played a prominent role, the dissidents in the party decided at a meeting at Ekamra Niwas, the residence of Dr. Mahtab, to intensify their agitation against the 'present party leadership.' Being unsuccessful in their endeavour, Mahtab, then a Member of the Parliament, walked out of the Congress with his seven trusted lieutenants and formed Jana-Congress (in 1966) with Pabitra Mohan Pradhan as the President to 'oust Congress from power.'²²

The next development that look place on the eve of election was that the ruling party even after defection of the dissidents became a pray to factionalism again. One group was led by Sadasive Tripathy, the Chief Minister, and the other by Biju Patnaik. Sri Tripathy and his group appeared to have been aided and supported by the Central High Command and the Patnaik group was in full control of the organisation and the majority of the legislators at the state level. The C.M.'s faction visibly joined the

22. Ibid.

chorus with the opposition in attacking Biju Patnaik leading to the final show-down when a number of Ministers refused to comply with the Chief Minister's order. With this background the voters went to poll on 21st February 1967.²³

The General Elections in 1967 came at the peak of anti-Congress wave in the country. It suffered reverses in several state including Orissa. In the election, both to the Assembly and Lok Sabha, the Congress was practically routed. Among the prominent Congress leaders who were biten to dust were Biju Patnaik, Nilamony Raupray, Satyapriya Mohanty, and a host of Ministers except that of the C.M. Mr. Sadasiva Tripathy. After the elections Biju Patnaik said that his party's defeat was mainly due to the split in the party before the election and internal dissensions within the party, and his opinion seemed to contain some element of truth. As many as 40 Congressmen, including five sitting legislators were opposing official candidates.²⁴ Further, top party leaders tried to sabotage the election prospect of a few official candidate also.²⁵

23. Jena, B.B.: General Elections in Orissa. Verma, S.P., and Iqbal Narain (ed) Fourth General Election in India. Orient Longman, Bombay 1968, p-350.

24. Ibid, p-150.

25. Mr. Binayak Acharya in his interview with Dr. Mohapatra revealed that Biju Patnaik has tried his best to sabotage the election of the Sadasiva Tripathy, the then C.M. (Patnaik J.K. in Factional Politics in India op.cit. p-160.

The Swatantra-Jana Congress alliance, having gained an absolute majority, formed a coalition Ministry on 8th March, 1967 with the Swatantra leader R.N. Singh Deo as the Chief Minister and the Jana Congress leader Pabitra Mohan Pradhan as the Deputy Chief Minister. Congress became the opposition for the first time in Orissa.

MRS. SATPATHY VS BIJU

In spite of Biju's supremacy in Orissa Congress some members under the changing circumstances started drifting from him. Again during the Crucial 1969 Presidential election Biju did a serious miscalculation. It seems that he failed to make the right move on the chess-board of politics. He threw his full weight behind Sanjiva Reddy, the official congress candidate and put strong pressure upon the Congress MALs of Orissa to vote for him. But result of the voting (Giri got 67, Desmukh 46 and Reddy 15) in Orissa Assembly revealed that a sizable number of legislators voted for Giri and hence their support to Mrs. Gandhi. It also indicated that Patnaik's hold over the Orissa Congress was on the wane. All his efforts to get a berth in the Congress(R) Working Committee ended in a failure. On the other hand Mrs. Nandini Satpathy was elevated to that position. Meanwhile a group of 'Young Turks' under the inspiration of Mrs Satpathy became very vocal in their criticism of the

Patnaik group. In fact, the Congress elements who gathered to raise their voice against him rallied round Mrs. Nandini Satpathy, a Deputy Minister of Broadcasting at the Centre. Other prominent leaders of anti-Biju faction were Baraja Mohan Mohanty, and P.K. Bala.²⁶

It was at this critical juncture of Biju's career that the election to the Rajya Sabha from Orissa came as the last nail in the Coffin. Biju Patnaik made a desperate bid to win the Congress nomination and succeeded in rallying the entire Orissa Congress legislature party behind him. The UPCC recommended his name unanimously to the Central Parliamentary Board. Patnaik himself also pleaded with Mrs. Gandhi for his nomination.²⁷ But the Prime Minister did not change her mind and the Central Parliamentary Board rejected the UPCC recommendation and selected Mr. Narayan Patra as the Congress Candidate for the election.

However, the UPCC fielded its own candidate as T. Sangama in an open defiance to the Central Parliamentary Board. In the election neither Mr. Sangama nor Mr. Patra could win. The candidate of Congress (O). B.K. Mohanty won the election. Biju Patnaik was directly accused by Congress(R) leaders like Binayak Acharya and Banamali Babu of sabotaging Patra's election and they demanded disciplinary action against him.

26. Ibid, p-165.

27. Interview with Mrs. Nandini Satpathy.

BIJU QUILTS CONGRESS

Meanwhile, Patnaik was mentally preparing to quit the Congress. Biju and his men felt humiliated by the High Command, which favoured the minority faction. Under the circumstances after the Rajya Sabha election, Patnaik has two course open to him. He was either to resign or to face the disciplinary action by the party which was already under process in the aftermath of the Rajya Sabha election. Patnaik choose the first option and resigned from the Congress Party on 6th April 1970.

NANDINI'S EMERGENCE

Towards the fagend of the sixties there arose in the political sky of the Orissa a new star - increasingly bright and attractive in character. Mrs. Nandini Satpathy was launched into the politics in her student days as a communist activist in the Revenshaw College, Cuttack, the premier educational institution of Orissa. Having failed to come up high as a communist, she joined the Congress and proved to be a hard working activist. In no time she won the favour of the strongman of Orissa Congress, Biju Patnaik, who helped her in being elected to Rajya Sabha on the Congress ticket. After she went to New Delhi, she prepared her ground there for a bigger political career. Being an ex-communist,

she established contacts with other Congress leaders who had some connection with the CPI in the past. They formed an informal pressure group within the Congress and began to gather more weight in the organisation as well as in the Government.²⁹ In course of time Mrs. Satpathy was able to cultivate with Mrs. Gandhi and gain her confidence. She was not only promoted to the post of Minister of State for Broadcasting, but also became the main adviser to Mrs. Gandhi on Orissa affairs. Mrs. Gandhi who was suspicious of Biju since long was looking for an alternative in Orissa to contain him and Mrs Satpathy was propped up by her to cut Biju into size.

At the beginning of 1971, a new political regrouping had come into being in the state and mid-term election took place in Orissa on 5 March 1971 both for the Assembly and the Lok Sabha. The performance of the Congress (R) was dismal in spite of the Indira wave. The Party failed to secure required majority in the assembly mainly because of two factors viz (1) the dominant faction led by Biju Patnaik had left the Congress (R) in May 1970 weakening it to a considerable extent and (ii) the joining of the Mahtab group in

29. The most important ex-communist Congress leader who was close to the power centre was Mohan Kumar Mangalam whose life was cut short due to air crash in July 1973. Among other leftists in the Congress is Mr. Chandrajit Yadav, S.M. Hashmi and R.K. Ganesh.

the Congress (R) created dissention in the rank and file of the party.

No sooner did Biju faction leave the Congress(R) than Dr. Mahtab and his followers except a handful of Jana Congress Members led by P.M. Pradhan joined the Congress(R). Dr. Mahtab's return to the party was fully engineered by Mrs. Satpathy despite the opposition of her allies like Binayak Acharya, S.S. Mohapatra and P.K. Bal. With her strong backing Dr. Mahtab, to the chagrin of 'Young Turks', was elected as the leader of the party in the legislature. This was the beginning of the tension between Mrs. Satpathy and Binayak Acharya which culminated in the latter's open revolt against the former in 1976 which led to her ouster from power. During this period (i.e. 1971-72) the Congress(R) was divided into two factions. One was the Satpathy - Mahtab faction and the other was the Young Turks - Acharya faction.

On April 27, 1971, Dr. Mahtab resigned from the CLP leadership and was succeeded by Acharya.

By this time a four party coalition government was formed with Biswanath Das as the Chief Minister. The Coalition partners were the Swatantra, Utkal Congress, Congress(C) and the Jharkhand. In the mean time Congress (R) had started encouraging defection in the Utkal Congress and P.S.P. The

later decided to merge in the Congress (R) in May 1972 and in June 1972 six Swatantra MLAs defected to the Congress (R). In the same month the entire Utkal Congress minus Biju joined Congress (R). Thus the strength of Congress (R) increased to 94. Das Ministry collapsed. The leadership issue within the Congress (R) became complicated with both Mrs. Acharya and Braja Mohan Mohanty staking the claims for the Chief Ministership. But to the surprise of many Mrs. Satpathy, an 'outsider' was made the Chief Minister by the High Command. She formed the seven-members Ministry on 14 June, 1972. However, factionalism took a new dimension with the formation of Mrs. Satpathy's Ministry.

In February 1973, a combined front styled as the 'Pragati Legislative Party' was formed with the members of Swatantra Party, six MLAs of erstwhile Utkal Congress and independents. Biju was elected as the leader of the new party and of the opposition in the house.³⁰

On 30 February, 1973 when the Assembly was in session, the political situation took a sudden turn. 25 members of the Congress (R), including two cabinet Ministers defected from the party and joined the Pragati Party. In fact they

30. Orissa Legislative Assembly's Notification No. 1773 dated 9.2.1973.

had planned to surprise Mrs. Satpathy on 1st March, 1973 on the floor of Assembly by declaring their decision. But Mrs. Satpathy went to the Governor before the Sunrise of 1st March and submitted her resignation to Mr. B.D. Jatti the Governor, and recommended the dissolution of the Assembly. By doing this she forestalled the Government's sure defeat on the floor of the Assembly and also the prospect of Pragati Party coming to power. Thus Orissa came under the President's Rule on 3 March 1973, for the third time since independence.

CHAPTER - IV

MID TERM ELECTION OF 1974 AND FACTIONALISM IN ORISSA

Mrs. Nandini Satpathy was a political light weight before she was appointed as a Deputy Minister at the Centre, and came close to Mrs. Gandhi who sent her to Orissa, as the Chief Minister in 1972. She continued to rule the state almost upto 1976 when she was virtually sacked from the Chief Ministership. This Chapter deals critically with the second Satpathy Ministry which came into being after the mid-term election to the Assembly in 1974.

Despite the attempts made by the High Command, factional fighting continued unabated in the Congress (R) during the first Satpathy Ministry (1972-1973) and after the fall of the Ministry. Soon after the fall of 1st Satpathy Ministry in March 1973, factionalism in the party took new dimensions. An anti-Satpathy move was bear headed by 8 MPs viz Banamali Patnaik, Banamali Babu, S.S. Mohapatra, Anadi Chandra Das, Swaraswati Pradhan, Binoj Mohanty, Chintamani Panigrahi and Arjun Sethi.¹ They met at Bhubaneswar and discussed plans to replace Mrs. Satpathy from leadership.

1. The Statesman, 3 March 1973.

They sent a memorandum to the P.M. and the AICC President Mr. Sharma charging that Mrs. Satpathy and the PCC President B.M. Mohanty had failed to keep the Orissa Congress united.² But Mrs. Satpathy's supporters wanted her to be made the U.P.C.C. (R) Chief in the interest of Unified leadership during the crucial pre-election period. However, the dissidents, including the 'Young Truks' tried to keep Mrs. Satpathy out of party presidentship.

In such circumstances, with the apparent pressure from Mrs. Satpathy the Congress (R) High Command removed the UPCC(R) Chief B.M. Mohanty and in his place appointed Mrs. Satpathy who became the UPCC (R) President on 26 March 1973.³ The infighting in the party became more intense slowly after Mrs. Satpathy became UPCC (R) Chief. During Mrs. Gandhi's tour to Orissa in October 1973, the "Young Turks" prepared and presented a memorandum demanding removal of Mrs. Satpathy from the Orissa Congress(R) leadership. But the P.M. chided the dissidents and gave clear indication of her continued confidence in Mrs. Satpathy.⁴

Under these circumstances, the Election Commission decided to hold Assembly elections in Orissa in the last

2. The Prajatantra, 9 March 1973.

3. Ibid, 27 March 1973

4. The Amrit Bazar Patrika, 24 October 1973.

week of February 1974. The Congress (R) party tickets were distributed mainly under Mrs. Satpathy's direction. A few of her critics like Trilochan Kanungo and G. Sabar, the two sitting MLAs, were denied party tickets⁵. As the offensive of the dissident mounted she needed additional sources of power to effectively counter it. The ex-PSP men were backing her. But their support was not enough to help her in winning the factional fight in her party as well as in winning the forthcoming Assembly election. One logical option open to her was an alliance with CPI. Being a communist activist in the past, she had maintained good relations with her ex-colleagues in the CPI, and she felt that it was the time to take their help in tackling her enemies, both inside and outside the party.⁶

But the above said strategy of Mrs. Satpathy was not liked by the ex-PSP leaders who were then her allies. They feared that CPI leaders, through the planned alliance would push them from the centre of power and entrench themselves there. But she remain firm in her strategy and got the approval of the High Command for this. An electoral

5. The Patriot, 22 Jan. 1974.

6. Mohapatra, J.K.: Factional Politics in India, Publication Allahabad 1985, p. 193.

adjustment with the CPI was made, although in a few constituencies the contest between Congress (R) and CPI candidates could not be avoided.⁷ A large number of Congress (R) dissidents (reportedly 46 in number) who did not get tickets contested as independent.

Against this backdrop election to the 147 members Legislative Assembly were held on 22nd and 24th February, 1974. There was favourable climate for the Congress (R) with the Indira wave still swaying. The electoral battle was mainly fought between Congress (R) and the Pragati Party. The Congress (R) emerged as the single majority party with 69 seats to its credit and the Pragati Party got 57 seats. The CPI bagged 7 seats, CPI(M) three, Socialist Party two, Jana Congress one, Jharkhand Party four and independents four.

1974 MID-TERM ELECTION TO ORISSA LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY

Name of the Parties	Seats			Valid votes in %
	Contested	Won	% of seats	
Congress	135	69	47	37.44%
Congress (O)	17	-	-	0.51%
Utkal Congress	95	35	24	26.45%
Swatantra	56	21	13.5%	12.08%

7. This happened in Aska and Ninapara constituencies. See The Hindustan Times, 7 and 8 February 1974.

CPI	14	7	4.5%	4.87
CPI (M)	8	3	2.9%	1.11
Socialist	17	2	1.4%	1.77
Jana Congress	42	1	0.53%	1.17
Jharkhand	12	1	0,53%	0.60
Independents	229	7	4.5%	13.94

On 2nd March, 1974 the Orissa Congress (R) Legislature party unanimously elected Mrs. Satpathy as its leader and with the promised support of the CPI she formed her second Ministry on 6th March 1974 with the "goodwill, support and cooperation from the Prime Minister and the Congress High Command."⁸

Naturally, Mrs. Satpathy was in high spirit as she was in complete command of the state party unit and at the same time enjoying the unique benefit of full scale patronage of Mrs. Gandhi and the High Command. As a result, at the meeting of the legislative wing of the party she was authorised to nominate the party's candidates to be the speaker and the Deputy Speaker and also to appoint the Chief Whip of the CLP and the CLP Executive and office bearers.⁹

8. The Indian Express, 20 Nov. 1976

9. The Statesman, 18 March, 1974.

MRS. SATPATHY - CPI ALLIANCE

Mrs. Satpathy's CPI connection grew stronger as days passed on. The CPI, on the other hand tried to gain some influence in the ministry's decision making from without. It happened that CPI leadership had some reservations toward B.B. Das and B.M. Mohanty - two stalwarts in the state congress (R). It put pressure on Mrs. Satpathy not to include these two in the Ministry.¹⁰ But she could not have done this as any omission would have spelt a disaster. They were opposed to Das as he was against the CPI when he was in the PSP. On the other hand Mohanty incurred the wrath of the CPI leadership as he was against the electoral understanding with them and prompted many independents to contest against the CPI candidates, (e.g. in Nimapara constituency). However, she took B.B. Das as the Revenue Minister while he was claiming the portfolio of Finance and succeeded in persuading an unwilling Mohanty to accept the office of the speaker.¹¹

But within one year of the Satpathy Ministry, the hitherto dormant dissidence once again raised its ugly head on account of her dictatorial behaviour and closeness to CPI. The latter tried to create rift between Satpathy and B.B. Das, the Revenue Minister who had a clean slate in the administration and in the floor of the house. Ultimately

10. The Times of India, 2nd May, 1975.

11. Ibid.

they succeeded in their Machivellian tactics and annihilated Das.

The State Congress (R) was divided into two camps Pro-CPI headed by the Chief Minister herself and the anti-CPI headed by Das. The anti-CPI faction pleaded that the party should strive to win over some members of opposition instead of the CPI which, in their opinion, would be more expensive both politically and otherwise. The ex-PSP leader were very much critical of the increasing CPI influence in the Government. B.B. Das the anti-CPI faction leader was supported by many dissatisfied elements in the party.¹²

B.B. Das, while addressing the meeting of party workers of Cuttack district alleged that the CPI was trying to cause another split in the party. The UPCC general Secretary and ex-PSP leader Nishamani Khuntia came out with an open allegation that the CPI was indulging in senseless violence and alleged that he was manhandled by the CPI workers near Paradeep.¹³ Mr. Khuntia was the President of the recognised union of Pradeep port and AITUC (Union affiliated to the CPI), was trying to build a base there.

12. The Motherland, 13 May 1975.

13. The Statesman, 15 Feb. 1975.

Moreover, the former PSP members were not the only ones to oppose to any more understanding with the CPI. Quite a handful of 'original' congressmen especially the young ones, were opposed to the CPI and hence joined hand with the Das faction.

On the other hand, the pro-CPI lobby in the Congress(R) and the CPI leadership tried to cajole Mrs. Satpathy to call off the ex. PSP men from their positions both in the Govt. and the party. They pined down the ex.PSP leaders like S.N. Dwivedy and B.B. Das on the point that they were not loyal to the party and were pro--JP who had, by then, started his movement against the Congress(R). This charge was beefed up because both the leaders had called on JP during his visit to Orissa in April 1975.¹⁴ This factional duel between the pro-CPI and the anti-CPI groups had a manifest impact on the stability of the state politics. Talks of change in the UPCC presidentship and rumours about a cabinet reshuffle added to the uncertainty. Unified leadership of the organisation and the government in the person of Mrs. Satpathy was resented by many in the rank and file of the party. Former UPCC presidents Mr. Binayak Acharya and B.M. Mohanty had established precedents by relinquishing one post in

14. The Sunday Standard (Calcutta), 14 Nov. 1976.

similar circumstances. But Mrs. Satpathy continued to be the UPCC President since March 1973, after the fall of her first Ministry. This perpetualism resulted in raising of many eyebrows and a feeling pervaded in the party circle that Mrs. Satpathy by holding two posts simultaneously was doing justice to neither. Further it was alleged that she was trying to convert the organisation as a tool of her faction. Many party-men including B.B. Das and B.M. Mohanty urged that in keeping with the principle of "one man one post" Mrs. Satpathy should step down from her party post. ¹⁵

In the midst of this rising controversy Satpathy rushed to New Delhi in the 1st week of May for a discussion with the High Command and Mrs. Gandhi. She probably pleaded with them to allow her to form a coalition government with the Orissa unit of the CPI. But, much to the chagrin of Mrs. Satpathy, her proposal was not only turn down by the High Command but she was compelled to relinquish the post of UPCC Chief. ¹⁶

SOCIALISTS DROPEd

The yawning gap between Mrs. Satpathy and ex. PSP elements in the Congress (R) resulted in the former's frantic

15. The Hindustan Times, 15 May 1975.

16. The Motherland, 4 May 1975.

bid to tighten her grip over the party and to suppress her adversaries with iron hand. To attain this, she should control not only the UPCC of which she was the President, but also the horizontally placed power centres affiliated to the Congress(R). Two such organisations were the students' Congress and the Workers Union of Paradeep port, affiliated to the INTUC. Arun Patnaik, the then President of the Students Congress, was replaced by Aswani Guru because he was not loyal to her. Nishamani Khuntia, one of the heavy weights in the state politics and an ex-PSP happened to control the Workers Union of Paradeep for long and that was his main power base, she manoeuvred to replace him by no other than her husband, Debandra Satpathy.¹⁷ This provides testimony to our hypothesis that with the intensification of factionalism, factional leaders seek their allies in sister organisations horizontally placed.

S.N. Dwivedy let loose a series of press statements openly criticizing Mrs. Satpathy, Quite naturally, she took strong exceptions to these statements and asked B.B. Das to publicly condemn Dwivedy and air his absolute loyalty to her leadership. Das - a man of morals and principles - refused to oblige and no wonder he was asked to resign from

17. The Dhartitri (Oriya Daily from Cuttack), 8 Apr., 1976.

the ministry. Thereupon Das tendered his resignation on 25th May 1975.¹⁸

At that time, Mrs. Satpathy agreed to lead the Indian delegation to the International Women's Convocation scheduled to be held in Moscow in the month of June 1975. It was stated that during her absence somebody else other than Mr. Acharya would remain incharge of the C.M. with this Acharya, the number two man in the Ministry who was nurshing a grudge since her first Ministry, became further dissatisfied. He joined hands with the Das-Mohanty faction. They used to meet at Mohanty's residence to chalk out their anti-Satpathy strategy. A few MLAs also openly criticized the removal of Das. On the other hand she tried to legitimise her action against Das and Dwivedy by obtaining 37 signatures of MLAs in support of her action. Armed with this document, she went to Delhi and briefed the PM and the High Command which in term agreed with her decision in dropping Das from the ministry.¹⁹

Towards the end of June 1975 the party was vertically divided into clear-cut factions. Although Das faction had no wholehearted support from quite a large number of MLAs, still then the bossism of Mrs. Satpathy caused hostility among a sizable number of MLAs and they came forward to help Das vis-a-vis Mrs. Satpathy.

18. The Hindu, 26th May 1975.

19. The Indian Express, 20 Nov. 1976.

However, the imposition of internal Emergency by Mrs. Gandhi's government on 25th June 1975, was a blessing in disguise for Mrs. Satpathy. She sought to take maximum advantage out of it in bottling up her opponents. Aided by bureaucrats and the ironcurtain hung around her, most of her ministerial colleagues had to wait for days together to get an audience with their Chief Minister. A coterie sprang up around her mostly consisting of sycophants who led her to believe that she was more popular in Orissa even than Prime Minister.²⁰

Armed to the teeth with various emergency provisions, she was quick to suppress, with full vigour, the intra-party indiscipline. The dissidents were at the receiving end after the imposition of Emergency.²¹ Meanwhile, after lying dormant during the initial months of Emergency, the dissidents struck again by demanding the removal of the CM from UPCC chief's post. The High Command yielded to the cumulative pressure and appointed Chintamany Jena, the then Deputy Speaker of the Assembly and a Mrs. Satpathy Yesman, as the UPCC President. Thus, she got opportunity to weed out the unwanted from the party's organisational wing. A new youth

20. The Indian Express, 20th Nov. 1976.

21. Mohapatra, J.K., op.cit., p-200.

organisation under the banner of National Socialist Corps with her son Tathagath as its president was launched to build up her image. The Youth Congress leaders who were with dissidents alleged that the NSC was a "sena" to tread on the neck of Mrs. Satpathy's critics.²²

THE SANJAY FACTOR

The factional conflict in the state congress (R) was significantly influenced by a new and emerging independent variable in the national politics. This factor which influenced the nation political life to a great extent was the phenomenal rise of Mr. Sanjay Gandhi as a dominant decisionmaking figure in the Congress. He had certain reservations towards the ex-CPI men in the party and the alliance of the party with the communists in different levels. He was determined to see to it that the CPI elements in the party must go root, branch and blossom. This development in the centre acted as a deterrent force in the factional fight in Orissa, and it singularly spell a great danger to Mrs. Satpathy, whose rise in politics was due to her ex-CPI background and alliance with the CPI. The anti-Satpathy or anti-CPI faction led by J.B. Patnaik in New Delhi took full advantage of the anti-CPI proactivity of Sanjay Gandhi.

22. The Indian Express. 20th Nov. 1976.

It was in August 1976 that the Central leadership of the Youth Congress thoroughly reorganised Pradesh Youth Congress of Orissa, with Rama Chandra Rath, an ex-student leader and an advocate at Berhampur as its President, much to the chagrin of Mrs. Satpathy who favoured Bipin Das for that post. Before this reorganisational move Mr. J.B. Patnaik, the then a Union Deputy Minister, suggested Satpathy to invite Mr. Sanjay Gandhi, (a Youth leader) to Orissa as a state guest. But Mrs. Satpathy turned down the suggestion by saying diplomatically that "Sanjay is like her son, and she would like to receive him personally and he will be her personal guest."²³ This seems to have irritated Sanjay Gandhi resulting in his wrath towards Mrs. Satpathy.

Another factor which added fuel to the fire against Mrs. Satpathy was her maltreatment with the newly organised PYC leaders. The PYC headed by Mr. Rath received stiff opposition from Mrs. Satpathy. Even the office bearers of the new PYC were barred entry into the PCC Bhavan.²⁴ Mr. J.B. Patnaik and some MPs and some odd half a dozen ministers of the state including Binayak Acharya, K.C. Leska and the Speaker B.M. Mohanty were first to raise the banner of revolt against her "hostile attitude" towards the new PYC and her

23. Interview with Mrs. Satpathy, cited in Mohapatra, op.cit. p-201.

24. The Indian Express, 20th Nov. 1976.

patronage to the National Socialist Corps. It seems that because of the pressure exerted by the Patnaik-Acharya faction, the High Command dissolved the students Congress of Orissa, controlled by the Satpathy faction.²⁵

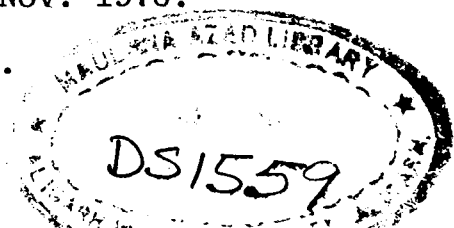
With a view to suppress the dissidents Mrs. Satpathy's supporters held a meeting of the Congress legislative party in the first week of October 1976 and decided to oust B.M. Mohanty from the post of Speaker. This was done against the advise of senior cabinet minister Mr. Laxman Malick. But the High Command rebuffed the move.²⁶

Things were moving very fast against Mrs. Satpathy. She could read the writing on the wall only after her failure to secure the permission of the High Command to reshuffle the cabinet.

From the third week of October 1976, both the faction became very active and they camped in Delhi to present their view points before the Prime Minister and Sanjay Gandhi. On 21 October dissidents led by Binayak Acharya, K.C. Lenka met the Prime Minister, Snajay Gandhi, Kamlapati Tripathy and V.C. Shukla and explained that they launched a campaign against Mrs. Satpathy only when the NSC and the parallel youth orga-

25. The Parajatantra (Oriya Daily) 10 Nov. 1976.

26. The Indian Express, 20th Nov. 1976.



nisation started opposing the P.Y.C.²⁷ On the other hand a group of Mrs. Satpathy's supporters led by J.N. Das Mohapatra the Education Minister met Mrs. Gandhi and apprised her of the political situation of the state.²⁸ Later, Mrs. Satpathy personally met the Prime Minister and Sanjay Gandhi and requested the latter to see that the name of the Youth Congress organisation was not used by anyone in the Congress organisation for serving personal interest.

The factional conflict in Orissa was beafed up in November when the Chief Minister remarked in a civil reception at Baripada in Mayubhanj district that some of her cabinet colleagues were trying to oust her from power and thereby create poliitical instability in the state. Perturbed by this remark a senior cabinet minister Mr. Laxman Mallick resigned his post on 12 November 1976.²⁹ Mrs. Satpathy tried to cajole Mr. Mallick, at first, but after being unsuccessful to winning over she hurled allegation that Mr. Mallick's resignation is motivated politically and smacks his partisan attitude. Thus Mr. Mallick joined hands with the dissidents.

In the Gauhati session of the AICC the Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi said to have remarked, in obvious reference to

27. The Sundry Standard, 24th Oct., 1976.

28. Ibid.

29. The Indian Express, 19th Nov. 1976.

Mrs. Satpathy and some other Chief Ministers that some of the Chief Ministers were thinking themselves as "Emperors" and by creating factions in the party were serving one groups interest. Again, Mrs. Satpathy in a major reshuffling of her Ministry on 26th November stripped Acharya of his finance portfolio and he was demotted to number four from number two position in the cabinet. Finance portfolio was given to Mr. Jadunath Das Mohapatra, one of the strongest supporters of Mrs. Satpathy in the cabinet. Gangadhar Mohapatra, another Satpathy supporter was rewarded by being allotted three more portfolios viz, forest fishery and animal husbandry, in addition to the two portfolios of food and supply which he continued to hold. Five ministers of state, belonging to Satpathy faction, promoted to Cabinet rank were Dibyalochan Sekhar Deo, Brahmananda Biswal, Somanath Rath, Kripasindhu Bhoi and Bhagirathi Gomango. Two outspoken dissidents K.C. Lenka and Dr. Benudhar Baliyarshingh were not promoted and the former was deprived of his important Industry portfolio which was given to a loyalist.³⁰ The swearing-in-ceremony was boycotted by all dissidents - Binayak Acharya, Benudhar Baliarsingh, K.C. Lenka, Jagannath Patnaik, Sailen Mohapatra, the Chief Whip, Basudev Mohapatra, the CLP Secretary and B.M. Mohanty, the Speaker.³¹

30. The Amrit Bazar Patrika (Calcutta), 28th Nov. 1976.

31. The Sunday Standard, 28th Nov. 1976.

Soon after this on 28th November 1976, both dissidents leaders Acharya and Lenka rushed to New Delhi and apprised the Prime Minister and others of the political situation in the state. They alleged that the Chief Minister had violated the Gauhati spirit and was trying a confrontation with the Centre. Quick came the rebuff from the Chief Minister and the UPCC Chief Mr. Jena that reshuffling of the Ministry did not amount to a confrontation with the Centre. However, at this time some prominent leaders like Mr. Chintamani Panigrahi (MP) and some PYC leaders informed the High Command that Mrs. Satpathy was trying to humiliate those ministers who were co-operating with the Youth Congress.³²

During this phase of factional conflict the CPI extended full support to Mrs. Satpathy. Rajeswar Rao, as an all India figure in the CPI and the local Communist heavy-weight Mr. Lokanath Chaudhury decried dissidents and the "caucus" at Delhi which was trying to create instability in the state. They also criticized the modus operandi in selection of the Chief Minister's by a 'coterie' in New Delhi. Their statements were severely criticized by the dissidents who wanted them not to meddle in the Congress's affairs.

Another sister organisation of the Congress (R) which extended full support to Mrs. Satpathy's faction was Orissa

32. The Indian Express, 1st Dec. 1976.

Pradesh Women Front. It cried down, in a resolution adopted in its meeting on 9th December 1976, the "mean efforts" of dissidents to destabilize the state. It further asserted its "strong and united support" for the leadership of the Prime Minister as well as that of the Chief Minister.³³ Although this women front was practically a defunct one but the ruling faction, in a frantic bid to control the fast deteriorating situation mobilized it to put psychological pressure on the High Command and the dissidents. Thus aptly remarks Dr. Mohapatra: "The wind was blowing against her and she seemingly left no stone unturned to reverse the direction of the wind."³⁴

It was exactly during this crucial juncture of the factional warfare that the die casted by Mr. J.B. Patnaik, the then a minister and a close and loyal associate of Mr. Sanjay Gandhi in favour of dissidents heralded doom's day for Mrs. Satpathy. During those days he was in Bhubaneswar to chalk out final strategy with important dissident leaders after a meeting with the Governor he told reporters that "the situation in the state could not be corrected unless the Prime Minister intervene!" After having consultation with important dissidents like Binayak Acharya, B.M. Mohanty, S.N. Dwivedy, and B.B. Das, Patnaik left for Delhi for a brief and the long with Mrs. Gandhi, Sanjay Gandhi and other national level leaders.

33. The Samaj (Oriya Daily from Cuttack) 11 Dec. 1976.

34. Mohapatra, J.K., op.cit., p-206.

The anti-Satpathy campaign gained further fillip with the return of J.B. Patnaik to Bhubaneswar on 10 December 1976 after a day's stormy trip to New Delhi. On that very day, eight Ministers and 12 Congress MLAs called on the Governor to inform that the Chief Minister had lost the majority support of the C.L.P. To convince the Governor they submitted a memorandum to that effect containing the signature of 47 and add MLAs. Much harrassment was caused to Mrs. Satpathy when she was advised by Sailen Mohapatra, as ex-communist like her and Basudev Mohapatra, the CLP Secretary to step down. Both the leaders also pointed to the Governor that Mrs. satpathy's ministry had become unworkable.³⁵

However, ignoring all the pieces of advice Mrs. Satpathy hastily rushed to New Delhi on being summoned by the High Command. After a long one hour meeting with the Prime Minister on 14th December she told reporters that she had left all matters with Mrs. Gandhi.³⁶ She returned on 15 December and the next morning she was asked by Kamlapati Tripathy, D.K. Barooah and Charnajit Yadav on telephone to resign immediately.³⁷ She informed them that she would resign after attending her official engagement at Dhenkanal (her own constituency) in the evening.

35. The Times of India, 12 Dec. 1976.

36. The Times of India, 15 Dec. 1976.

37. Mrs. Satpathy revealed this to Dr. Mohapatra in an interview. cited in Dr. Mohapatra's, op.cit. p-207.

It was exactly during her address in the meeting that a wire-less message was received from the High Command dictating her to resign. An emotional and thoroughly broken Mrs. Satpathy wound up her speech and dashed to Bhubaneswar Raj Bhavan at 6.23 PM to hand over her resignation to the Governor. Thus came to an end the era of one of the most impudent and powerful Chief Minister in the political history of Orissa. And it was for the fourth time that the President's Rule was imposed on Orissa since independence.

Here is an interesting development to test one of our hypothesis regarding the role of the press in the factional battle in a state. The hypothesis under verification is that when a powerful leader gets involved in the factional warfare, he would tend to his advantage. In case of Mrs. Satpathy the period from 1974 to 1976 when internal opposition to her grew increasingly intensity, she used All India Radio, Cuttack to boost her image. Again, the Oriya Daily Dharitri started by her in 1974 had not only extended strong support to her but also severely attacked her detractors in the party. It highlighted the "useful" alliance between the Congress (R) with the CPI and launched a fierce attack on ex-PSP elements who became hostile to Mrs. Satpathy.³⁸ Never a day passed

38. The Dharitri (Bhubaneswar) 20 May 1976.

when the paper did not contain any magnified column on the Chief Minister's achievements and the dissidents' character assassination.³⁹ If one glances through the issues of Dharitri of this period (especially of the year 1976) it becomes clear that the newspaper took active part in the factional battle of the Congress (R) and strongly defended its owner - Mrs. Satpathy.

ACHARYA MINISTRY

A.R. Antulay, AICC General Secretary incharge of Orissa affairs reached Bhubaneswar immediately after Mrs. Satpathy's resignation. In a speech to Congress(R) workers Antulay criticised and condemned the concept of "state bossism". After that Antulay alongwith Acharya and J.B. Patnaik left for New Delhi. For sometimes it appeared that there was a competition between Patnaik and Acharya, the two architects of Satpathy's downfall. But J.B. Patnaik's elevation as a minister of state just at that time provided amply testimony to the Prime Minister's desire about Acharya to be the new Chief Minister. Thus Binayak Acharya was elected as the CCP leader and formed the new ministry on 29th December 1976 thereby putting an end to a long political anarchy in the State.

39. The Dharitri (Bhubaneswar) 29 Nov. 1976.

However, Acharya's term was the briefest so far in Orissa - 123 days only. He had started with a lot of goodwill which he soon spilled by his indecision in certain important matters. His close party colleagues, who had brought to him to power, soon got disillusioned with him while his detractors, who included a number of former ministers and pro-Satpathy Congressmen continued to spipe at him. Again, the unexpected and stunning success of the Janata Party in the General Election of 1977 demoralised Congressmen and left them throughly shaken. Erosion fast started in the party ranks. A section of Congressmen were even willing to join the Janata Party or extend its support, to an alternative government that may be formed by the Janata Party. It was during this time that 18 Congress MLAs including a Minister, A.U. Singh Deo, left the party, leaving it to a bare majority of two in the 147 members house. Dr. J.K. Mohapatra rightly points out that "Acharya was, perhaps, too soft a man to be the Chief Minister of a troubled state."⁴⁰ It was exactly during this time that 9 state Assemblies including that of Orissa were dissolved by the Centre.⁴¹ Thus a crippled Acharya Ministry came to an end on 30th April 1977.

40. Mohapatra, J.K. op.cit., p-210.

41. The Statesman (Calcutta), 1 May 1977

CONCLUSION

Keeping in view the above discussion we may infer the following conclusions.

The hypothesis that core members of the party hardly shift their loyalty is found untenable. In 1970 Nandini Satpathy, Binayak Acharya and S.S. Mohapatra were the core member of one faction called Satpathy faction. But in 1974 Acharya became the core member of another faction opposing his former friend Mrs. Satpathy. Similar is the case of Ex-PSP men S.N. Dwivedi, B.B. Das, N.K. Khuntia who were Mrs. Satpathy's strong allies but later on revolted against her. Thus personal interests of group leaders are the main factors of factionalism. A member whether core or peripheral - would tend to leave the faction the moment he realises that the shifting would serve his interest better.

Another conclusion is that, in the Congress system the High Command plays the decisive role. When Satpathy was imposed as the Chief Minister, her faction was in minority while her detractors were in majority. Again when she was sacked in 1976, she enjoyed the support of the overwhelming majority in the party. The legislators and party-men had to digest the rulings of the High Command. Thus the faction which could manage to win the favour of the High Command,

was sure of victory irrespective of its support base in the rank and file of the party in the state.

As the factional conflict intensifies, the leaders of both factions are inclined to seek support of sister organisations placed horizontally and power-holders placed vertically above and below them. The Satpathy faction mobilized students' and Women's Organisation on its side, while the Patnaik-Acharya faction sought and got the support of the state unit of the Youth Congress. Similarly, both the faction tried desparately to cajole and win over the party bosses in New Delhi.

Fractionalism tends to produce inter-party as well as intra-party alliances. Mrs. Satpathy, due to her communist background sought CPI support in order to counter dissidents. Similarly, dissidents in Orissa, mostly ex-PSP men, tried Clandestinely to help J.P's movement to bring an early end to Mrs. Satpathy's Ministry.

Another hypothesis tested was the strong link between political elites and the press during factional fight. The example of Dharitri - the Oriya daily founded by Mrs. Satpathy is a point in the case.

CHAPTER - V

FACTIONALISM DURING JANATA RULE

The country had experienced thrilling political developments following the unscheduled radio broadcast on January 17 1977 by Indira Gandhi announcing the dissolution of the Lok Sabha and holding of resh elections to the House in March. The emergency rules and press censorship were relaxed. The leaders and workers of political parties detained during the emergency were released. The Lok Sabha was formally dissolved by the President, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmad on January 18, 1977. Hectic political activities started all over the country. The four non-congress opposition parties Jana Sangh, Bharatiya Lok Dal, Congress (O) and Socialist Party and a few former congress leaders who also suffered during emergency because of their support to JP's "total revolution" hurriedly came to form a new political organisation christened as Janata Party.

On February 2, 1977 Babu Jagjivan Ram resigned from the Congress¹; so did H.N. Bahuguna and Mrs. Nandini Satpathy former Chief Ministers of U.P. and Orissa respectively and R.K. Ganesh, a former Union Minister. They formed a new

1. The Statesman (Calcutta), 3 February 1977.

political outfit labelled as CFD (Congress for Democracy) and decided to fight the election in alliance with the Janta Party. The CFD headed by Babuji gave a new momentum to the anti-congress movement in the country. The elections were held from March 16 to 20, 1977 and to the surprise of all the Janata Party swept the polls in Northern India capturing 271 out of 542 seats in Lok Sabha. The Congress which got only 152 seats was practically routed in northern India. And to cap it all, Mrs. Gandhi was beaten to dust in her Rai Bareilly constituency by the Socialist leader Raj Narain.

Soon after the result were out the Emergency was lifted. So also the Press censorship. The suspended fundamental rights were restored and the ban order on some social and religious organisations was withdrawn. The political milieu of the country was, by and large, normalised. Mrs. Gandhi tendered her resignation on March 22, 1977 signalling the end of thirty-years old uninterrupted Congress rule in independent India.² The Janata leader Mr. Morarji Desai, was sworn in as the new Prime Minister on March 24, 1977.

In Orissa also the Janata Party which fought the elections in alliance with CFD and the CPI (M) bagged 16

2. The Hindustan Standard, 23 March 1977.

(Janata 16, CFD-1, CPI(M)-1) out of 21 Parliamentary seats. The Congress got only four seats and one went to the former Maharaja of Kalahandi, P.K. Deo, who contested the election as an independent backed by the Congress. The unexpected success of the Janata was largely due to the popular image of Biju Patnaik among the people.

The Congress Ministry of Mr. Binayak Acharya was dismissed by the Centre along with other congress-ruled states on 30 April 1977.³ Fresh elections to the State Assembly were held on June 10, 1977. The Janata Party led by Mr. Biju Patnaik swept the polls while the Congress was completely routed. It was a virtual white-wash of the Congress. Out of 147 seats in the Assembly, Janata Party got 110 seats; Congress 26, CPI and CPI(M) one each and independents nine. This was unprecedented in Orissa because no single party in the state had secured such an overwhelming majority in the past. Commenting on the poll outcome Sunit Gosh writes:

"A radical change in Orissa's political landscape was perhaps the most remarkable feature of the poll outcome. Other noteworthy features were: first, the emergence for the first time of a single political party as a formidable

3. The Statesman, 1 March 1977.

non-congress force through the democratic process; secondly, dis-integration of the geo-political barrier between the coastal and the hill areas; and thirdly, re-emergence of Mr. Biju Patnaik as the undisputed leader of Orissa."⁴

THE 1977 MID-TERM ELECTION TO ORISSA ASSEMBLY*

S. No.	Party	Seats			Valid vote percentage
		Contested	Won	% of seats	
1.	Janata Party	147	110	74.83	49.24
2.	Congress	146	26	17.69	31.01
3.	CPI	25	1	0.68	3.57
4.	CPI(M)	4	1	0.68	0.88
5.	Independents	282	9	6.12	15.30
TOTAL		604	147	100%	100%

In the meeting of the JLP, Nilamoni Routray, a trusted man of Biju Patnaik was elected as the leader. He formed a 14-member ministry which took the oath of office and secrecy on 26th June 1977.

The Routray Ministry assumed office with a euphoria and confident majority in the Assembly. People, for long fed up with the mis-rule of Congress and political instability took a sigh of relief and poured down their good wishes

4. Gosh, S., Orissa in Turmoil, (Bookland International Bhubaneswar, 1979). p-192

*The CFD had no separate existence following its merger the Janata Party.

The independents included different factions of the Jhar-khand Party, Utkal Janata, Kalinga Sena etc. The successful independents included seven rebels of the Janata Party.

and hope for the new Ministry. Politically, Orissa never had it so good.

Ironically, however, the advantage acquired by the Janata Ministry appeared to be slipping out of its hand within six months of its inception with a popular feeling that the present government was perhaps no different from the previous Congress regimes. The very first unpleasant development occurred during the ministry making itself in June when several Janata MLAs of Ganjam district openly revolted against their leader, the CM, demanding a cabinet rank representation for their district. It was only an indication or prelude to the shape of things hovering in the offing.

However, the ways of politics are always queer and they have always been queerer in the case of Orissa. It is rather a strange phenomenon that the efforts to topple the Ministry were started and spearheaded by a person who happened to be a cabinet Minister in the state. He was none other than Mr. Prahalad Mallik, Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Power, who wields considerable following among the Harijans. He started his operation within a few weeks of the formation of the Rautray Government. To attract the support of Adivasi and Harijan legislators, he formed an organisation styled as the Adivasi and Harijan Cultural Association. Its meeting was attended by Jagannath Mallick, the Chief Whip of the Govt.

and many Ministers and legislators of the two communities.

Mr. Prahallad Mallick, once a trusted Lieutenant of Mr. Biju Patnaik and Mr. Rautray, actually hoped for the post of Chief Minister, which with the intervention of Mr. Biju Patnaik was given to Rautray. This is the root cause of Prahallad Mallick's alienation and his subsequent dissident activities. Being alarmed by the dissention within Party rank, Mr. Biswanath Pandit the Janata Party President in the state, sought explanations from Jagannath Mallick for his attending the meeting where plot to topple Rautray Govt. was allegedly held.⁵ On September 5, 1977, at a joint meeting of JLP and MPs from the state the matter was discussed in hot atmosphere and the Chief Minister was requested to choose his own man of confidence as the Chief Whip.⁶ However, no action was taken against the powerful dissident leader and Minister Mr. Prahallad Mallick.

There existed a sharp division over the issue of Mr. Biswanath Pandit's continuing as the President of the Orissa Unit. When Union Health Minister Raj Narain and Janata leader Laxmikantama visited Orissa in the first half of 1977, to reorganise the party, many legislators and party cadres strongly protested against Mr. Pandit's continuance as the

5. Link, September 11, 1977, p.21

6. Ibid.

President. They have reportedly charged him with misconduct towards party members and partisan attitude. Pandit belonged to the socialist faction of the Janata Party and it was alleged that the socialist and RSS elements in the party were trying to capture the organisation at the cost of BLD faction which is popular in the state due to its leader Biju Patnaik.

Thus the factional fight came to the fore in a meeting of Janata Party's state committee, held in September. The meeting brought to sharp focus the brewing dissidence inside the party making it clear that harmonious relations of its constituents was still a far cry. Noisy demonstration demanding reconstitution of what was described as the "socialist-dominated State Committee" by certain youth factions marred the proceedings of the meeting. On the other hand Congress(O) and the CFD factions of the Janata Party continued to be discontented because the socialist and the Jana Sangh have been given undue representation in the Council of Ministry. Many of them felt that the JLP leaders were doing partiality while nominating members of different committees of the Assembly.

The dissidents felt sore at the way Rautray reconstituted the State Housing Board, Khadi and Village Industries Board, Social Welfare Board etc. in which only loyalists were adjusted.

Having dissatisfied with the function of the Routray Ministry which, according to dissidents, had utterly failed to fulfill its election pledges, near about 56 MLAs in a signed note wanted a reshuffle of the Ministry. However, it was Biju Patnaik who came to the rescue of the Chief Minister and was successful in assuaging the feelings of dissidents.⁷

Another event which gave golden opportunity to dissidents to demand Chief Minister's resignation was his government's treatment towards visiting Mrs. Gandhi in the second week of January 1978. The State Government treated Mrs. Gandhi as a "State Guest". On 9th June violence broke out in Cuttack in the meeting of Mrs. Gandhi and several protesting Janata volunteers totalling about 36 were injured in a clash with the Police. These injured Janata volunteers who were in hospital in Cuttack went on hunger strike protesting against police in-action and demanded Mr. Rautray's immediate resignation.⁸ Yuva Janata and some students leader also joined them. Prominent dissidents, including A.N. Singh Deo, Bhagabat Behera, Jagannath Mallick, Hara Prasad Patra, Haladhar Mishra P. Dora, Gadadhar Giri and A.K. Jena, strongly criticised the Government's action terming it a "mockery of democracy."⁹

7. Amrit Bazar Patrika (Calcutta) 2 Jan. 1978.

8. Amrit Bazar Patrika (Calcutta) 11 June 1978.

9. The Hindustan Times, 11 June, 1978.

Another irritant in the state unit of the Janata party was the presence of the former Chief Minister Mrs. Nandini Satpathy, the CFD faction leader in the state. Her presence inside the party posed a threat to the Chief Minister Rautray. Hence Rautray mobilized his BLD legislators and others against Mrs. Satpathy. 107 Orissa legislators in a signed letter to the Party President Chandrasekhar demanded action against her for allegedly antiparty activities. They cited a reported speech of Mrs. Satpathy at Dhenkanal, in which she attacked the Janata Government for utilising the police to achieve vindictive ends. She also reported to have said that Rautray Government represents the interest of rich and landlords. They demanded her removal from the national executive of the party.¹⁰

In the mean time factional fight came to an unprecedented new height in the centre. Morarji Desai and Charan Singh fell out over some important governmental issues. This crisis at the Centre set in motion a realignment of forces in Orissa. Mrs. Satpathy, a shrewd politician indeed, suddenly changed position and took a softer stand against Mr. Rautray. The local daily Dharitri connected with her, which

10. Link, July 9, 1978. •

was bitterly criticising Routray Ministry upto now, started praising Routray while criticising his boss Mr. Biju Patnaik. Another newspaper close to the former Chief Minister Dr. Harekrishana Mahatab, 'Prajatantra', also became hostile to Biju. Some Janata Ministers also joined them. The aim was to prevent Biju's return to State politics which may seal their prospect hermetically.¹¹

By November 1978, groupism and infighting in the Orissa Janata Party reached a new high. A three-day meeting of the state unit's executive and legislature party ended in chaos. No one bothered to discuss draught, the rise in prices, the slow pace of developmental activities or the organisational affairs of the party. They all engaged in mud-slinging. Some legislators attacked Ministers, alleging corrupt practices including debauchery. The main target of attack was Industries and Mining Minister Mr. H.C. Buxipatra and Transport Minister Natabar Pradhan. A group of legislators, including Ramakrishna Patnaik, and A.N. Singh Deo, who were apparently seeking ministerial positions were reportedly fermenting resentment and discontent among the legislators and stepping up the campaign against the Routray Government.

In February 1979, dissident activities grew up. Dissidents in Orissa Janata Legislature party launched a signature

11. Link, July 9, 1978.

campaign for the replacement of the Chief Minister. Although the number of signatories to the memorandum demanding Rautray's removal was kept a closely guarded secret, but the claimed figure varied from 25 to 57. The dissidents appeared to be confident of getting a majority in the 117-member JLP. Though Biju Patnaik, the Janata Supremo in the State denied this but his air-dash on 21 Feb., 1979 to the State capital while the Parliament is in session and his hectic talks with the senior party leaders created an impression that dissidents demand could no longer be ignored. The dissidents aired their view that they would be "most happy" if Mr. Patnaik himself takes the stewardship of the troublesome state.¹² Dissidents drew their inspiration from the defeat of Mr. Ram Naresh Yadav, the Chief Minister of U.P. and the acceptance of the Party High Command of demand in Bihar for the renewal of mandate by Mr. Karpoori Thakur.¹³ However, the crisis blew over and the Union Steel Minister again succeeded in what he calls "mollifying the ruffled feelings" of his party colleagues. He further classified that, "the legislators wanted me to take over. But it is out of question."¹⁴ Thus the move by dissidents to topple the Rautray Ministry failed as they could not gain the support of Biju Patnaik and other Central leaders.

12. Indian Express (Delhi), 22 Feb. 1979

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

But the brow-beating of the High Command and Biju Patnaik had only a temporary effect on the dissident's activities in the state. Again in the very next month a considerable section of MLAs openly revolted against Mr. Routray and his cabinet colleagues. These legislators calling themselves "pro-changers", sent a delegation of seven leaders, including Ramakrishna Patnaik, A.N. Singh Deo, Bhagabat Behera, Batakrishna Jena, Surendra Nath Pradhan, and others to Delhi with a memorandum demanding change in the leadership.¹⁵ They met all the central Ministers and other members of the Janata Parliamentary Board except A.B. Bajpayee and claimed that central leaders were receptive and had assured them to suggest Nilamani Routray, the Chief Minister to seek vote of confidence after discussing the matter in the coming Parliamentary Boards meeting. Thus, dissidents succeeded in raising the first round.

Another tactical victory for dissidents was scored when the Party's Central Parliamentary Board took decision asking the Chief Minister, Mr. Routray to seek a fresh vote of confidence of the JLP. But their hopes were belied because their ranks fast depleted as the date for vote, April 19, neared. Most of the dissidents began to feel that the threat to Routray's leadership is a direct threat to the leadership

15. Link, March 18, 1979.

of Union Steel Minister Biju Patnaik, against whom they dared not to oppose. Even among CFD and Socialist factions many were not prepared to support pro-changers.¹⁶

In the meantime dissident leaders R.K. Patnaik and B. Behera sent telegram to Janata High Command requesting them not to allow Mr. Biju Patnaik visit Orissa before April 20, because he may influence the legislators and horse-trading might result in.¹⁷ But Mr. Biju Patnaik arrived at Bhubaneswar on 14th April and a dialogue between two factions was started in the presence of Biju Patnaik at his residence. Dissident's leader Mr. R.K. Patnaik had a long dialogue with the Chief Minister and Biju Patnaik. It is reported that Biju Patnaik asked dissidents to forget all differences and cooperate with Mr. Routray.¹⁸ However, after these developments, pro-changers were almost sure of loosing the day on April 19. As expected, Routray won the vote of Confidence hands down.¹⁹

On May 18, the Chief Minister went to Delhi to pursue the Janata High Command on the expansion of his cabinet. But the High Command, including the Prime Minister Morarji Desai,

16. Link, April 22, 1979

17. Patriot, April 15, 1979

18. Ibid.

19. Times of India (Delhi), April 21, 1979.

turned down all his pleas.

Routray had maintained the stability of his government for 25 months in spite of efforts by some disgruntled elements to pull it down. However, following the Janata split at the Centre the Chief Minister was in a fix.

Following the split at the Centre, three distinct groups emerged in the State Janata Party - the ministerialists, who were in an overwhelming majority and wanted the state party to be converted to Janata(S); the dissidents who wanted to remain with the Janata party, and the third group of a few individuals who wanted to keep the state Janata Party and the JLP independent of both the Janata and the Janata (S) till the political situation became clear.²⁰ But displaying master-mindedness of a seasoned politician, Routray side-tracked all questions about his party's linkage with either of the two Janata groups. He declared that the Orissa Government was independent of any faction at the Centre and that it would maintain equidistance from both.

But Prahallad Mallick, a cabinet rank minister in Rautray Ministry, who started his dissident operation within a few weeks of the formation of the Ministry, established

20. Indian Express, (Delhi), August 6, 1979.

contacts with Jagjivan Ram and came to an understanding with his one-time rival Nandini Satpathy and the RSS-Jana Sangh faction of the Janata Party. He demanded that Routray should announce if the Orissa JLP was a part of Janata or Janats(S).²¹

Meanwhile, the former Jana Sangh Minister Biswabhusan Harichandan also joined hands with Mr. Mallick. Both started criticising the Rautray Ministry, and Biju Patnaik, who alongwith eight MPs from Orissa defected to Janata(S) and joined in Charan Singh's cabinet. Both persuaded Chandra Shekhar to issue directives to Routray to convene a meeting of the JLP and to decide who was with the Janata and who with the Janata(S). The meeting was fixed on August 18, Routray pleaded that the time was too short. But Chandra Shekhar had already issued telegrams to all JLP members, convening the meeting of the JLP for August 18. Janata Party Secretary R.K. Hegde was sent as the observer.²²

Routray, then advised the Governor to dismiss Mallick and Harichandan from the cabinet and they were served with notices of dismissal on August 17. On the very day Chandra Shekhar dismissed Routray from the primary membership of

21. Link, August 26, 1979.

22. Link, August 26, 1979.

the Janata Party for 6 years. But the dismissal of Routray made no impact. Only P.K. Das, Minister of Health and Education, a known dissident, resigned stating that he felt ill at ease while working in a defectors' Ministry. But Routray continued to enjoy the majority in the JLP and the support of Biju Patnaik.²³

On August 18, the Routray Government tried to prevent the meeting of the JLP. Section 144 was promulgated in the Janata Party office and its surroundings and through one of his yes-man the Chief Minister got an injunction issued by the Bhubaneswar Sub-Judge court preventing Hegde to hold the meeting of legislators. But the legislators numbering about 30 met at Biswabhusan Harichandan's residence and elected Prahallad Mallick unanimously as the President of the Janata Legislature Party owing allegiance to Chandra Shekhar faction. All dissidents, including State Janata Party President Biswanath Pandit, A.N. Singh Deo, Nandini Satpathy, R.K. Patnaik etc. joined in the new JLP which became the main opposition party in the Assembly.²⁴

Soon after the formal split of the Orissa Janata Party, Biju Patnaik came down to Bhubaneswar and got himself elected As the President of the Orissa Janata Party (Neutral). Biju,

23. Patnaik, B.K.: The Politics of Floor-crossing in Orissa (Santosh Publications, Cuttack, 1985). p-162.

24. Link, November 11, 1979.

to whom the Chief Minister had surrendered lock, stock and barrel, wished to fill the posts of outgone Ministers with his own loyal followers. But other aspirants would not agree to this. They demanded expansion of the Cabinet to accommodate them also.²⁵

Biju and Routray were in a fix. They were afraid that if the vacancies were filled up with their royal men before or during the ensuing short session of the Legislative Assembly, other aspirants might defect and swell the ranks of truncated Janata Party. Thus, the Chief Minister announced to expand his Ministry after the short Assembly session which commenced on 12 September 1979. On 24 Oct. 1979, 15 new Ministers were taken in a massive expansion of Routray Ministry.²⁶ However, the expansion of the Ministry created more problems than it solved. Resentment in the Party cadre against Routray ran high on the inclusion in the cabinet of Brundaban Naik and Jagannath Mallick.

Nayak, hitherto the leader of the opposition, defected from Congress (I) and joined Lok Dal only to become a cabinet Minister. Insiders felt that Nayak was admitted to the Party with the hope that it would help in the party's prospect in Ganjam district where Nayak has a great deal of influence.

25. Link, November 11, 1979.

26. Times of India (Delhi) 25 October 1979.

Likewise MLAs and party-men are sore over inclusion of Jagannath Mallick, who had to relinquish the post of Chief Whip in 1977 when he worked hand in glove with Prahallad Mallick under the cover of Adivasi and Harijan cultural society to over-throw the nascent Routray Government and to form a cabinet to be headed by Prahallad Mallick, a Harijan. In addition to all these factors, the refusal of the two members, Govinda Seth and Surendra Sahu, to take oath as Minister of State has brought the discontentment to the surface. To add fuel to the fire, C.M. Mishra, Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Board, also an aspirant for a berth in the cabinet, tendered his resignation after the expansion.²⁸

To satisfy the disgruntled, Routray was trying hard to rehabilitate them in some official positions. Uday Narayan Singh Deo, also cabinet aspirant, has been appointed the Government Chief Whip, following his predecessor V.P. Agarwal joining the Cabinet as the Minister of Transport and Tourism. Since three out of the four newly admitted cabinet Ministers and three out of nine State Ministers were taken from Cuttack district a large scale resentment has appeared among legislators and party-men belonging to other districts.

27. Link, November 11, 1979.

28. Ibid.

1980 GENERAL ELECTION

The Janata experiment had its natural death culminating in the Congress came-back in January 1980. The failure of the Janata Party associates to shed their differences and mend fences in the interest of stability led to the dissolution of Lok Sabha and fresh election was held in January 1980. The split in the Janata Party and the political opportunism of its leadership kept them away from voters' preference. The result of the 1980 mid-term General Election was not surprising. Congress(I) reaped a 333 seats out of 470 places in which it fielded its candidates. Mrs. Gandhi formed the Government.

Mrs. Gandhi could not forget the Janata assault on Congress ruled states in 1977 in dissolving the State legislatures where the Janata Party was overwhelmingly elected. She followed the suit. The Central Government ordered the dissolution of 9 Assemblies and the Presidents Rule was clamped upon these states. Orissa was one among those States. Thus the Orissa Legislative Assembly was dissolved on 17th February 1980 and the Presidents Rule was imposed for sixth time since independence.²⁹ With this Routray's ministry fell

29. Orissa Legislative Assembly in Historical Perspective (1973-82) published by Secretariate, OLA, Bhubaneswar.

after ruling the State for two years and eight months.
Fresh elections to Orissa Assembly was held on 31st May
1980 in which Lok Dal was virtually routed and Congress(I)
was record 118 seats in the Assembly.³⁰

30. Mishra S.N., Party Politics and Electoral Choice in
an Indian State.

CHAPTER - VI
RETURN TO CONGRESS SYSTEM
THE ERA OF J.B. PATNAIK

The object of this Chapter is to analyse factionalism during J.B. Patnaik's first Ministry. Although the problem had not been so acute as was the case during the previous ministries. However, factional fights during this period reveal some unique features which were not observed previously

Average life of a ministry prior to Patnaik's arrival was two years and ten months; none of his predecessors could complete a full term in the Office in spite of all their eminence and unquestionable leadership qualities. But J.B. Patnaik created a record in completing a full term as the CM in Orissa. He towered all his predecessors in deftly handling dissidents. The present chapter covers the political developments from 1980 to 1985 and in the light of findings test the hypotheses.

After the great debacle in 1977 the congress party in the state stood a house divided. Congressmen have engaged themselves in mud-slinging. Aftermath of the poll debacle some Congressmen became very active in trying to oust Acharya. Some of the followers of J.B. Patnaik, including some youth factions, tried hard for Patnaik to take over. At the same time after his defeat from Balasore, the former M.P., S.S.

Mohapatra seemed to be aspirant for the P.C.C. Presidentship. Meanwhile the then PCC President Chintamani Jena submitted his resignation and was advised by D.K. Barooah to continue till the organisational election scheduled to be held in September.¹

This was the state of affairs of the Congress when another blow in the form of historic 1978 vertical split struck it down to dust. Better known popular leaders like the CM, Binayak Acharya, Banka Behari Das, Jagannath Patnaik, Trilochan Kanungo, Chintamony Panigrahi, etc. continued in the Congress(R), while the emergency men like Janki Ballav Patnaik, former Union Minister of state for Defence; K.C. Lenka, a former Minister and General Secretary of the PCC, Bipin-Das, and M.P. Ram Chandra Rath etc. joined the Congress(I). Most of the 26th Congress legislators in the Assembly joined Congress (R). Janaki Ballav Patnaik was elected as the President of PCC(I). Thus the Congress(I) was reduced to an insignificant minority in Orissa during Janata Rule.

ASCENDANCY OF J.B. PATNAIK

The ascendancy of Mr. J.B. Patnaik (better known as

1. Link, 10 April, 1977. p-14.

Patnaik the younger) in the politics of Orissa opened up a new chapter in the state. He had by now associated his name to the entire era - the era of J.B. A brief account of his Political life is necessary to understand his political style.

That man's appearance is often deceptive holds true to J.B. Patnaik. No wonder the first impression varies from man to man. If some consider him too easily manageable and harmless, other feel that he is cold and aloof by temperament, while still others consider him high and mighty. Little wonder he is an enigma to many. That's why his stewardship of the Congress(I) in the state on the eve of election to seventh Lok Sabha was suspect even to seasoned journalists and observers who did not mince words to point him as light weight in comparison to Patnaik the elder (Biju Patnaik) Rabi Roy and other stalwarts of Janata Party and Lok Dal. But the results of the 1980 Lok Sabha elections proved the doubting Thomases to be absolutely wrong.

His rise in the politics is neither flashy nor meteoric. That is why few took note of the strides he was as tutely taking all these years to burst forth on the State's political scene. After completing his M.A. in Political Science from B.H.U. in 1949 he joined the then Chief Minister Dr. Mahtab's English daily the Eastern Times as sub-editor In 1950 he become the president of Orissa Youth Congress.

Split of 1969 gave him the much needed scope to contact with the Congress Party headed by Mrs. Gandhi. He was elected to Lok Sabha in 1971 from Cuttack. In the poll-fray, he had to contend with the challenge of late Biren Mitra - the redoubtable 'Dada' of Cuttack and an Ex-C.M. But J.B. Patnaik humbled Mr. Mitra by a comfortable margin.

After a short spell as M.P., he was inducted into the central cabinet as the deputy Minister of Defence under Jagjivan Ram. This gave him chance to come closer to Mrs. Gandhi, Sanjay Gandhi and other top notchers of the Congress Party.

With the Emergency, Sanjay Gandhi emerged on the scene as an all dominating figure. Patnaik organised his hurricane tour of Orrissa. The compliments he paid to Mr. Gandhi in the Cuttack Public meeting earned him the sobriquet of "Chamcha". But he was unperturbed. He sided with Sanjay to the hilt in his rub with the then Orissa Chief Minister, Mrs.Nandini Satpathy. Shortly afterwards the all-powerful Nandini had to eat humble pie. She was ignominiously eased out of the Orissa "gaddi", and Sri Binayak Acharya was installed in her place. This episode revealed the power Mr. Patnaik wielded at the Centre.

The momentous year of 1977 saw the rout Mrs. Indira Gandhi and her powerful Congress Party. J.B. Patnaik lost

Parliamentary seat. Revelations by various enquiry commissions unnerved many a congress stalwart. When his well-wishers urged Mr. Patnaik to reconsider his stand, his reply was that it was a temporary aberration in India's body politic. "Wait and see, she will be back in power soon", quipped Mr. Patnaik.² Many scoffed at his readings. Bereft of friends, he plunged head-long into the task of re-organising the party. Thus, the base assiduously built up during the two and half years of the Janata Rule paid Congress(I) rich dividends in Lok Sabha polls of 1980.

The credit of thumping victory of the Congress(I) in Orissa goes to a great extent to Sri J.B. Patnaik. He utilized Mrs. Indira Gandhi's Charisma to the hilt to build up a well-greased party machine, that out-witted those of Sri Biju Patnaik's Lok Dal. Mr. J.B. Patnaik is neither a demagogue nor a rabble-rouser. He is cool and calculating in thought and action. And once a decision is arrived at he pursues the same tenaciously, irrespective of the hurdles is the way.

THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1980 AND FACTIONALISM

With 13 million voters Orissa went to polls on January 3, 1980 to elect 21 members to the Seventh Lok Sabha.

2. Organiser, 23 March 1980.

But factionalism within the Congress (I) Party came to surface with the nomination of Chintamani Jena to contest from Balasore constituency. Shyam Sunder Mohapatra, who represented the constituency earlier, was ignored because, it was alleged, J.B. Patnaik, the President of P.C.C.(I) and Mohapatra's archrival, stood in his way.³ In fact Patnaik who was also in the charge of electioneering in Orissa could successfully eliminate not only Mohapatra but his entire group of followers by not giving them an opportunity to contest in the elections.⁴ Mohapatra was close to Indira Gandhi and had stood by her during her worst days. But he failed to get Lok Sabha ticket as Sanjay Gandhi reportedly opposed his candidature under the influence of J.B. Patnaik.

Thus, Congress(I) on the eve of 1980 General Election was a house divided into two factions. The majority or dominant faction led by J.B. Patnaik the P.C.C.(I) Chief and the minority faction led by S.S. Mohapatra.

The result of the mid-term poll was not surprising. Congress(I) won the election with flying colours. In Orissa it was a near white-wash—Congress(I) captured all but one

3. Padhi, K.S. Midterm Lok Sabha Elections in Orissa - An analysis in Indian Journal of Political Science, December 1980 vol.41(4) P-781-801.

4. Link - 24 August 1980. P-17

seat. It secured 20 seats whereas the ruling Lok Dal or Janata(S) could capture only one seat. Rest of the parties drew blank. With the landslide victory of Congress(I) J.B. Patnaik's stature in the eye of congress(I) High Command shot up. He was amply rewarded with a berth in the Central Cabinet his portfolio being Tourism and Civil Aviation. He became very close confident of Sanjay Gandhi and Indira Gandhi after the election.

On 17th Feb. 1980 Mrs. Gandh's Government following the precedent established by Janata regime dissolved those state Assembly where Janata Dal was in majority. Thus, on 17.2.1980 President's Rule was promulated on Orissa⁵ and Nilamani Routray's. Ministry fell. Fresh election to Orissa Assembly were held on 31 May 1980. The Congress(I) under the stewardship of J.B. Patnaik the then Union Cabinet Minister swept the polls while Janata(S) was completely routed. Congress(I) by capturing 118 out of 147 seats created history. Janata(S) of Biju Patnaik fared unexpectedly poor and could only capture 13 seats. In 1977, Biju Patnaik was a Union Cabinet Minister in Janata Government and was appointed Incharge of electioneering in 1980. The Patnaik Vrs. Patnaik game this time

5. Misra S.N. :Party politics and Electoral Choice in an Indian State 1989. p-364.

benefited the younger Patnaik. Other political parties who could manage to enter the Assembly were Janata (Chandrasekhar) 3, CPI 4, Congress(R) 2 and independents 7.⁶

The biggest electoral victory in Orissa since independence which went to the credit of Congress(I) was mainly attributed to the negative impact of Janata rule. The congress (I) not only created record in capturing 118 seats but it created yet another record when it clearly swept polls in Sundergarh, Sambalpur, Bolangir, Phulbani, Kalahandi and Koraput districts. The opposition failed even to win a single seat in these "Garjat" districts.⁷

1980 MID-TERM ELECTION TO O.L.A.

Party	SEATS		%age of votes	%age of seats	Deposit Loss
	Contested	Won			
1. Congress(I)	147	118	47.93	80.27	-
2. Congress(V)	97	2	7.07	1.36	74
3. B.J.P.	29	-	1.42	-	26
4. Janata(S)/L.D.	111	13	19.56	8.84	39
5. Janata(Raj Narain)	2	-	0.05	-	2
6. Janata (Chandrasekher)	29	3	4.01	2.04	14
7. C.P.I.	27	4	4.78	2.72	11
8. C.P.I.(M)	14	-	2.20	-	7
					contd.....

6. Misra S.N. Op.cit. p 128-129.

7. The Hindu (Mad). 8th June 1980.

9. Jharkhand	19	-	0.56	-	18
10. All India (Jharkhan)	7	-	0.05	-	2
11. SUCI	8	-	0.57	-	7
12. Forward Block	5	-	0.10	-	5
13. Independents	141	7	11.88	4.77	111
TOTAL	736	147	100	100	416

Source: Election Office Record.

After the election, the Congress High Command decided to send the lone member of Orissa in the Union Cabinet Mr. J.B. Patnaik to lead the Orissa Ministry. On June 6, Mr. Patnaik was unanimously elected as the leader of the Congress (I) Legislature party.

On 9 June, a 19 member Congress(I) Ministry with J.B. Patnaik as its head was sworn in. It marked the end of 113 days President's rule in Orissa.¹⁰ Thus, Patnaik headed 18th Ministry of the State and was the 14th Chief Minister of the state since Orissa came into being. The three tier ministry was as follows:¹¹

10. Hindustan Times (Delhi) 10 June 1980.

11. Misra, S.N. Op.cit - p 265.

S. No.	Ministers of Cabinet Rank	Minister of States	Deputy Minister
1.	Mr. Gangadhar Mohapatra	1. Harihar Karan	1. Mrs. S. Hembram
2.	Raghunath Patanaik	2. Niranjan Patnaik.	
3.	K.C. Lenka	3. B.K. Biswal	
4.	Ram Chandra Ulaka.	4. H. Khan	
5.	Upendra Dixit	5. J.K. Patnaik	
6.	Dayanidhi Naik	6. Bhajaman Behera	
7.	Basudev Mohapatra.	7. K.C. Patnaik	
		8. K.C. Patel	
		9. Kunaria Majhi	
		10. L.M. Gandhi	

Ministry making apart, the ugly and sub-merged head of factionalism had come to surface just after the elections were announced. Party tickets were distributed at the instances of Mr. J.B. Patnaik. He assiduously eliminated all supporters of Mohapatra faction, in the name of High Command. About 50 rebel Congress candidates were in the electoral fray in Orissa to the embarrassment of party leadership. The revolt against this authoritarian behaviour of party leadership was more pronounced in Ganjam and Bolengir districts. The Congress(I) Chairman of Bolargir Municipality, Mr. Parsuram Hota and DCC(I) General Secretary.

N.P. Joshi were among the rebels, contested as independents against the Official Congress(I) nominees.¹² On 11 May, 1980 Orissa P.C.C.(I) President J.B. Patnaik, taking serious note to this development, expelled 49 party-men who contested election as independents after they were denied party tickets. Included among those expelled were leaders like S.N. Patnaik, a former Minister P.C. Gherei, a former General Secretary of P.C.C. (undivided Congress), Mrs. Sarendri Nayak and Batakrushna Panda of Rourkela.¹³

In new Delhi, the leader of anti J.B. Patnaik faction, Mr. S.S. Mohapatra was eager for his political rehabilitation. Known as an efficient manipulator, Mohapatra could manage to win the confidence of Sanjay Gandhi in his last days. Taking advantage of Patnaik's absence from Delhi, he succeeded in carving out a place in the heart of Mrs. Gandhi also. Thereupon, he got himself nominated as General Secretary of AICC(I) along with Sanjay Gandhi. These development gave an impression in the minds of Congressmen in the state that Patnaik and Rath had lost their grounds at the centre. In addition to this Mohapatra's

12. Times of India (Delhi) 7 May 1980

13. Amrit Bajar Patnaik (Cal) 12 May, 1980.

nomination to Rajya Sabha came as a blow for Patnaik and his supporters. In spite of all these development, Patnaik's men were hopeful that their leader would be able to withstand all the challenges with the blessing of Sanjay Gandhi. But the sudden demise of Sanjay Gandhi in the plane-crash dashed all their hopes.¹⁴

Never before any political party come to power in Orissa with such a massive majority in the state Asembly as the Congress(I) did; and never before a chief Minister had face so much hostility from his own party members with-in a few month of his installation as J.B. Patnaik was facing. An overwhelming majority in the state lagis-lature has always been a source of worry for the party leader. In the case of Patnaik it had not been different. As Mishra puts it:

The misfortune of massive majority was gradually felt by the Congress leadership. Only twenty odd members finding berth in the council of Ministers it was difficult task to please and solicit cooperation from nearly 100 members.¹⁵

Ministry - making was not a very difficult task for Patnaik as for other state Chief ministers because of Patnaik's

14. Link, 24 Aug., 1980.

15. Misra S.N. Op.cit. p.131-132.

proximity to Indira Gandhi. Persons were rejected or selected under the name of Congress High Command. Although Patnaik was rewarded with the Chief Ministership by the Party High Command, but in the process he made quite a few enemies in his own party such as K.C. Lenka, a member of his own cabinet in charge of Revenue portfolio. Equally ambitious for the Chief Minister's post were S.S. Mohapatra, M.P., B.M. Mohanty Union Deputy Minister of Civil Supply and Laxman Mallick a very shrewd scheduled caste M.P. of Orissa.¹⁶

Mr. Lenka, a non-descript politician only a few years ago, came closer to power centre in the State when he was included in the cabinet of Nandini Satpathy. A trade Union leader from Chaudwar constituency in Cuttack district, he made his fortune when he was a Minister. It is alleged that he acquired huge property, a number of petrol pumps and a cinema house in Cuttack. Lenka, known as a good organiser worked hard with Patnaik to galvanise the Congress(I) party in the state after the 1978 split. He was also close to the High Command. None would have bothered if Mr. Lenka had been satisfied with his piles. But problem arose as he sought to project himself as a rival of Patnaik in power

16. Organiser: 32 (46) 5 April, 1981. p-1-2.

game. The result, at the time of election, was that there was no love lost between Patnaik and Lenka. During election to the Assembly, Patnaik's camp allegedly did its best to sabotage the election of Lenka from Chaudwar constituency. But Lenka came through and openly challenged the claim of Patnaik to the legislature party's leadership. Later he tactically lay low but never gave up his ambition for occupying highest office of the state. But it could have sounded better had Patnaik contested in the June poll instead of being imposed from the Centre. This could have taken teeth out of his political opponent Lenka.

The second major rival of Patnaik was Shyam Sunder Mohapatra. A shrewd politician indeed, he was practically in oblivion so long as Mrs. Satpathy was in power. Later, all his effort to come closer to the high command were frustrated by J.B. Patnaik. He was so effectively bottled up by Patnaik that he was even denied a ticket to contest the last parliamentary election from his own district Balasore. But he did not lose heart. With great tenacity he cultivated R.K. Dhawan, Principal private secretary to Prime Minister and eventually succeeded in coming closer to Sanjay Gandhi and the Prime Minister. Shortly after Mr. Patnaik left for the State to take over the administration, Mohapatra entered Congress(I) headquarter as a General

Secretary of AICC(I) and within a few days became a member of Rajya Sabha from Orissa Assembly making others envious of his growing political stature in so short a time.¹⁷

The third potential contender was B.M. Mohanty, a former Minister in Nandini Satpathy's cabinet and the speaker of the Assembly. A quiet operator, Mohanty knows how to keep the cards close to the chest. Though less bumptious than two others, he is no less ambitious about the high office of the State's Chief Minister.

Worries of J.B. Patnaik deepened after his protege Ram Chandra Rath fell out with him. This All India Youth Congress(I) President thought that Mrs. Gandhi had done injustice to him by not offering him a cabinet post. Mrs. Gandhi rewarded this close confidant of her late younger son with a berth in her Ministry. He was appointed as Minister of State for fertilizer and Chemicals. He was also labouring under impression that Patnaik - his mentor - had not done what he should have to promote his interest. The relation between the two had further stained after the death of, in suspicious circumstances, a girl in Delhi. Source close to Rath circulated a canard among Orissa M.P's and MLAs about the Chief Minister's involvement in the sordid affairs.

17. Ibid.

FACTIONALISM DEEPENED:

Factional fight in the state intensified in May 1981 on the eve of by-election for the Cuttack Parliamentary seat which was lying vacant following the resignation of J.B. Patnaik. While Chief Minister and P.C.C. Chief Chintamani Jena and their followers wanted to put Mrs. Jayanti Patnaik, the Chief Minister's wife as a candidate, the opposite faction in the party led by S.S. Mohapatra, the AICC(I) General Secretary tried hard for Mr. A.P.Ray.¹⁸ In this round Chief Minister's faction won as the case of Mr. Roy was very weak as compared to Mrs. Patnaik. Another reason was Patnaik's closeness to Rajiv and Mrs. Gandhi and other top brass of Congress High Command. In the election Mrs Patnaik won with flying colours, inspite of the sabotage efforts by the rival faction. The allegation that anti-patnaik faction worked for opposition was buttressed by the fact that very large number of votes were polled by the opposition nominee in Chawduar Assembly segment, the constituency of dissident Minister Lenka, However, despite alleged sabotage by the dissident the victory of

18. Patriot, 4 May, 1981.

Mrs. Patnaik raised the stock of J.B. Patnaik both in state and in New Delhi.¹⁹

Soon after the election, the C.M. J.B. Patnaik, apparently after obtaining green-signal from the High Command eased out the senior most minister in his cabinet, K.C. Lenka who held the portfolio of revenue and excise.²⁰ Thus, Patnaik got rid of his most formidable rival. But the sacking of Lenka facilitated him (Mr. Lenka) to come openly against the former which he could not do otherwise. As a result factionalism was gradually taking a new dimension towards the second half of the 1981.

After his sacking in July Lenka camped in Delhi to explain his grivancies to party High Coammand. He placed before Rajiv Gandhi and other leaders several photostat copies in support of his allegations. At the same time some MLA's and several Youth Congress functionaries presented memorandum to the Prime Minister on 22 July 1980 citing instances of omission and commission by the Patnaik Ministry. One of the major allegation was that he had built up a coterie of people related to him and a powerful contractor's lobby is influencing the government's decisions.²¹

19. Indian Express (Delhi) 19 June, 1981.

20. Times of India (Delhi) 20, July 1981.

21. The Hindu (Mad) 23 July, 1981.

Other allegations against Patnaik was that his style of functioning had alienated him from the bulk of partymen; that he was corrupt and had shown favouratism by appointing five Patnaiks as Ministers in the 18-member Ministry. They also pointed out that the CM bore a grudge against Lenka because he had opposed writing off arrears of Rs.3.5 crores from mining lessies. Lenka had also opposed writing off Rs. 1.5 crore arrears of electricity charges due from an industrialist. It was also alleged that the Chief Minister had done nothing towards implementing Prime Minister's 20 point programme in the state.²²

However, the Chief Minister's faction strongly denied these charges and the Finance Minister R.N. Patnaik came to Delhi with some other MLA's to counter the activities launched there by dissident leader, Lenka. In a press conference in New Delhi, the Finance Minister categorically denied the charges levelled against Patnaik, and announced that the government would agree to an enquiry by the Centre into these charges.²³ At the same time, the Chief Minister, also refuted these charges and declared in a press conference that there were "no dissident" and "there is cent

22. Hindustan Times (Delhi), 19 July 1981.

23. Statesman (Delhi), 23 July 1981.

percent support for me in the legislature party." Questioned of that cent percent included, Lenka, Patnaik asked, "Has Mr. Lenka demanded a change in the leadership openly?"²⁴

But the move of dissidents got a set back as the Prime Minister did not respond warmly to the destabilisation move led by Lenka. A handful of Lenka's supporters expected that a number of neutral Congress(I) MAL's would join them after their leader's return from New Delhi. But they were disappointed since Lenka was allowed to see Mrs Gandhi only after a week-long wait. And that too ended with a very dissappointing note.²⁵

After a lull, the dissident activities grew again in the wake of Prime Minister's visit to Bhubaneswar in September 4. The one-day visit of Mrs. Gandhi was for making an assessment of the performance of the Patnaik Ministry.²⁶

But the dissidents who were very active during her visit, became demoralised when Mrs. Gandhi warned them not to go press about their allegation against the Ministry. On the other hand, she appreciated the performance of Patnaik Ministry.²⁷

24. The Hindu (Mad) 24 July 1981

25. Patriot, 26 July, 1981.

26. Patriot, 10 October 1981.

27. Patriot, 10 October 1981.

Soon after her departure there was a closed door meeting of some dissidents and a former Chief Minister. Ram Chandra Rath, M.P. and a known Parnaik detractor, convened a get together of legislators at Bhubaneswar circuit House which was attended by about 40 legislators, including the Minister of State for community Development and Panchayat Raj, K.C. Patnaik and deputy speaker Himansusekhar Padhi.²⁸

Factionalism became sharper in 1982. The dissident went on the offensive at the January 12 meeting of the state party executive held at Bhubaneswar. This an indication of growing infighting. This was the first time in the one-and-a-half year tenure of his ministry that the dissidents were so outspoken in the presence of the Chief Minister, J.B. Patnaik. At the PCC(I) meeting all had kept mum. Not that his opponents made any revelation about Mr. Patnaik and his men. It was the same old wine in new bottle. The principal allegation was that Mr Patnaik is acting on the council of a "ruling clique" consisting of five persons. They were: Mr. Basanta Biswal, a minister of state for works, housing, mining and geology whose intimacy with Patnaik dates back to boyhood days; Mrs. Jayanti Patnaik, M.P. and the wife of the Chief Minister,

28. Ibid.

Dr. H.K. Mahtab, the Veteran politician and an Ex. Chief Minister Mr. Niranjana Patnaik, Minister of state for irrigation and power who is elder brother of Chief Minister's son-in-law; and M.I.M. Patnaik an executive engineer under whom Biswal served as a contractor before his initiation to politics by J.B. Patnaik in 1978.²⁹

Appearance of this "ruling clique" lent credence to the view that under the Patnaik government the contractors and mine-owners had come to the fore. Together, indeed, these persons hold charge of most of the departments by which contracts are given. Allegation surfaced regarding favouritism and kickbacks.³⁰ It is not dissidents alone who alleged that the cabinet was not functioning like a 'team' because of special power enjoyed by Mr. Biswal; even the Finance Minister Mr. Raghunath Patnaik complained personally to the Chief Minister about Biswal's habit of interfering in the affairs of other departments. He also referred to several instances of alleged diversion of funds, including those meant for building houses for tribals which were said to have been used for constructing a market complex in Cuttack.³¹

29. Indian Express 22 Jan., 1982.

30. Ibid.

31. Indian Express (Delhi) 20 May, 1982.

Another allegation against Mr. Patnaik was that he is not loyal to the Prime Minister. Some of the examples they cited were the Government's covert and overt support to the RSS State convention held in December, the total neglect of 20 Point Programme.

In September 1981, another chance had come up to prove Mr. Patnaik's disloyalty. At that time the state unit of the Friends of Soviet Union was being formed and the dissidents had taken the initiative to capture the Unit. The dissidents hurriedly joined in intending to find a new channel to Mrs. Gandhi and to prove before her that she could not rely upon Mr. Patnaik any longer. Perhaps the subject was sensitive and the Chief Minister afterwards went to Delhi and with the consultation with the central FSU leaders turned the tables by getting a new committee formed.³²

Corruption was the favourite weapon of the dissidents to strike at Patnaik Ministry. But corruption was also a question agitating the vocal public in the state. It may not be too far fetched to see a relation between the growing public disappointment and the emboldening of the dissidents. Another factor that encouraged the dissi-

31. Indian Express (Delhi) 20 May, 1982.

dents to demand a rightful place in the party and the government was believed to be the possibility of the opposition unity.

By November 1982, dissident activity grew to such an extent that the Congress High Command had to take a serious note. J.B. Patnaik succeeded in convincing the High Command of the ulterior motives of the dissidents. Thus, on 5 November three dissident leaders in the Orissa Assembly - Sheikh Matlub Ali, Mr. Bipin Das and K.C. Lenka were served show-cause notice by the High Command. They had been asked to explain within 10 days time. Talking to newsman in Delhi AICC(I) general secretary G.K. Moopanar, M.P., said that "indicipline can not be tolerated at any cost."³³ This was followed by the sacking of Mr. Bipin Das as the party Chief Whip and Mr. Ali as the Secretary of the legislature party.

In disregarding the threat of disciplinary action against them the dissidents reiterated their determination to prevent "sabotage" of the 20 - point programme by the state government. The dissidents drew solace from the support of Mr. Patnaik's friend-turn - foe Ram Chandra Rath, the Union Minister of state for Fertilizer and chemicals,

32. Indian Express (Delhi) 22 Jan. 1981.

33. National Herald, 5 November, 1982.

who had been touring the state and stressing the need, in public meetings, of speedy implementation of Prime Minister's 20-Point Programme. Another source of inspiration was former AICC (I) General Secretary S.S. Mohapatra. Although Mohapatra, after getting instructions from the Prime Minister remained aloof from campaign against the Chief Minister, but he had not prevented his followers to dissociate from anti-patnaik activities.

VIOLENT TURN

The differences between the loyalists and the dissidents, which were so far confined to memoranda to the centre, or platform speeches descended to street fighting and physical assaults. On that day a meeting was arranged at the circuit House of Bhadrak where Mr. Ram Chandra Rath was to address the Party's workers. It was organised by dissident leader, Arjun Sethi, M.P. from Bhadrak, and Netrananda Mallick, MLA from Chandbali. Some of the Chief Minister's men shouting anti-Rath slogans attacked Rath's motorcade and four of his followers were injured in the incidents.³⁴ The public meeting which followed the incident, passed off peacefully. Several dissident leaders, including K.C. Patnaik, the second minister to be axed off by the Chief Minister after

34. Hindustan Times 9 December, 1982.

Lenka, severely criticised the failed of Patnaik Ministry.

About 20 dissident MLA's wrote a letter to the Prime Minister expressing their concern over the brutal assault on one of their colleagues (Mr. N. Mallick) and four other party workers. They pointed out that under the administration of Patnaik, their personal security was at stake.³⁵ However, the Chief Minister Mr. J.B. Patnaik refuted dissidents' charge that he had any hand in the Dec. 8, incident.³⁶

In the following month, Orissa Congress(I) was rattled by Poll reverses in Andhra and Karnataka. Andhra Pradesh, the neighbouring state of Orissa in the south contains a considerable Oriyas in its border constituencies in which Congress(I) politicians from Orissa had gone for campaigning. After the results both factions started blaming each other for the reverses. Ministerialists attributed the rout of the party on the dissident activity in Andhra, giving a warning to the central leadership not to be indulgent to the dissidents in Orissa. On the other hand dissidents emphasised that the verdict was not against Mrs. Gandhi but due to the misrule of men-in-power in those

35. Hindustan Times, 11 December 1982.

36. Patriot, 11 December, 1982.

states. In fact, the observation implied that Mrs. Gandhi should keep a close watch on the functioning and performance of the state cabinet.

Thus the Congress(I)'s rout in the states election in 1983 coupled with the merger of main opposition parties in Orissa, sharpened the factional fight in the State. The dissident leaders gave ultimatum to the party High Command giving them January 26 as the deadline for a change in leadership. This ultimatum was served to the High Command because the dissidents were reportedly given to understand that their grievances would be looked into after the election to three states were over.³⁷

In the mean time dissidents, having realised that they were failing due to lack of strong leader who could match Patnaik and impress upon the High Command, stepped up their activity in Bhubaneswar to induct former Chief Minister, Mrs. Nandini Satpathy (an independent MLA for the past one year) into the party and ultimately their faction. Mrs. Satpathy was adopting a "Barkis is willing" attitude for the induction while dissidents were hoping to gain some leverage with her entry. Dissidents started

37. Hindustan Times (Delhi) 16, Jan. 1983.

a signature campaign demanding her admission into the party after Mrs. Satpathy was told by Mr. Kamlapati Tripathy that unless the proposal comes from Orissa unit of the party he could do nothing. On the other hand Ministerialists were trying hard to prevent her entry. In a memorandum given by them to Mr. Tripathi, AICC(I) working president, they argued that she was the first Chief Minister to desert Mrs. Gandhi in 1977.³⁸

Factionalism intensified further in the second half of February 1983 in the wake of Organisational election in the Party. On 23 February, a measure of uncertainty was introduced into Orissa politics when two Union Ministers of State from Orissa lodged a protest with the party High Command against the conduct of Organisational elections which excluded them and many senior leaders from top committees and denied them a suitable role in the organisational set up. Mr. KP Singh Deo, the then Union Minister of State for defence complained personally to the central party leadership that those who had been elected to the D.C. (I) of his home district, Dhenkanal, were the people who had opposed him in the 1980 general elections.³⁹

38. Patriot 3 Feb. 1983.

39. Statesman (Delhi) 24 Feb. 1983.

Mr. Ram Chandra Rath, the then Union Minister of State for Petroleum and Chemicals, had also complained that election to District Congress(I) Committees in the state had been held in a way that only people "hand-picked" by the Chief Minister were included in them. The dissidents led by K.C. Lenka, Bipin Das, Srikanta Panda, Matlub Ali, Kangali Panda, Netrananda Mallick, and Lalitmohan Gandhi, all MLAs met on 23 Feb. Congress(I) the Working President Mr. Tripathi, the general Secretary Rajiv Gandhi Pranab Mukerjee, and the General Secretary in charge of Orissa Chandulal Chandrakar. They complained about the "large-scale irregularities" in conducting the poll."⁴⁰

Besides all senior Congressmen like R.C. Rath, K.P. Singh Deo, MPs like Jagannath Rao, Laxman Mallick, S.Sahu and S.S. Mohapatra had been left out from the top Committees. It was a virtual elimination of these Patnaik detractors or potential rivals from state scenes.⁴¹ It shows that factions try their level best to control party organisations down the lower rung in villages and districts.

A significant development occurred, just during this time, in the form of unprecedented out-brust of all SC/ST

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

MLA's against Mr. Patnaik. Prominent dissident tribal leader Hemananda Biswal provided leadership to these MLAs who were sore about the inaction of the Ministry in keeping its election promises fulfilled regarding the upliftment of Harijans and Adivasis. They constitute 40% of the total membership of the Assembly. Their joining hands with the dissidents caused Patnaik many a sleepless night and he desparately tried to win over them by his characteristic carrot and stick tactics.

By March 14, situation worsened to such an extent that there were two PCC(I) Presidents in Orissa. Though Mr. Chintamani Jena, M.P. was still officially the president of PCC(I), the actual control was exercised by Mr. Dambarudhar Ulaka, MLA who as Patnaik's nominee got himself elected just before the last minute postponement of the election by the party high command. Mr. Jena's fall from the grace, a long time Patnaik loyalist was sudden. One fine morning the Chief Minister summoned some of his tested colleagues to his residence and said that High Command is unhappy over the functioning of Mr. Jena, and himself suggested the name of Mr. Ulaka and told them to go and file nomination paper for Mr. Ulaka. Mr. Jena was not consulted at any state and was kept in darkness till the last moment.⁴²

42. Hindustan Times (Delhi) 14 March 1983.

The central leadership of the Congress(I) must share the blame for continuation of feud in the state unit. The manner in which the Central leadership postponed the organisational elections after giving a long rope to the Ministerial group to conduct these in whatever manner it liked had emboldened the dissidents who saw the postponement as cancellation of the entire process. While the dissidents were jubilant, the ministerial group was perplexed. The later group became somewhat nervous, despite its overwhelming majority in the legislature party, since this cannot be regarded as a guarantee against a change of leadership. The strategy of dissidents was to precipitate a crisis situation in which the High Command will be obliged to concede their demand for a change. This proves that the High Command is the ultimate arbiter of Ministry's fate and acts as a balancer in the power game in states. Another observation is that both factions want to make friends in the organisational set ups placed vertically in the party - both below and above.

In May 12, the Congress(I) High Command issued show-cause notices to three dissidents leaders in Orissa for their "anti-party" activities. The three were K.C. Lenka, Hamandanda Biswal, and Bipin Das. AICC(I) General Secretary C.L. Chandrakar, who was in charge of Orissa, told newsmen

that the action was taken on the basis of reports from PCC(I) chief and the Chief Minister and the reports appeared in the press. In an interesting development, Hemandanda Biswal, as the Chairman of the public undertaking Committee, on March 30 (a day before his term was to be over) had indicated the Chief Minister and some officials on the famous mustard oil scandal in which the state Government had purchased Mustard oil at a higher price than the prevailing price in the market. However, the Committee was reconstituted with Indramani Rout a patnaik yesman as the chairman who rejected the earlier report and decided to review the issue.⁴³ It was due to this that Mr. Biswal was issued a show-cause notice. On June 7, Mr. J.B. Patnaik returned from New Delhi and announced with confidence that there was no question of change of leadership and his ministry would continue in office.⁴⁴

Elections for the Orissa PCC(I) Presidentship, Vice-Presidentship and other office-bearer was to be held on July 15. Dissidents had filed their nomination papers for almost all posts. But Mr. Dhruba Charan Sahu, Assistant Returning Officer and a know Patnaik-man, declared all nomination papers of dissident as invalid on flimsy grounds on

43. Hindustan Times (Delhi) 12 May 1983.

44. Statesman (Delhi) 8 June 1983.

July 13. Thereupon Mr. Gayachand Bhuyan, dissident candidate for the presidentship and Brajmohan Mohanty M.P. air-dashed to New Delhi to present their case to the High Command.⁴⁵ However, Mr. Gulam Rasul Kar of Kashmir, the AICC(I) appointed Returning Officer who reached Bhubaneswar on July 14 and validated all nomination papers, and declared that voting will be conducted on July 16 instead of July 15. Thus the rebel candidates were left with no time to campaign, as they were in New Delhi by that time. Most dissidents including the Presidential candidate, Mr. Bhuyan, reached Bhubaneswar from Delhi, only half an hour after the election was over. "God alone knows what happened there. We could not appoint even polling agents," said a young Orissa leader.⁴⁶

Thirty out of 238 Congress(I) dissidents boycotted the election thereby giving the ministerialists a clear walk-over. Mr. Nityananda Mishra, MP from western Orissa. who was a ministerialists nominee, was elected as PCC(I) President defeating dissidents' nominee Gaya Chand Bhuyan MP by 204 to three votes. Basanta Das, a third aspirant, drew blank. Dambasudhar Ulaka, a ministerialist, was elected as Vice-President. Another ministerialist, Basanta

45. Indian Express, 14 July 1983.

46. Statesman, 25 July, 1983.

Kumar Biswal (Minister) was elected defeating Basanta Das by 208 to nil. All the 18 seats in the executive of the PCC(I) were won by Ministerialists by overwhelming majority. However, the 30 members elected to the AICC(I) without contest included two dissidents Mr. Braja Mohan Mohanty and Mr. Basanta Das.⁴⁷

Despite the strong protests lodged by party dissidents, the Congress High Command approved the election as final. Mr. C.L. Chandrakar AICC(I) General Secretary in-charge of Orissa, said in New Delhi on 21 July 1983, that "the elections are final. They are all over.....you can see that there are a couple of dissidents in the executive list."⁴⁸ In it was Mr. Chandrakar who acted as a yoeman in favour of Mr. Patnaik in Congress Headquarter in Delhi, which saved Mr. Patnaik from many troubles.

In the second half of 1983, Patnaik tried to heal the rift in Orissa Congress(I). In November he had two separate rounds of talks with K.C. Lenka, Mr. Nityananda Mishra M.P., and PCC(I) president, who till a few days ago was a dissident himself acted as a go-between.⁴⁹ The process intensified before the Calcutta plenary session of

47. Times of India 17 July 1983.

48. Statesman 22 July 1983.

49. Hindustan Times 11 November 1983.

the AICC(I) scheduled to start on 26 December 1983. The package deal under which the dissidents were to come to a compromise included ministerial berths for four prominent dissidents, including Mr. Lenka, and accommodation of others in corporations and other statutory bodies. Mr. Patnaik, apprehensive of Rath's moves, swung into action, and under his express orders the PCC(I) released a press note announcing the inclusion of the Union Minister of State for Defence. K.P. Singh Deo and Lenka as special invitees to PCC(I) working Committee and Dr. Krupasindhu Bhoi and Matlub Ali MLA, as PCC members.⁵⁰

In the plenary session of the AICC(I) at Calcutta, Orissa dissidents, 10 MPs and 25 MLAs, submitted memorandum to the Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Rajiv Gandhi on 29 December 1983 alleging a "sorry state of affairs both in the government and the party under the Chief Minister J.B. Patnaik and his coterie. The High Command assured them of a change of leadership soon."⁵¹

In February 1984, came the elections to the Panchayat Samiti and rift accrued over the candidates. The PCC(I) decided to contest on party basis. A state-level Committee was formed under the Chairmanship of Mr. Mishra, the PCC(I)

50. Hindustan Times 22 December 1983.

51. Hindustan Times 31 December 1983.

President to select the candidates. The other members of the Committee were the Chief Minister, J.B. Patnaik, Basanta Biswal Niranjana Patnaik, Kishore Chandra Patel and Basudev Mohapatra, all trusted and loyal ministers of the Chief Minister and Mr. Jagannath Patnaik, President of Kalahandi DDC(I). This body was the final court of appeal also. The most significant aspect of this Committee was that not a single dissident leader was included in it. In fact, it was a clever design devised by the Chief Minister, J.B. Patnaik to eliminate those partymen from rural belts who were critical of him.⁵²

Sensing the process of elimination the leader of dissidents, Union Minister of state for Fertilizer and Chemicals, Ram Chandra Rath, reacted strongly to the Party executive decision. In Rath's home district of Ganjam, his sworn enemy, Mr. Brundaban Nayak, whose name was recommended by the PCC(I) executive for admission into Congress(I) started the process of selecting Congress(I) candidates for Panchayat Samiti polls at the behest of Mr. J.B. Patnaik. Meanwhile, K.C. Lenka, the prominent dissident leader who had patched up with the Chief Minister and was co-opted to the PCC(I) executive had to face rival candidates in his own constituency of Choudwar in Cuttack district put up by Mrs. Jayanti Patnaik M.P. and wife of

52. Hindustan Times 5 February 1983.

the Chief Minister. The dissidents did field up their own candidates as independents in many constituencies.⁵³

Mr. Dayanidhi Nayak, dissident was forced to resign on 11 Feb. 1984, and Somnath Rath, the speaker of the Assembly, was inducted to fill in the gap. This reshuffle was followed by Patnaik's meeting in New Delhi with the Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi. Mr. Nayak was touring his home district Kalahandi. While he was half-way through addressing a public meeting near Bhawanipatna, a curior reached with the state plane and he was asked to return leaving his speach halfway. On reaching Bhubaneswar, he was taken straight to the Chief Minister's Office and was asked to resign. He prevaricated, so he was forced to resign under compulsion. Mr. Nayak was elected to the Assembly four times and was a cabinet minister twice.⁵⁴ The reshuffle had been so made that all the key portfolios were in the hands of Patnaik's coterie. It was, in deed, an exercise to control all "money bags" portfolio and was a strategic move in preparation for the comming general election.⁵⁵

In the first week of March the one more variable was added in tussle between Ministerialists and dissidents.

53. Hindustan Times 5 Feb., 1984.

54. Hindustan Times, 12 Feb. 1984.

55. Ibid.

It was over the selection of candidates for the ensuing Rajya Sabha poll. There were as many as 30 aspirants for the seats that to fall vacant towards the end of the month. ON March 4, PCC(I) executive meeting at Bhubaneswar could not finalise the list and, to find out of the impose, delegated the power of selection of candidates to the Chief Minister. Meanwhile there were demands for neglected western Orissa for representation. Similarly, the Adivasi and Harijan legislators had demanded representation pointing out that out of four outgoing MPs one was Harijan and one Adivasi.⁵⁶ In a memorandum to Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Rajiv Gandhi 6 MPs from western Orissa complained that the "Callous and indifferent" manner in which people of Western Orissa were being treated by the State Administration gave impression "that a deliberate strategy has been formulated by the State Government to stall any progress in this region." The signatories were Dr. Krupasindhu Bhoi, Ras Behari Behera, Christopher Ekka, Narayan Sahu. Gayachand Bhuyan, and Arjun Sethi.⁵⁷

In the first week of April, Bhuta Singh, Union Minister for works and Housing visited Orissa to ascertain the performance of Patnaik's Ministry. In a statement

56. Hindustan Times (Delhi) 17 March, 1984.

57. Statesman (Delhi) 29 April, 1984.

after his tour, on April 8, he said that "I am quite satisfied with the performance of the Orissa Government. The Government is doing 'Very well' in the task of implementation of revised 20 point programme."⁵⁸

Ministerialists in Orissa suffered a setback in the re-poll (which was done after the changes of irregularities were upheld) to organisational election in three important districts of Sambalpur, Phulbani, Hemananda Biswal, a prominent dissident leader, was elected as DCC(I) President defeating Mr. J. Pradhan, a loyalist MLA by 102 to 62 votes. Robi Patnaik, also a dissident, elected as the Vice-President In Phulbani Mr. Jagdish Jani, M.P., defeated a ministerialist Mrutunjaya Naik, M.P.⁵⁹

The factional fight, which hitherto was submerged under the party discipline erupted into open by unchaining all party norms in the month of September. On 5 September, S.S. Mohapatra, M.P. and a dissident leader, openly demanded a change of leadership after the Burla incident in which 10 students of Regional Engineering College had died. In a press statement on September 12 Mr. Mohapatra flayed the Chief Minister again and charged his (Mr. Patnaik's) faction of the ruling party with "attempts to throttle the

58. Statesman (Delhi) 9 April, 1984.

59. Hindustan Times 23, April 1984.

voice of Congressmen." He also announced that he would tour different states to "Unmask" the administration of the Chief Minister, J.B. Patnaik. He demanded a "Up-type change" in the state. According to him, various charges of corruption, favouritism and the deteriorating law and order situation in the state made by several MPs and MLs were pending from long time and no action had been taken for the post three years. The "results of such memoranda has been disimissal of a minister (a dessident) and the party secretary in the Assembly." All dismissed were dissidents.⁶⁰

The open revolt of Mohapatra had taken the Chief Minister and the PCC(I) Chief by surprise and he, upon the advice of his friends in Delhi, initiated a signature campaign among party MLAs requesting the Prime Minister to take disciplinary action against Mohapatra. Armed with this documents Patnaik rushed to Delhi and appraised of the situation in the state to the Prime Minister and in a press conference at his Rajpath residence he, exuding confidence, told pressmen that he was going to stay and would complete his full term. "Mr. Mohapatra is a lone voice," said Mr. Patnaik. To butress his point he pointed out to the strong statement made by the AICC(I) General

60. Times of India (Delhi) 13 September 1984.

Secretary Mrs. Bajpaie on September 6, snubbing Mr. Mohapatra for his irresponsible statements. According to the CM, Mohapatra was saying against him because he suffered from personal prejudice against him

(the CM).⁶¹ On Sept. 8, AICC(I) sought explanation from Mohapatra for his anti-party activity. Meanwhile, Rajiv Gandhi gave a clean chit to the Patnaik Ministry, saying its performance particularly in the implementation of 20 points programme, had widely been commended by developmental experts.⁶²

Defending himself, Mohapatra said that he had only echoed the voice of mute millions of the state and he is fully loyal to Mrs. Gandhi. However, the Congress High Command summoned to Delhi several congress leaders of Orissa on October 10. Some dissidents were also summoned. The purpose of the meeting was to "throw out intra-party differences threatening the ruling party's election prospects in the state."⁶³ However, the disciplinary Action Committee of the Congress(I) recommended Mohapatra's expulsion from the party. On 17 November 1984, S.S. Mohapatra was expelled from the Congress(I) Party. Thus, master juggler, J.B. Patnaik, got rid of one of his long-standing and bitterest rival in the State politics. That Patnaik

61. Statesman (Delhi) 8 Sept. 1984.

62. Times of India (Delhi) 15 Sept. 1984.

63. Times of India (Delhi) 9 October, 1984.

had succeeded in poisoning the ear of the High Command and action against Mohapatra was imminent was clear when the Prime Minister during his Orissa tour just a day before her assassination praised J.B. Patnaik and his Government for doing well and ruled out any change in the leadership.⁶⁴

Mrs. Gandhi was assassinated on 31st October, 1984. This generated a new emotional out-brust throughout the country. Congress(I), through their campaigning, speeches, manifesto and propaganda projected 'Unity and integrity' of the nation as an issue before the electorate along with 'Clean government.' All these coupled with the sympathy factor gave a spectacular success to Rajiv on his maiden appearance as leader of the party and government. With 49.17 percent votes and 401 seats in its bag Congress(I) opened up a new chapter in the annals of electoral history. In Orissa these same factors helped Congress to win all but one seats (it was 20 out of 21 seats). Dissidence during the poll to Lok Sabha was lying at its lowest ebb. All Congressmen unitedly fought the election. It was due to the traumatic experience of the nation which came in the form of Mrs. Gandhi's assassination and events which followed it.

64. Amrit Bazar Patrika, 31 October 1984.

Nevertheless, there were some dissidents in the state who allegedly tried in vain to sabotage their political enemies in their own party i.e. Congress(I). Thus on January 9, 1985. The PCC(I) executive and the presidents and the Secretaries of the DCC met at Bhubaneswar and authorised PCC(I) president Nitya-nanda Mishra to form a Committee to enquire into allegation against partymen who were engaged in anti-party activities during the Lok Sabha elections and to recommend action against them.⁶⁵

An analysis of the above discussion shows that it is the High Command and especially Mrs. Gandhi and his son Sanjay and latter on Rajiv who were the ultimate balancing factors in political rivalry at various levels. Had it not been so, the local conflicts and dissensions would have shattered the party edifice long ago. The dissidents were always incapable of harming the man at the top if he was in good book of the High Command. J.B. Patnaik successfully tackled all his detractors and almost isolated them into political wilderness. Those who were opposed to him were either sacked or expelled or were forced to toe the line of the Chief Minister. In addition to this J.B. Patnaik made friends in New Delhi with heavy weights in the AICC(I)

65. Patriot 11 January, 1985.

such a G.K. Moopanar, Rajindra Kumari Pranab Mukherjee etc., who worked for him. It was due to these factors that inspite of most of the M.P.'s from the state opposing his leadership and constantly trying to persuade the High Command through memoranda, he continued to hold on without any danger. In fact, all these memoranda proved to be disasterous for the dissidents themselves when it was seen that after each such representation the High Command gave a clean chit to Patnaik Ministry and to cap it all gave green signal to the Chief Minister to strike at the dissidents to control them.

Another observable fact is that when a leader of the faction persistently tries to gain some power and failed repeatedly in his attempts he usually either leaves the party or revolts openly out of frustrated hopes and blasted emotions. The instance of S.S. Mohapatra is point in this regard. He was opposed to Nandini Satpathy and later on to J.B. Patnaik. Both of them effectively centred Mohapatra due to their proximity to Mrs. Gandhi and her son. When Mohapatra was rising to eminence during his general secretaryship of the AICC(I) in 1980 exactly at this time Patnaik successfully clipped the wings of his over ambitious rival. Subsequently, all his efforts were also belied by Patnaik both in Delhi as well as in Orissa Sens-

ing that he could not succeed in his aim inspite of his undefatigable anti-Patnaik efforts for over four years, he (Mohapatra) revolted openly, knowing fully well that this could invite severe disciplinary action against him. In fact, he was mentally prepared to face the expulsion. This shows that when a faction leader's demand is disregarded for long he retreats to the point of open rebellion.

Another fact to be observed is that the process of elimination of dissidents, if handled astutely, helps in putting the party legislators on their toes. Thus, J.B. Patnaik, during his maiden experience of state politics got rid of dissident leaders like K.C. Lenka, Upendra Dixit R.C. Ulaka, Dayanidhi Nayak and K.C. Patnaik etc. on different occasions, and this exercise was done under the name of Congress(I) High Command. This otherwise generated hope among the aspirant legislators and put the ministerial colleagues on the right track.

CONCLUSION

As a matter of fact, factionalism in Indian politics is omnipresent and mutli-dimensional phenomenon. In Liberal Democratic party Systems which are open and competitive in nature factional conflicts are inevitable. Intra-party groups and rivalries take many forms. It is due to this factionalism that party politics in Orissa since the very inception of the State has passed through several interesting phases. During the period under study (1975 to 1985) the ruling parties witnessed many a crisis and clash of interest and/or personalities. The players changed sides, the rules of the game underwent alterations and strategies witnessed new dimensions.

The hypothesis that factionalism is predominantly personal in nature is amply proved through analysis of facts in the present case study. The interest of group-leaders had, in all cases, been the major contributing factor in the formation and/or disintegration of factions in the party. For instance, Mahtab in late fifties formed a faction with Biju, Biren and Nilamoni as the core members only to stage a comeback from his political exile in Bombay Raj Bhawan. Soon after he succeeded in his design, the faction disintegrated. Similarly, J.B. Patnaik - Ram Rath

faction was formed by the former only to wrest power from Mrs. Satpathy. And no sooner did J.B. Patnaik was made the C.M. in 1980, he ignored the claims of his trusted follower Ram Rath which resulted in latter's alienation from his master and subsequent emergence of Mohapatra - Rath - Lenka faction in 1982. This also shows that faction-leaders often side-track their hard-core followers if they foresee danger to their own interest or position in the form of possible challenge from the emerging leadership of their earstwhile supporters.

Another powerful variable at the micro-level factionalism is the "psychological and sociological" factor which James L. Payne termed as "status incentives". It means a heightened need for power, prestige and the like on the part of an actor who enters politics primarily in pursuance of these basically personal ends. In the present study, it is difficult to come across a single faction - leader who did not ran after these powerful motivating factor. In fact, the very strength and cohesiveness of a faction depended largely upon the ability of a leader to distribute material benefits and extend patronage to his followers. The relation between a leader and his followers is invariably that of give-and-take a mutual interest adjustment. The leader, in return of support from his followers,

distributes benefits and offers political protection or support to his followers who, in fact, support the leader in the hope of receiving patronage from him rather than follow any principle or ideology. The relationship is superficial, short-lived and amoral. Binayak Acharya supported Nandini Satpathy in the hope that in case of Biju Patnaik's defeat he would be made the leader of the CLP and hence the CM if a chance came. But when Mrs. Satpathy was imposed by the party High Command as the CM, Acharya's long-cherished hope was shattered and he soon started a tirade against her. Similarly, Ram Chandra Rath supported J.B. Patnaik in latter's fight against Mrs. Satpathy and continued to do so till he realised that he was fighting a lost battle and that his cause no longer being nurtured well by his mentor. Marry C. Carras' thesis that ideology or policy issues also causes factionalism does not hold good in the light of findings in the present study. In the present study the facts amply prove that personal ambitious and gains rather than principles and ideology have been the determinants of factionalism. Principle and ideology always get the back seat in the game of politics in India.

Factionalism is highly fluid and fluctuating in nature. Members - both core and peripheral - often change sides without any hesitation if they perceive that it will any way help achieve their desired goal. In 1972-73, Binayak Acharya,

S.S. Mohapatra and P.K. Bal who were allies of Mrs. Satpathy against the dominant faction of Biju Patnaik soon parted company and formed anti-Satpathy faction when she joined hand with Mahtab. Similarly, for some time ex-PCP men like S.N. Dwivedi, B.B. Das and N. Khuntia were allies of Mrs. Satpathy. But soon after her alliance with the CPI in 1974 they drifted away from her and joined the rival faction. In 1976, J.B. Patnaik's faction consisted of K.C. Lenka and Ram Chandra Rath as the core members which resulted in Satpathy's down-fall. Just after J.B. Patnaik became the CM and the "ruling clique" with B.K. Biswal as the dominant figure emerged on the scene, Lenka and Rath turned hostile to Patnaik so much so that they became the leaders of dissidents. Thus, it is apparent that factionalism is marked by a high degree of fluidity.

Factional conflicts at one level of the organization sometime tend to spread their tentacles to the other level too both vertically and horizontally. The State level party leaders, in the present case study, tried hard to gain the support and goodwill of the High Command and at the same time strove hard to control the DDC and other lower level institutions. In 1975 Mrs. Satpathy, tried to replace her men, though without success, in the Workers' Union of Paradeep, Students Congress and State Youth Congress. These

abortive attempt proved fatal for her in the State politics and cost her the Chief Ministership in 1976. Similarly, J.B. Patnaik, in 1983, maneuvered the organisational elections to the DCCs and the PCC (1) to capture these organisation. His success in this exercise is an independent variable which explains his continuity in power. In fact, mobilization of all these organisations placed horizontally and down the ladder is always considered essential to impress up on the High Command of the vitality and inevitability of the leader concerned. Thus, it may be concluded that with the intensification of factionalism, both sides compete for winning over the support of power structures placed horizontally as well as vertically both down and above them. It may not be out of place to mention here that the Congress party with its dominant position in the Centre and most of the States for a considerably long time has developed a political culture of its own. There is no gainsaying the fact that factionalism as an index of power game has acquired acceptability in Congress political culture. Its forms did differ but the outcome did not.

Another noticeable fact which emerges clearly from the study is the decisive role played by the High Command especially in the Congress System. A faction, regardless of its strength in the CLP, could easily emerge as victo-

rious in the factional warfare if it can win the support of the High Command. In the tussle between Satpathy and Biju Patnaik, the former won although she was representing a minority faction and Biju Patnaik was in full command of the party organisation. But Indira Gandhi did not like Biju from the beginning which clinched the issue in Satpathy's favour. She was virtually imposed on the State party Organisation by Indira Gandhi in 1974. Similarly, J.B. Patnaik succeeded against Satpathy only and exclusively due to disdain which Sanjay Gandhi harboured against the ex-communist Satpathy. She was sacked in 1976, inspite of majority support to her in the CLP and the party in general. From 1980-85, notwithstanding all their indefatigable efforts, Lenka-Mohapatra faction could not dislodge J.B. Patnaik because he enjoyed the confidence of Mrs. Gandhi and later on Rajiv Gandhi and cultivated good relations with Congress heavy-weights at the Centre such as Pranab Mukherjee, Chandulal Chandrakar, G.K. Moopanar, Rajendra Kumari Bajpae etc.

The case of strong leadership for countering factionalism in the party is generally found to be untenable. In case of Orissa we find a galaxy of distinguished personalities endowed with undisputed qualities of leadership, For example, Dr. Mahtab and Biju Patnaik were towering

figure with immense mass following. Dr. Mahtab was a seasoned politician and dynamic. Similarly, Mrs. Satpathy had unparalleled shrewdness in her style of functioning while R.N. Singh Deo, Natakantha Das etc. were just brilliant leaders. J.B. Patnaik, as compared to these figures was too small and just an emerging star. However, the leadership of all these stalwarts was characterised by the intense group fighting so much so that none of them could complete a full term in the office. But, strange as it seems, J.B. Patnaik is going to complete his second full term as the Chief Minister of the troublesome Orissa. Thus, contrary to the popular belief, strong leadership is no sure an antidote to factionalism.

The view that party in power is susceptible to intense factional cleavages in the absence of any effective and organised opposition does not hold ground with consistency. Factionalism during J.B. Patnaik's first ministry from 1980-85 continued unabated although the Congress was facing a strong opposition with Biju Patnaik as the head of Janata Party. After the mid-term Assembly poll of 1974, Congress ministry with Satpathy as the Chief Minister was made possible because the CPI (which had seven members in the Assembly) supported her from without. Utkal Congress was formidable and strong having 35 members.

Congress was facing unprecedented external threat in the form of an alliance between three formidable heavyweights of the State viz Biju Patnaik, Dr. Mahtab and R.N. Singh Deo, all former CMS which was termed as Pragati Party. But, inspite of such external threat, intraparty tussle between Satpathy and ex-PSP men was on full swing which latter on developed into anti-CPI faction headed by Binayak Acharya and S.N. Dwivedi. Similar was the case of increasing factionalism in Lok Dal Ministry of Nilanony Routray during 1979-80 when they were facing challenge from the re-emerging Congress party in the State.

A dominant party, because of its unchallenged monopoly of political power, patronage and financial resources available to it, obviously attracts to itself a wide variety of socio-economics interest and, thus becomes a haven for most disparate elements which grope, through it, for political recognition, articulation and control. J.B. Patnaik gave a stability to the State politics which resulted in proliferation into the Congress(I) of various interest groups, such as contractors and mine-workers lobbies, which resulted in the factional conflict between Biswal (representing contractors' lobby) virsus anti-Patnaik faction led by K.C. Lenka and Ram Chandra Rath.

Janata Party from 1979-80 also provides an example in this regard and also explains intense factionalism during the Janata rule. Potentiality or prospect of factionalism in dominant party is more than in other lesser political parties.

Another important observation is the strong possibility of inter-party collaboration when factionalism increases in a party. Mrs. Satpathy, due to her Communist background sought their support to win against her rivals in the party itself. It was this very motivation which also forced her to engineer PSP merger in the Congress. Another instance is clandestine support of ex-PSP men in the Congress to the J.P. movement in Orissa. They did it to hasten the downfall of Nandini government because they were opposed to her alliance with the CPI. Similarly, Biju Patnaik the leader of opposition in the Assembly supported dissidents who were striving hard to replace J.B. Patnaik.

The role of press and media of communication e.g. T.V., Radio in intensification of factionalism has been well observed during the present study. Press and politics go hand in hand in Orissa. Every stalwart in politics in the State either owns a newspaper or has direct or indirect control over a newspaper. Dr. Mahtab owned

the Eastern Times (English) and "The Prajatantra" (Oriya). Mrs. Satpathy also has her own paper - Dharitri - edited by her husband. J.B. Patnaik's son-in-law owns and edits a widely circulated Oriya daily "Sambad". These newspapers mirrors the views attitude and perceptions of their owners. For example, when Mrs. Satpathy was involved in factional fight with the dissidents in the party in 1976, the Dharitri, the paper established by her, extended strong support to her. It not only praised and highlighted her bold leadership and substantial achievements, but also bitterly attacked the opponents. Similarly, 'Sambad' was used by J.B. Patnaik to boost his image and expose the misdeeds of dissidents leaders throughout the entire period of his first ministry when he was facing challenge from Mohapatra-Lenka-Rath faction. J.B. Patnaik also used All India Radio, Cuttack and Cuttack T.V. for the above-said purpose. This also shows that with the intersification of factionalism the media of mass communication got involved in it thereby tremendously increasing the flow of political communication.

The study suggests that factionalism in Orissa, transcends important socio-political categories such as caste, tribes etc. Only during pre-independent days caste was the base of factionalism. Satyabadi group was comprised

of Brahmins and the anti-Satyabadi group consisted of Karans. But after that no such things was observed. Important leaders of a faction since post - independent period were from different castes. The wide-spread criticism that Nandini Government was Brahmin was not correct. The most important dissidents during that period were Binayak Acharya and Ram Chandra Rath, both Brahmins. Similarly, regionalism (coastal versus western tribal districts) never acquired importance in the factional game in the State. This was primarily because the Congress had seldom been strong in western Orissa and hence most of its important leaders were from coastal districts. So the Congress factionalism was mostly been confined to its leaders from the coastal districts.

In the light of facts, it may be concluded that, when a leader of a faction fail repeatedly in his endeavour to gain power or his hope of success in future is bleak, he either revolt openly against the party leadership or leaves the party altogether. For example, S.S. Mohapatra was effectively curbed first by Mrs. Satpathy and then by J.B. Patnaik. All his effort to cut a place in the power structure was sabotaged by the two former CMS. When Mohapatra saw that so long as J.B. Patnaik is there he had no chance to test real power, he openly revolted against the former

fully knowing that disciplinary action would be taken against him. In fact, he was mentally prepared to face the action of High Command which culminated in his expulsion in 1984. Similarly, in 1940s, Das - Mishra faction quit the Congress party, when they saw that they would never succeed against Mahtab. The case of Congress splits in Orissa in 1967 when Dr. Mahtab and his followers left Congress to form "Jana Congress" and again the next split in 1970 when Biju Patnaik and his followers left the party, when they were defeated in the factional conflict with Mrs. Satpathy faction prove the above point eloquently. Both the split were the result of this "demand-and-retreat" syndrome of faction-leaders.

Last but not the least is the observation that the process of elimination of dissidents, if handled astutely, help putting the party-men on the right track. J.B. Patnaik, during his first ministry, got rid of K.C. Lenka, Upendra Dixit, R.C. Ulka, Dayanidhi Nayak, K.C. Patnaik etc. on different occasion, all done under the name of High Command, generated hope among aspirant and at the same time put the ministerial colleagues on the track. This helped him in curbing the dissidence in the party.

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