







# ORISSA REVIEW

SEPTEMBER 1997





Chief Minister Shri J. B. Patnaik inaugurating a special condolence meeting at Rabindra Mandap on 13-9-1997 in sad memory of Mother Teresa.



The pic. shows Mother Teresa at the Leprosy Ashram at Janla near Bhubaneswar in mid-Eighties.



# ORISSA REVIEW

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## In This Issue...

- Integration of Princely States in Orissa 1  
*Dr. A.C. Pradhan*
- Darkest was the Night before Dawn 9  
*Dr. Pabitra Mohan Nayak*
- Under-Ground Organisation during the August 14 Revolution in Orissa  
*Dr. Bijay Chandra Rath*
- An Agitation for Betel-Leaf 20  
*Avaya Kumar Behera*
- Second Congress Ministry in Orissa (1946-50) 23  
*Dr. Hemanta Kumar Mohapatra*
- 50 Years of Irrigation in Orissa 27  
*Dr. A.K. Dalua*
- A Look into Economy of Orissa during Pre and Post-Independence period 31  
*Dr. K.K. Bal*
- Agriculture in Orissa—Its Present Position & Future Strategy 35  
*Dr. R.K. Panda*
- Development of mineral based industries and progress of mineral exploration and exploitation in the State during 50 years after Independence 38
- The Place of Kendrapara in the National Struggle for Freedom 40  
*Umakant Mohapatra*
- Insurance Investment in Orissa 43  
*B.N. Biswal*
- Note on the Recent visit of Chief Minister & the State Delegation to U.K. 45



## CHIEF MINISTER DISCUSSES WITH BRITISH OFFICIALS REGARDING DEVELOPMENT OF STATE

Shri J.B. Patnaik, Chief Minister, Orissa and Shri B.K. Biswal, Dy. C.M. during their current visit to U.K. called on the Secretary of State, DIFD, Ms Clare Short on 27th Aug' 97 and discussed the continued support of DIFD not only in health and energy sectors as before but also in poverty alleviation programmes through (i) agroforestry, (ii) mini-irrigation projects, like borewells, lift irrigation projects, etc. and (iii) organisation of women's cooperatives in Tribal areas for undertaking various kinds of economic activities, like processing of food products, production of handicrafts items etc. Officials of the State Govt. delegation were present during the discussion. In course of discussions, the Chief Minister highlighted the measures taken by the State Govt. (i) to develop irrigation potential, (ii) commercial agriculture, (iii) supply of foodgrains at subsidised price to people in rural areas, (iv) provision of mid-day meal for school children and (v) free kitchen for the old and the infirm as a multi-pronged strategy for alleviation of poverty.

Secretary of State Ms. C. Short, Govt. of U.K. very much appreciated the determined efforts of the State Govt. for effectively tackling the problems of poverty, besides attracting large scale industrial investment for accelerated development of the State through utilisation of abundant natural resources. Chief Minister entirely endorsed the view of the Secretary of State, BIFD, that every effort should be made to ensure percolation of the fruits of development to the poorer sections of the society. Precisely for this purpose the Chief Minister mentioned that the State Govt. are according very high priority to development of agriculture and in that context the projected development irrigation facilities and agroforestry have become very relevant. Support of the U.K. Govt. for these programmes which are aimed at alleviation of poverty would receive due consideration of the British Govt.

Representatives of several business/industrial houses including (i) Kvaerner International (Com) Ltd. (ii) Balfour Balty (Com) Ltd., (iii) United Industries and Investment Ltd., (iv) Tim Skeventon, GEC Alsthom, (v) N.S. Atkins (Com) Ltd. called on the Chief Minister and have had discussions regarding possibilities of their participation in industrial/infrastructure projects in Orissa. A meeting was also held with Chairman, CDC, who evinced keen interest in infrastructure projects in Orissa. Another meeting with European Chairman of M/s Marryn Lynch was also held on the 27th.

Discussions were quite fruitful.

## STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTED TO THE UPLIFT OF THE POOR

While addressing a large gathering on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee year of India's Independence at the Mahatma Gandhi Marg, in the State Capital Chief Minister, Shri J.B. Patnaik outlined his Government's plans and programmes for the all round development of the State.

He unfurled the national tricolour flag and took the salute at a combined march-past on the Mahatma Gandhi Marg to commemorate completion of 50 years of India's Independence.

Disclosing the plan and projects in the pipeline for the rapid industrialisation of the State, Chief Minister said more steel plants would be set up in the State including the proposed ones at Sukinda and Gopalpur. Approximately Rs. One lakh crore would be invested in setting up the industries, he added.

Reminiscing about the glorious period of Orissa's maritime trade, Chief Minister focussed on the upcoming three ports in Orissa. The Gopalpur port would soon be developed into one of the biggest ports within the next five years. The upgradation of the Paradeep port and setting up of another big port at Dhamara near Chandbali were also in the offing.

Apart from this, the tourism potential of the State should be tapped and exploited. Development in tourism sector could contribute to the economic growth of the State, he added.

Focussing on the commitment of the government to develop the agriculture sector, Chief Minister reiterated Govt.'s stand to double the production of rice, groundnut, pulses, cotton and vegetables within next few years.

The Chief Minister stressed the need for uplift of the poorer sections of the society to fulfill the dreams of Mahatma Gandhi. Recalling the sacrifice and struggle of freedom fighters, he urged the masses to pay tributes to them and imbibe their ideologies.



# INTEGRATION OF PRINCELY STATES IN ORISSA

*Dr. A.C. Pradhan*

There were twenty six Oriya-speaking princely states in Eastern States Agency at the time of independence. Out of them, except Seraikella and Kharswan, the rest were finally merged in Orissa. The merger of these twentyfour states was an event of great significance in the history of modern Orissa and India; it opened the vista of all round development for Orissa and marked the beginning of the twin process of integration and democratization of princely states in India. The need for merger of princely states with Orissa proper had been a long-felt necessity. Way back in 1929, the Attlee sub-committee, appointed by the Indian Statutory Commission had stressed the need for administrative relationship between the proposed Orissa province and the princely states.

Whatever might be the reality of situation in states the British authorities regarded themselves as the trustees of the princely rulers. Through the Political Department of Government of India all protection was being accorded to them. From April 1933 the provincial government ceased to have control over the states. From 1 April 1933, 26 princely states of Orissa and 14 princely states of Central Provinces were placed under Governor of Central Provinces who exercised his jurisdiction through an official, called Agent to the Governor General (later on designated as Resident). These states were constituted into Eastern States Agency. Under the Resident two Political Agents were appointed - one for Orissa states, and another for C.P. states.

Early in April 1946 Harekrushna Mahatab, the prospective Prime Minister of Orissa submitted a memorandum to the Cabinet Mission, putting forth therein his arguments for the merger of the princely states with the province. He argued in the memorandum that the political history of princely states, economic development of the province as

well as states and smooth functioning of administration in both of them called for the amalgamation of the princely states with the Orissa province.

While the rulers were opposed to the merger of princely states with Orissa, some Praja Mandal leaders thought of introduction of responsible Governments in their respective states with themselves at the helm of affairs. Some princes thought of retaining their position by introducing responsible governments. In some princely states, such as Nilgiri and Kharswan, the rulers sought to safeguard their positions by setting the aborigines against the Prajāmandal groups, dominated by caste Hindus.

After becoming the Prime Minister of Orissa in April 1946, H.K. Mahatab felt the urgent need for coordination between the provincial Government and princely states in such matters as communication, law and order, administration of justice, education, public health, excise, forests, industries and agriculture, because the states were geographically contiguous to the province and intermingled with the territories of the province. The provincial Government particularly found it difficult to maintain link with Sambalpur districts and Angul subdivision of Cuttack district without coordination with princely states. For development of coordination with princely states Mahatab wrote two letters to the rulers and met their representatives in a conference at Sambalpur on 16 October 1946.

In the meantime there was a lot of discussion in the press about the amalgamation of princely states with the province, which made the rulers uneasy and nervous. Consequently, in their letters to Col. Todd, the Resident of Eastern States Agency and H.K. Mahatab, the rulers of Seraikella, Patna, and Kalahandi took strong



exceptions to the campaigns in the press for amalgamation of the princely states with the province and particularly the reported statement of Mahatab on amalgamation. Though sympathetic towards the rulers, Todd advised them to hold discussion with Mahatab. In their replies to Mahatab, the rulers of Patna, Seraikella and Kalahandi criticized the press campaign for amalgamation and assured cooperation, if the states were treated as equals by the provincial Government.

At this stage Mahatab and C.L. Trivedi (Governor of Orissa) tried to dispel the apprehension of the rulers about the alleged move of the provincial Government to absorb the states. In their discussions with Herbert, the special representative of Viceroy, held on 20 and 21 June 1946, Mahatab and Trivedi pointed out that one common administration would be established for the province and states with the following provisions :

- a) Dynasties of the rulers would be preserved.
- b) Privy purse would be guaranteed.
- c) Rulers would have representation in a common Legislature and a common cabinet.
- d) A convention would be established that no law, passed by the common legislature, could be applied to a state without the formal consent of the Ruler concerned, it being understood that such consent would be forthcoming.
- e) Each state would be retained as a unit in the administrative system.

On 29 June 1946, Mahatab addressed another letter to the rulers expressing satisfaction over their willingness for mutual discussion.

The rulers actually did not intend to cooperate with the provincial Government. They rather made attempts to foil Mahatab's moves for a common administration with the blessings of the Political Department. In this attempt the ruler of Seraikella and the ruler of Patna (R.N. Singh deo, who was the son of the ruler of Seraikella and had been adopted by the Maharaja of Patna) played leading parts. In his letter to the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, dated 30 June 1946, R.N. Singh deo opposed the plan for common administration for states and province on the ground that it would result in the political and economic exploitation of the backward people of the states by the more

politically conscious people of the province. The rulers of Patna and Seraikella contended that many princely states (such as Patna, Kalahandi, Sonapur, Sambalpur, Rairakhol, Bamra, Bonai, Gangpur, Baudh, Athamllik, Daspalla and Seraikella) had no historical link with Orissa. The ruler of Seraikella rejected Mahatab's contention that the princely states were originally mere Zamindaries and claimed real sovereign powers.

As a counter-blast to Mahatab's move for bringing the states and province under a single administration the rulers of Orissa and Central Provinces (Chhatishgarh) states formed the Eastern States Union so as to make it a unit of the proposed all-India Union. The Maharaja of Patna was an enthusiastic protagonist of the Eastern States Union, but the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj reserved his option about joining it. The Eastern States Union was inaugurated from 1 August 1947.

The Maharaja of Patna had also made another move for the formation of the state of Koshal, consisting of princely states of Western Orissa and Sambalpur district. The campaign for this new state was being carried on through the state paper of Patna, *Patna Dipika*. R.N. Singh Deo also tried to make capital out of anti-Hirakud Dam agitation in Sambalpur.

On 16 October 1946 H.K. Mahatab met some rulers, representing the Orissa States at Sambalpur. This meeting proved a failure, because the rulers opposed Mahatab's proposal for joint planning and administration and expressed their commitment to the proposed Eastern States Union and held Mahatab Government responsible for agitations in the states. Mahatab's failure to get favourable response from the rulers and the formation of Eastern States Union by the rulers were due to the support they got from the Political Department. While the rulers tried to evade integration by forming the Eastern States Union, there was persistent demand from the Praja Mandal groups for introduction of responsible government as well as integration with the province of Orissa. Sarangadhar Das, the main Praja Mandal leader (who hailed from Dhenkanal) and Members of Orissa Legislative Assembly was playing an active role in rousing the public opinion in states for establishment of responsible Government and integration of states with the province.



The Krishak Party of Patna demanded from the ruler the declaration of responsible Government by 1 July 1947 and constitution of an interim popular Government from 1 April 1947 and asked for the permission of All-India States' People's conference to launch civil disobedience movement for the attainment of these goals.

On 1 March 1947 the Orissa and C.P. Regional Council of the All-India States Peoples' Conference met at Cuttack. The conference asked the rulers to transfer "all powers of administration to the people's representatives in their respective states or groups of states or to negotiate and amalgamate, in consideration of language, culture, geographical contiguity and economic necessity, with neighbouring provinces, so that a free and federated India may be constituted comprising separate and autonomous linguistic units of homogeneous people and thereby to effectively contribute towards the all round progressive growth of the Democratic Federated Indian Republic.

The conference asked the rulers of Eastern States Agency not to proceed any further with their proposed scheme of "Eastern States Federal Union", as it did not take into consideration the linguistic, cultural, social, geographical and economic facts but explore every possible means for the collaboration of Oriya-Speaking states with the province of Orissa as also of Hindi-speaking states with the neighbouring Hindi-speaking province.

While Mahatab was trying to implement joint administration of states and province, Pattabhi Sitaramayya opposed it and expressed preference for grouping of states of Orissa like Deccan States Union. Sitaramayya opposed Mahatab's plan on three grounds : First, the states could not be provided representation in the Orissa Legislative Assembly without amendment of Government of India Act, 1935; secondly, Mahatab's scheme gave undue weightage to the rulers at the cost of the people of Orissa province, because while the rulers would maintain their territorial integrity and authority and might become ministers in the Orissa Government, the people of Orissa province would have "no hand in connection with the administration of the states"; thirdly amalgamation was impossible so long as the rulers of individual states retained their autocratic powers.

The transfer of power by the British

Government in 1947 threw a challenge to the rulers. Theoretically with the lapse of British paramountcy the rulers became sovereign, but practically they found themselves caught up in the wave of nationalism and democracy, and found it difficult to maintain law and order because of popular unrest.

Besides the rising tide of democracy, represented by the state Praja Mandal there were two other political realities to which the rulers could not close their eyes :

- (1) The Provincial Government of Orissa which for geographical, historical and cultural reasons as well as administrative and developmental compulsions wanted the integration of states with the province, and
- (2) the Dominion Government at the centre, which was the natural successor of the British Paramount power and wanted not only accession and democratization, of princely states but also their merger in the neighbouring provinces. In June 1947 the Political Department which was controlling and protecting the rulers was liquidated and States Ministry was created to bring about merger and democratization of princely states.

On 26 September 1947 the rulers met at Bhawanipatna to consider the question of introducing responsible Governments in the states with a view to pacifying the agitators. While some rulers favoured the idea of introduction of responsible Governments, others opposed the idea seeking to suppress the popular movements by means of force. The rulers decided in this meeting to strengthen their joint police force by recruiting the Gurkhas and Pakistanis.

At this stage, the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj who had not joined the Eastern States Union introduced responsible Government in his state with Sarat Chandra Das, a Praja Mandal leader as Prime Minister. The Maharaja of Patna made a partial offer of responsible Government which was rejected by the State Krushak Sangha (Peasants' Organisation) in its conference of 10,000 people, held at Patna on 29 and 30 October 1947. This conference also refused to recognize the Eastern States Union.



In the meantime there were disturbances in Nilgiri. The Raja of Nilgiri who was unpopular and had been forced to remain out of power for sometime by the Political Department created a lawless situation in his state by setting a few aborigine criminals against the Praja Mandal leaders. The aborigine criminals looted the houses of the Praja Mandal leaders, and set fire to their houses. Out of panic many non-aborigines fled to the neighbouring Balasore district. The Orissa Government apprehended that the aborigines' disturbance in Nilgiri might spread to other areas and drew the attention of the Government of India on the situation in Nilgiri. Mahatab went to New Delhi to discuss the situation with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the Home Minister of the Government of India, who was also in charge of states. Being authorized by the Government of India the Government of Orissa decided to take over the administration of Nilgiri. On 14 November 1947 the District Magistrate of Balasore proceeded to Raj Nilgiri with adequate police force to take over the administration. The Raja of Nilgiri handed over the administration without any resistance and disarmed the Eastern States Union force, stationed at Raj Nilgiri.

After the takeover of Nilgiri a meeting was held on 20 November 1947 in the Chamber of V.P. Menon, the Secretary of States Ministry to consider the future constitutional status of Orissa states. The meeting was attended by H.K. Mahatab (the Prime Minister of Orissa), V.P. Menon (the Secretary, Ministry of States), C.C. Desai, (Additional Secretary, Ministry of States), B.D.S. Bedi (Regional Commissioner, Sambalpur) and Nagendra Singh, I.C.S. The meeting in the States ministry took two important decisions. First, the Eastern States Union which had been formed "in utter disregard of linguistic, economic, and social considerations" and could not be a "culturally and linguistically homogenous unit" should not be recognized. The meeting decided that "as the future of the Orissa States, economically and politically lay with the province of Orissa, it was necessary that the Chhatishgarh States comprising Hindi-speaking areas should seek integration with the province of C.P. and Berar, whereas the Oriya-speaking tract should seek constitutional relationship with the Province of Orissa". Secondly, it was decided that a conference of 'B' and 'C' class states would be held at Cuttack in the first week of

December 1947 in which the Orissa Prime Minister would participate to decide the modality of integration of 'B' and 'C' class state with the province of Orissa.

While the integration of 'B' and 'C' class states with the province was being contemplated by the States Ministry and the Orissa Government, cracks developed in Eastern States Union. The Raja of Khairagarh, a Member of the Eastern States Union proposed that the rulers should extend "full and unconditional cooperation", "including if necessary the merger of states" to the neighbouring provinces. Many small rulers who thought of acting independently wanted the scrapping of Eastern States Union. The rulers of Korea and Patnagarh were keen on preserving the Eastern States Union. On 1 December 1947 the rulers of Korea, Patnagarh and Khairagarh met Sardar Patel in New Delhi. Patel told them clearly that the Eastern States Union must be dissolved and that the Oriya-speaking states must be integrated with Orissa and the Hindi-speaking states with Central Provinces. He pointed out that the 'B' and 'C' class states were incapable of standing on their own feet and must be integrated with the province, and that suitable machinery should be evolved through discussion at Cuttack for joint administration of certain subjects between the province and 'A' class states. Consequently all the three (A, B & C) classes of rulers were invited to the conference at Cuttack.

Mahatab's personal equation with Sardar Patel proved to be an important factor in the final settlement of states' problem in Orissa. "When we stayed together in Ahamadnagar fort (jail)", writes Mahtab in his memories, "a kind of father-son relationship had developed between us". Originally, when the conference of Orissa states chiefs was scheduled to be held at Cuttack in December 1947, it was decided that V.P. Menon, the Secretary of States Ministry alone would come to Cuttack to discuss with the rulers. But later on, through Mahatab's intervention, Sardar Patel decided to come himself. Mahtab writes : "I pressed Sardar to come down to Cuttack himself and settle the matter as he thought proper. He agreed and come to Cuttack on the 13th December 1947".

Patel arrived at Cuttack on 13 December 1947. The same day he had discussion with the Governor K.N. Katju and the ministers of the



Government of Orissa. After this discussion Patel took the momentous decision that the rulers of all the three (A, B & C) classes of states would be divested of political powers and administrative functions and that all the three classes of states would be merged in the province of Orissa. About Patel's determination to have the three classes of states merged in the Province V.P. Menon wrote : "Sardar was prepared to go all out to secure the merger of all three classes of states with the province of Orissa". Consequently the Orissa Governments memorandum, containing the plan of integration of B & C classes of states which had been drawn up at the instance of States Ministry was scrapped and a new memorandum was prepared and printed overnight, containing the plan of integration of three classes of states.

The memorandum proposed integration of states in the following manner :

- (a) The rulers would accede to the Dominion Government in all matters covered by the list of federal subject in Government of India, 1935.
- (b) With the permission of the Dominion Government the rulers would accede to the province of Orissa in all matters covered by the provincial and concurrent list in the Act.
- (c) The rulers would be completely divested of "all political powers and administrative functions" but they would be guaranteed "dynastic succession, a generous privy purse, enjoyment in perpetuity of personal liberties and certain well-defined personal dignities and prerogatives".

The new memorandum made a departure from the New Delhi discussion of 20 November in one important respect. While the New Delhi discussion had contemplated the merger of B and C class states and left the A class states outside the scheme of merger, the new memorandum proposed merger of A, B and C classes of states according to Patel's decision at Cuttack.

On 14 December 1947, at Raj Bhavan, Cuttack Patel met 'B' and 'C' class rulers at 10.00 a.m. and 'A' class rulers separately after the lunch. In both these meetings, on behalf of the Dominion Government and Provincial Government the following functionaries were present - Sardar Patel, H.K. Mahtab, V.P. Menon, K.V.K. Sundaram

(Secretary, Ministry of Law), V. Shankar (Patel's Private Secretary), Maharaj Nagendra Singh (Regional Commissioner, for the Eastern States, Sambalpur), Nilamani Senapati (Revenue Commissioner, Orissa) and B.C. Mukherji (Chief Secretary, Government of Orissa). In the meeting of 'B' and 'C' class rulers, the rulers of Athagarh, Baramba, Daspalla, Hindol, Khandapara, Kharswan, Narisighpur, Nilgiri, Pal-Lahara, Rairakhol, Ranpur and Talcher were present. The Raj Mata (the dowager queen) of Ranpur who had earlier given consent for merger was also present. Two rulers of 'B' class states (Athamallick and Bonai), and ruler of one 'C' class state (Tigiria) did not attend the conference for illness and some other reason. All the eleven rulers of 'A' class states (Bamra, Baudh, Dhenkanal, Gangpur, Kalahandi, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Nayagarh, Patna, Seraikella, and Sonepur) were present in the conference held after lunch.

In his address to the rulers which was friendly, persuasive and yet mixed up with veiled threats and warnings Patel told the rulers that the in the interest of the people as well as their personal interests the rulers should sign the merger agreement. He told the 'B' and 'C' class rulers : "...if Orissa Government suggested merger of the states in the province, it was not with any selfish motive to swallow all states but it was designed in the best interests of the people of the states and the province as both were determined to march rapidly on the path of progress". Similarly Patel told 'A' class rulers : "The Dominion Government was vitally concerned in the rapid development of Orissa into a model province with its rich mineral resources but this could not be achieved owing to the problem created by Orissa state which intertwined and broke the administrative unity and contiguity of the province".

Patel anticipated that some rulers might try to evade merger on the plea of having introduced responsible Government and that some might claim autonomous status. "Responsible Government in petty states", he said, "had no meaning". He also pointed out that the states could not afford to have institutions like High Court, hospitals, educational institutions, and other modern facilities. He guaranteed them in perpetuity privy purse, dynastic succession, privileges and dignities. "As a member of a family trying to solve a family problem" Patel advised the rulers to get



rid of disturbances in states by divesting themselves of all power and authority. While giving friendly advice Patel warned the rulers against the consequences which might follow in the event of non-merger. He told the 'B' and 'C' class rulers that if his advice was not listened to, the princes would soon have to come to Delhi after being chased by their people and that he might then not be in a position to help them as things might have gone too far. He told the 'A' class rulers: "Every one realized that the Orissa states were like ulcers on the body of Orissa province and they had to be either cured or eliminated.

Patel's address in each of the two meetings of rulers was followed by discussion. In the evening, the rulers of B and C class states held discussion with V.P. Menon, when Patel was busy in addressing a public meeting at Cuttack. At 10.00 p.m., on the same day, the rulers of 'A' class states met Menon.

Patel did not encounter much opposition from the rulers of 'B' and 'C' classes. They demanded a higher privy purse that what had been fixed by the Government of India. He did not yield to their demand.

On 15 December out of 15 'B' and 'C' class rulers 12 signed the merger agreement, while three others (the rulers of Bonai, Athmallik and Tigiria) signed later, as they did not attend the conference at Cuttack.

'A' Class rulers had a hard bargain and signed the merger document at the last moment, when Patel was about to leave Cuttack by special train for boarding the plane at Bhubaneswar.

Among the 'A' Class rulers the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj pleaded that as he had already granted responsible Government to his people, he could not make any commitment about the merger without consulting his ministers. His stand was accepted. In view of his commitment to democracy and the area, population and income of the state of Mayurbhanj, his state was left outside the scope of merger for sometime.

The Maharaja of Patna who acted as the spokesman for 'A' class rulers pointed out during discussion with Patel in the afternoon that the draft merger agreement did not tally with the discussion he had with the latter in New Delhi. He demanded autonomous status for the states and assurances

for the maintenance of their territorial integrity, representation of the rulers of the legislature, their private property, palace guards, security of permanent services and privileges. He also wanted further time for legal consultation. In reply Patel told that though he had no objection to any alternative scheme being put forward by the rulers, he could not guarantee about what would happen, if his friendly advice for giving up political power and administrative function in lieu of the guarantee for "dignity, dynastic succession, privy purse and privileges" was not headed by them.

At night, during discussion with V.P. Menon, the Maharaja of Patna suggested that there should be a federation of princely states with the province of Orissa regarding certain subjects, while for other subjects the states would remain autonomous units. Menon told the latter that such a "cumbrous arrangement" was practically unworkable and was not beneficial to the people of states.

As the rulers of 'A' class states adopted a stiff attitude, V.P. Menon, probably on his own initiative, decided to give a direct threat to them so that they would sign the merger agreement. He planned to convey the threat through the ruler of Dhenkanal. On the night of 14th December, after all the rulers had left, Menon had a personal discussion with the ruler of Dhenkanal. The ruler of Dhenkanal was feeling very shaky because of the Praja Mandal movement in his state. He, therefore, agreed to merger, as his demands which were quite reasonable were accepted by Menon. Then Menon requested the ruler of Dhenkanal to convey to other rulers that if they did not sign the merger agreement, the administration of their states would be taken over by the Government of India. The next day early in the morning the Maharaja of Patna met Menon. The latter reiterated his threat. Thereafter the Maharaja of Patna gave a memorandum to Menon, containing the following demands :

- 1) A bicameral legislature would be established in Orissa with the rulers of 26 states as the permanent members of the upper house.
- 2) Perpetual privy purse and personal rights and prerogatives of the rulers should be guaranteed. Menon accepted the memorandum and assured the rulers that the Government of India would meet their demands as far as possible after consulting the provincial Government.



The rulers wanted certain amendments in the merger agreement which were accepted by Menon. After hard bargain, finally, all the 'A' Class rulers except that of Mayurbhanj signed the merger agreement.

Sardar Patel had to wait for one hour in the special train at the Cuttack railway station so as to enable Menon to secure the signatures of the 'A' class rulers on the merger agreement. Finally, when Patel received the merger agreement in the train, he issued a statement, appreciating the rulers' patriotism and sacrifice. Some rulers alleged that they had been coerced to sign the merger agreement. The Maharaja of Kalahandi lodged a complaint to Mahatma Gandhi to this effect. Gandhi called Menon and wanted to know whether the rulers had been coerced to sign the merger agreement. The latter did not categorically deny the charge of coercion. But Patel rejected the charge of coercion, levelled against him.

Actually both Patel and Menon had given warnings and veiled threats to the rulers in their eagerness to obtain the rulers' consent to the merger. But warnings and threats had been preceded by patriotic appeals and offer of concessions on personal status. Most of the rulers accepted Patel's proposal because they felt that in the prevailing situation it was in their interest to do so.

"Most of the Rulers", writes H.K. Mahatab, "reconciled themselves to the new order of things and they realize that Sardar Patel had done them the greatest service by securing to them the privy purse in perpetuity and also safety from any kind of popular agitation which was bound to come, had not the states, merged with the province."

Patel, Mahtab and Menon brought about the merger of states by discussion with the rulers and without consultation with the Praja Mandal leaders who were supposed to be the peoples representatives in the states. Among the rulers only the young Raja of Ranpur and the ruler of Mayurbhanj referred to states people's representation through assemblies within the states. Patel had no talk with Praja Mandal leaders. He poohpoohed those Praja Mandal leaders who wanted responsible Government with state autonomy under the constitutional headship of the rulers. He said in the public meeting at Cuttack on 14 December 1947 that if the rulers were thieves,

the Prajamandal leaders who wanted to take over states were dacoits.

The merger of princely states in Orissa was achieved through the initiative and persistent efforts of H.K. Mahtab, the Prime Minister of Orissa under the bold and decisive leadership of Patel at the centre, supported by Menon's dexterity in negotiation and bargain. About Mahtab's role Patel later on wrote : "He was the living spirit in that drama, his was the enthusiasm which triumphed over difficulties and his was the persistence which at last succeeded". Those leaders and workers - the Praja Mandal activists and Congress socialists who exposed the misrule of chiefs and roused political consciousness of the people at the grass root level, (leaders such as Sarangadhar Das, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Nabakrushna Chaudhury and Malati Chaudhury) could make integration possible by breaking the morale of the rulers.

On 23 December 1947, in pursuance of the Extra Provincial Jurisdiction Act, 1947 the Government of India delegated to the Orissa Government the power to administer the princely states "in the same manner as the districts in that province". This delegation became effective from 1st January 1948.

Though states people's leaders had not been consulted at the time of merger, after merger, the Governor of Orissa appointed, three states people's leaders - Kapileshwar Nanda (Balangir Patna), Kailas Chandra Mohanty (Nilgiri), and Pabitra Mohan Pradhan (Talcher) as Executive Councillors, having the status of Ministers for associating them with the provincial Government. Besides in February 1948, Orissa States Assembly was constituted under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister of Orissa with the following members - the Prime Minister himself, the three Executive Councillors, the Chief Administrator (who had been appointed to look after the administration of ex-states), and 34 nominated members from the ex-states. This arrangement was terminated on 9 October 1949, as according to the notification of Governor General 31 members were nominated to the provincial legislative Assembly from the ex-states, raising the strength of the provincial legislature from 60 to 91. These nominations were made through Prime Minister's consultation with Sailendra Narayan Bhanjdeo, the leader of the opposition.



In the meantime disturbances took place in Seraikella and Kharswan, leading to the loss of these states to Bihar. Due to non-merger of Mayurbhanj no direct territorial link could be established between the province of Orissa and these two states. Being instigated by outside politicians, the tribals of these states wanted merger with Bihar. Consequently the rulers of these two states changed their option for merger with Bihar. The Bihar Congress leaders left no stone unturned to get these two states, surrounded by Singhbhum district of Bihar. Finally through the arbitration of the states ministry, Seraikella and Kharswan were transferred to Bihar on 18 May 1948.

Troubles also started in Mayurbhanj which had remained outside the province. The responsible Government of Sarat Chandra Das failed to function. The state exchequer became bankrupt. Consequently the Maharaja and his Prime Minister handed over the administration to the Government of India on 16 October 1948. The Government of India appointed a Chief Commissioner for the administration of the state. On 1 January 1949 Government of India handed over Mayurbhanj to the Government of Orissa. But at this stage the tribals of Mayurbhanj, led by Sonaram Soren and Ramchandra Majhi,

vehemently opposed the merger of Mayurbhanj with Orissa. Most probably the tribals were misled by some outside agencies. In thousands they came to Baripada and held meetings and demonstrations. They declared Bamanghaty subdivision independent and tried to block the road between Baripada and Rairangpur. The tribal opposition was suppressed with the help of military police, and there was much bloodshed. After sometime normalcy was restored and the tribals reconciled themselves to merger of Mayurbhanj with Orissa.

In retrospect, it appears that Orissa lost Seraikella and Kharswan not only because of tribal unrest, instigated by outside agencies (tribal as well as non-tribal) but also due to delay in the merger of Mayurbhanj. As a result of the loss of Seraikella and Kharswan, twentyfour states were merged with Orissa and the territory of the province was enlarged by 72,382.2 square kilometres. Six districts of the province of Orissa (as constituted in 1936) and twentyfour ex-states were reorganized into thirteen districts.

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### APPRECIABLE CARGO HANDLING IN PARADIP PORT

Total cargo handled by the Paradip Port Trust increased to 5447749 tonnes till the end of August this year, compared to 4474725 tonnes during the corresponding period last year. This resulted in an increase of 22 per cent. Traffic also increased over this period by 13 percent as against target fixed by the Ministry of Surface Transport. Major commodities handled include iron ore, thermal coal and raw materials for P.P.L.

Number of ships handled also increased by 13 percent. Record quantity of 72105 tonnes cargo handled on 19th December 1995 was surpassed twice, once on 11th May 1997, 72486 tonnes and again on 3rd August 1997, 74378 tonnes. Paradip Port Trust in confident, by end of this financial year the annual target of 11.80 million tonnes will easily be achieved. (PIB)

### FOUNDATION STONE OF A 90KM-LONG BROADGAUGE RAIL LINK LAID

The proposed broadgauge rail line (Project cost Rs. 477.53 Cr.) will connect Angul (Budhapank) with Sukinda Road via Duburi. This new line will reduce the distance between the Talcher Coal fields & the Daitari Industrial Complex by 59 kms, the distance of the proposed steelplants at Sukinda Road and Nagpur by 193 kms and Katni by 112 kms. The new line will facilitate transportation of ores and minerals like chromite, coal, nickel, fireclay, kyanite, silliminate and granite.



# DARKEST WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE DAWN

Dr. Pabitra Mohan Nayak

We do not know why the night grows so dark before the crack of dawn. The story of the struggle for India's freedom is the story of such a long, dark, dreary night, a night loud with orphans' cries and widows' tears. And in a hill-bound, riverine tract like Sonepur that night looked like Satan's murky night. Birmitrodaya Sing Deo, KCIE, Dharmanidhi, Jannagunakar was then the Maharaja of Sonepur State. He was mighty and merciless, and his subjects lived like dumb, driven cattle under his unmitigated autocratic administration.

The reign of Birmitrodaya spanned over long thirtyfive years from 1902 to 1937. This period, punctuated with the Non-co-operation Movement of 1921 and the Salt Satyagraha of 1930, was both historic and historical for India. The clarion call of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal for Swaraj sent tingling sensations down the spines of hundreds and thousands of our countrymen. The non-violent non-co-operation movement spearheaded by Mahatma Gandhi stirred the sleep of centuries and thrilled the minds of millions. While India awoke to life and freedom, here was a small state walled by hills and separated by rivers where the call for freedom hardly created a ripple.

BM Sing Deo rested assured that the storm that was brewing would blow over the quiet Mahanadi. The atrocities which he perpetrated on the peace-loving, unprotesting, ignorant, illiterate subjects would find, he fondly hoped, no single rebel. But this is what, to the Ruler's dismay, did not happen. Discontent was growing. And the tyranny of the Ruler only slowly helped fuel this fury.

The economic policies relentlessly pursued by BM Sing Deo, no doubt, swelled the royal treasury, but they rendered the population of the State economically invertebrates. The State buildings were the only pucca buildings. The palace alone was electrified. People could not construct a new building, wear a fine shirt, even use an expansive pen for fear of inviting the wrath of the Ruler. No one could hoard money and if, by mischance, some one showed signs of growing

rich, he was fleeced before long in a false case. Ladies could not move freely for fear of the eyes of the spies. The cultivators who were born poor became poorer through payment of various kinds of taxes which ranged from collection of ashes for washing clothes to keeping cattle.

There were taxes called *haldian patti* for royal ceremonies, forest cess or *nistar pass*, cattle tax or *langula kara* or *kharchari* tax, *varaha mahasul*, ashes tax, coal tax, fuel-bamboo tax, oven tax or *chuli patti* etc.. There was a court fee for each application, a fee for interview with the Ruler, a fee for title deeds. There was a special tax to meet the "heavy expenditure incurred by the Ruler in travelling outside the State". (Sonepur State Code, I, iv, 38) There were cycle tax, school tax, *pataki* tax, loom tax, *pandhri* tax, the Madona or marriage tax for inferior castes, the *chhuri* or widow marriage tax, the road tax, *rahadhari* tax or bazar tax, betel-tax etc. (Report on the Adm., 1891,2) Thus what is said of the Marathas may well be said of the Maharaja of Sonepur .:

...that people were mulcted for having houses to live in... If they ate grain, their food was taxed... If they ate meat, they paid duty on it through their butchers. When they married, they paid for beating drums... If they rejoiced at the set Hindu festivals, they paid again, at the holi, for instance, on the red powder which they threw at each other at the 'pala' on the ornaments which they tied to the horns of their cattle. Drinkers were mulcted by an excise, and smokers, by a tobacco duty. Weavers, oil-pressers, fishermen and such low-caste industrialists had, as a matter of course, to



bear special burthen. No houses or slaves or cattle could be sold, no cloth could be stamped, no money could be charged - even prayers for rain could not be offered, without payment. In the accounts of the Nawab Sadik Ali Khan, Governor of Narasingpur for the year 1806-1866 such entries are found - A fine on Bhagwant Chaudhuri, who was building a large house - Rs. 3000/-. A fine on Mehronpuri Gosain, who was digging tanks and building temples - Rs. 6000/-. (Toynbee, II.2)

B.M. Sing Deo himself admitted in his letter to the Viceroy on 19.3.1937, just a few days before his death, the hopeless incapacity of his subjects for payment of further taxes : "...the taxable capacity of my subjects is very, very limited and it is not possible to tax them any further without grinding them to penury". (Sonepur Durbar 5). And B.M. Sing Deo ground the subjects to penury. He subjected them to free labour or *bethi*. During the celebration of religious festivals, *dhobis* supplied wood, carpenters constructed the *rathas* of Lord Jagannath, masons repaired the temples, oil-pressures supplied oil for the *masals* and "where boatmen have to carry Brahmans by the rivers from some part of the State, the *keots* do the work... without claiming any remuneration". (Sonepur State Code II, 63) The subjects contributed unpaid personal labour to the execution of works in the P.W.D (Sonepur State Code, I, 17) Each tenant offered the village-holder two ploughs at the ploughing season and two sickles at the reaping season, carried their luggage when they went abroad, fetched wood for the *rathas*, extinguished forest fire, maintained village roads and village *deraghar*, contributed their labour to public religious festivals did repair and roofing of government buildings, temples, police stations and schools. Each tenant gave one bundle of paddy at the reaping time and one '*kuta* of *dhan*' at the thrashing time to the *chowkidar* and *jhankar* of the village. And when any State officer visited the village, the *nariha* or sweeper arranged the kitchen, washed utensils and supplied water, the potter supplied pots, the barber shaved and massaged and worked as orderly, the launderer washed clothes and cut wood - free. The subjects were not allowed to sell agricultural produce to any one except to the agent authorised by the Ruler (Sonepur State Code, II, 67) and the village *chowkidar* was not permitted to sell the hide and horns of dead animals except to a person appointed by the State (Sonepur State

Code, I, 20). No villager could transfer land by sale, by mortgage, by gift or by dowry or construct water reservoir on his own land without the sanction of the State. The *gauntia* could not appoint his successor, the Zamindar, his *makaddam* without the Ruler's approval. The people could not sell trees, boulders, quartz of their own land without license. They were made to work gratis during royal functions, receptions of Sahebs, visits by State officers, excavations of tanks, construction of temples or revertments or graingolas or *dharmasalas* etc. People were made to provide vegetable, rice, *mug*, ghee, *gur*, milk, curd etc. for the *sradhas*, *samkrantis* and *Govardhan pujas*, for the Chaitra Mangala Puja on Tuesday and Laxmi Puja on *Margasira* Thursdays observed by the royal palace (Satapathy, 12).

B.M. Sing Deo started '*Udhar-Bhandar*' in twentyfive centres of the State (Bhattacharya, Introduction) in order to protect the subjects against "unscrupulous money-lenders". (Sonepur State Code, I, xii, Preamble) But with this pious preamble to the *Udhar-Bhandar Vidhi*, there was a lot of exploitation on the poor public. It is said that the Endowment Fund, started by the Maharaja to loan money, realized the capital with hundred and fifty percent interest, while the *Khamars* and graingolas charged five times the capital (Satapathy, 12). Grain was loaned in small *tamvis* and realized in big ones. While the paddy was loaned out at exorbitant interest, its realization was not recorded or was deferred deliberately in anticipation of more interest.

Bharat Chandra Nayak describes in lurid details the last days of his family in Sonepur State under BM Sing Deo which gives a clear picture of the Ruler's *modus operandi* in the realisation of loan :

After the death of my father, Bhagaban Nayak, the Raja's men came with a register to realize the loan said to have been incurred by my father. We were three brothers, and we protested that we knew nothing about the loan nor had our father ever told us anything about it. But they turned a deaf ear to all our entreaties, forcibly entered the fields and reaped away the standing crops. This was repeated in the following year, and when they appeared again in the third year, our patience was at the end of its tether. We fought and broke their arms. But soon we were arrested and sent to court



and the court sentenced us to imprisonment. After several days of confinement we decided to seek pardon from the Ruler who released us on our assurance to quit the State. One night the Raja's men came, demolished our house and deposited our family somewhere on the border of Patna and Sonapur (*Mora Purva Smrti*, 5).

The Rulers were interested in revenue, writes R.K. Ramdhyan, rather than in farmers (Bolangir District Gazeteer, 365). And the farmers under BM Sing Deo, oppressed to the maximum, lived from hand to mouth or left homes and hearth to seek their fortune elsewhere. Even the Political Agent, Sambalpur disapproved of taxes like *Haldian Patti* which was "a cess or benevolence levied to enable the State to meet any extraordinary expenditure such as expenditure incurred in connection with Raj family marriages. It has the sanction of custom, but cannot otherwise be defended. The finances of the State and the Raj family allowances and expenditure should be so adjusted as to render the levy of such forced benevolences unnecessary in future" (Report on the Adm. 1903, 20). But these 'forced benevolences' continued to be realized till the death of BM Sing Deo.

Sonepur which has more than 40 percent tribals, could not have a politically conscious public. While male literacy in every 1000 persons in Patna, Kalahandi and Rairakhol in 1901 was 36, 33 and 20 respectively, it was just 21 in Sonapur State (The Census of India, 1901, XIII, 34). In the words of a freedom fighter, Satyananda Hota, BM Sing Deo wanted schools but no education, police but no security, judiciary but no justice. He instituted a High Court and a Hazur Court but saw to it that the courts had no jurisdiction over the rate of assessment, the manner in which settlements were made or the Zamindari *takolis* were settled or the Zamindars were recognized or adoptions were allowed and protected status granted by the Ruler (Sonapur State Code, II, 10).

But this does not mean that people did not protest or petition against the Ruler. They did. "The administration of justice is not inefficient", observed the Political Agent who visited Sonapur in 1903, "but there is a tendency to impose inadequate and inappropriate sentences of fine and imprisonment" (Report on the Adm., 1903, 21). There was also inappropriate banishment. Jagannath Panda, adopted son of Ranbir Sing Deo, brother of BM

Sing Deo, Gourisankar Raiguru, Benimadhab Raiguru, Gokul Raiguru, Debendra Sing Babu, Amulyamani Babu, Chintamani Purohit, Nabin Pandia, Banamali Pujahari, the Lalus of Baldapali and Patabhadi etc. were shunted out of Sonapur on grounds of disloyalty. The Maharaja introduced Section No. 12 into Chapter II of *Vividha Vidhi* which reads as follows :

That any person who may be proved to have uttered in public such words in respect of the British government or in respect of the Ruler and the members of his family as are calculated to bring the aforesaid British government or the aforesaid persons of the Ruling Family into contempt or to create disloyal or disrespectful feelings in the minds of others, shall be liable to be sentenced to imprisonment for a term of 3 months or to fine of Rs. 100/-.

The Administrative Report of 1905-06 says that the 'evil advisers' of Rampur Zamindar were 'banished' since the Zamindar disobeyed the orders of the Rulers to reside in Sonapur town. The orders of the Ruler were intended to keep this refractory Zamindar under close watch. In case of Barapali Zamindari the Report says that the "contumacy of the Gauntias was broken by the ejection of the ringleaders". And there were ringleaders here and there in the State and their tribe increased. There were Chaturbhuj Misra, Damodar Rath, Hara Misra, Dhanwant Mallik, Kalia Mallik, Laxman Satpathy, Ramchandra Satpathy, Satyananda Hota, Daityari Sundhi, Murali Misra, Banchhabata Pujari, Dasarathi Prasad Rath, Handalal Sethi, Bhimsen Bhoi, Baisampayana Padhi, Kashinath Pani, Daityari Badpanda etc. who, too, revolted and were persecuted. Ranbir Sing Deo collected the receipts of refund of *takavi* loan and sent them to the Political Agent for enquiry. There was Ghundu Bhitria of Manamunda, with his spotless Punjabi and French-cut moustache, who wrote to the Viceroy against the Ruler. When it came to the ears of the Maharaj, he instantly deputed Sripati Mahalik who destroyed his betel-plants and threw his belongings down the flooded Tel. And when Ghundu returned from Baud, he found he had already become a beggar. The Mehers of Binka were men of means. They were Sripati Meher, Lokanath Meher, Ganda Meher. Ganda Meher had moved the British government against Prataprudra, BM Sing Deo's father, for his inability to pay off Rs. 20,000 he had borrowed. And when BM Sing Deo



came to power, he clapped Ganda in jail. On another occasion a man was set to throw opium into the basket of vegetable the servant of the refractory Lal Saheb was carrying from the market. The poor servant was arrested, and Lal Saheb had to do the menial work of the servant; he had to fetch water from the river.

Thus the rebels were involved in false cases, harassed and persecuted, insulted and imprisoned. And while Sonapur State registered 591 criminal cases in 1907-08, Patna State had none (Bolangir District Gazetteer, 380). These sporadic incidents ignited popular discontent against the Ruler, reflected in the letter from Governor, Bihar and Orissa to BM Sing Deo :

I regret to hear that misguided men should be attempting to mislead your people and agitation of the type which of late has been too conspicuous in India can lead to nothing but trouble and unhappiness. You naturally resent unjustifiable personal attacks upon yourself, and libellous abuse is too frequent a feature of this campaign. But your reputation and position are strong enough to justify you in disregarding the personal aspect. It is the effect upon the ignorant that is most to be deplored, and I am glad that, on your side, you have attempted through the Press to disseminate wiser counsels. It is misrepresentation playing upon ignorance which is the strongest weapon of this anti-government movement, and the best means of countering it is to expose the false doctrines which are being preached (Sonapur Raj, 105-06).

Thus the personality of BM Sing Deo, his astute diplomacy, his tactful handling of issues prevented a conflagration, yet the 'pernicious propaganda' continued. The 'madness' was on the increase. 'I trust', observes Sir Hugh Stephenson, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., Governor of Bihar and Orissa at a Durbar held at Sonapur on 14.1.1931 'that the madness that has run its course throughout most of India is now fading away, but even so the future has anxious problems for all of us' (Sonapur Raj, 119).

With the passing away of BM Sing Deo, the grip over the disgruntled subjects loosened. The fire of smouldering discontent was suddenly kindled ablaze. Sudhansu Sekhar Sing Deo, who succeeded him in April 1937 and ruled for a decade of discord, was a walking shadow, a poor substitute for his powerful father. He was not an able

administrator like his father nor was he a deft diplomat. The sun, too, was beginning to set over the British empire. And the distant rumblings of the National Congress were heard. The Prajamandal movement was organised in Turum under the chairmanship of Bhimsen Bhoi on 11.12.38. A charter of 14 demands including abolition of *bethi*, *begari*, *chanda*, *bheda*, *rasad*, *magan*, *marjimanibhar*, unnecessary cesses, customs and export duties, *nazarana* system etc., remission of rent, non-interference of State authorities in social matters, institution of an elected popular government and establishment of the rights of the citizens was placed before the Maharaja on 27.3.1939.

There was practically no political agitation before the establishment of popular government in 1939. The impact of popular government led to mass upsurge. In Patna and Sonapur the Krisak Party was organised to agitate against the Ruler, who formed a counter party named Prajamandal. And when the States People's Conference was formed in 1931 to agitate for the freedom of the people of the Ex-State, the Eastern States Union was constituted by the Ex-States of Orissa and Chhatisgarh with a common High Court and other joint institutions in order to counteract this agitation. Not satisfied with this union, the Ex-State people demanded the fullest possible privileges as in neighbouring provinces. When the provincial Congress leaders started a movement after the Second World War to amalgamate the Ex-States, Patna Maharaja began a campaign for formation of a separate territory known as Mahakosala. By this time the survey of the Mahanadi valley project was undertaken. People apprehended submergence of hundreds of villages by the Hirakud Dam. The people of Sambalpur started an agitation against the acquisition of land. This opportunity was utilised by the supporters of the Mahakosala movement : "If our independence and unity could not endure, so our subordination or disintegration cannot last. The glimmers of dawn... are visible on the horizon. Koshal has awakened from its listlessness, its languor, its lethargy. It has begun taking notice of what is happening all around. The wheel has turned" (The Koshal Tract, 26).

It was during this time that the Aranyak Brahmin Samaj, an organisation of Jharua



brahmins of the State, was constituted under the leadership of Kaibalya Charan Nayak of Sonepur town, Dhruva Pandia of Nimna and Mrutyunjay Hota of Ranipur. The organisers held large public meetings at Binka, Birmaharajpur, Ulunda, Jaloe, Sindurpur, Rampur etc. and mobilised the Aranyak brahmins. The objective of the Samaj was more social than political (*Aranyaka*, 2). Yet the indirect political impact of the Samaj upon the Ruler could not be ignored.

The freedom fighters of Sonepur created at village Bagchhara a Blue Shirts volunteers organisation to mobilise the youths.

These local institutions, these limited agitations were beginning to fade into the national mainstream. A storm was brewing, and the Indian National Congress which was to snatch power from the hands of the British in August 1947 was growing strong. The National movement for liberation was gathering momentum. And under the thrust of this movement every village in Sonepur State had a library and spinning wheel. The wheels of history were turning, turning. And while the libraries, which were set on fire by the Raja's men, were burning, the fiery words of Sardar Patel shook the conference hall of the Rajas in Cuttack: "He (Sardar Patel) told them that the Orissa States were like ulcers on the body of the province and that they must either be cured, otherwise they might find themselves uprooted by the people" (Menon, 165). And on 15 December 1947 a *Masal Sobhayatra* symbolically lighted up the dark

recesses of the State and on the morrow with the rising of the New Year's sun, Sonepur alongwith other *garjats*, merged into the national mainstream.

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#### TPDS affects the people badly

Following the introduction of Targetted Public Distribution System (TPDS) from June'97 the central allocation of rice to Orissa has been slashed from one lakh tonnes to 35,000 tonnes per month and wheat from 50,000 tonnes to nil. The state Govt. was forced to purchase 20,000 tonnes of rice to sell through PDS.

\* Konark TV Ltd. to be made Joint Sector Co. soon.

\* Dredging of the Chilika mouth will start from Nov. 16 with the 10th Finance Commission award of Rs. 27.50 Cr.

#### Dowry prohibition cell opened at Cuttack

A dowry prohibition cell was opened at Cuttack on 25.8.1997 to investigate into all cases of atrocities on women. Its area of operation stretches to the districts of Puri, Nayagarh, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara and Jajpur. Four more similar cells are likely to be opened in Rourkela, Sambalpur, Berhampur and Sunabeda.



# UNDER-GROUND ORGANISATION DURING THE AUGUST REVOLUTION IN ORISSA

*Dr. Bijay Chandra Rath*

The historic AICC session at Bombay on 8 August approved the famous "Quit India" resolution. The Government was in no mood to either negotiate or wait for the movement to be formally launched. It reacted swiftly and in a pre-dawn swoop (9 August 1942) Gandhiji and other leaders were arrested. The Congress organisation was declared unlawful. The entire country was stunned at the sudden turn of events. Spontaneous protest movement accompanied by sporadic incidents of violence disrupted the normal life everywhere.

In Orissa as elsewhere in the country, early in the morning of 9 August, 1942 all important leaders were taken into custody. A list of 26 persons were prepared by the Government for immediate arrest. Out of them, with the exception of Smt. Malati Choudhury and Surendranath Dwivedi, all the other 24 persons were picked up from different places of Orissa. H.K. Mahatab was arrested from Bombay on 9 August alongwith other Congress working Committee members.

Surendra Nath Dwivedi, member AICC, was the king-pin of the underground activities in Orissa. He belonged to the socialist group of the Congress and was in close touch with the leading socialist members of the time like Achuta Patawardhan, Ram Manohar Lohia, Ashok Meheta, Rama Nandan Mishra, Aruna Asaf Ali, Yousuf Meherally, Nabakrushna Choudhury etc. He was a believer of the peaceful Gandhian non-violent mass-movement. But like many socialist compatriots of the period, he did not think it desirable to suspend or terminate a mass-movement on the ground that it (movement) turned violent. Yet (like other socialists), he strongly subscribed to the view that a mass-movement in India could only be possible under

Gandhiji's leadership and there was no alternative to it. Gandhiji was a brilliant strategist and it was his firm conviction which prompted the Congress to launch the movement in that critical period of 1942.

Surendra Nath Dwivedi left for Bombay on 3 August 1942 from Cuttack to attend the AICC meeting. He reached there on 6th August and took part in all the activities there. After the 'Quit India' resolution was passed by the AICC, Yousuf Meherally, the-then Mayor of Bombay, convened a secret meeting of the socialists at his residence. Among others, Achuta Patawardhan, Ram Manohar Lohia, Ram Nandan Mishra, Ashok Meheta, Smt. Malati Choudhury, Surendra Nath Dwivedi etc. were present. There it was decided to launch the underground movement against the British by hoodwinking the police. Surendranath Dwivedi was entrusted with the charge of spearheading the movement in Orissa. Malati Devi, who was present in the meeting also endorsed the proposal. But it was considered desirable for her (Malati Devi) to court arrest in Orissa, as the confinement of a lady of her stature was sure to incite public opinion against the British.

On 9 August, While Surendra Nath was going to meet Gandhiji the latter was already arrested. He met his Secretary, Pyarelal who gave him a small message of Gandhiji. It contained a sort of directive - *"our country is independent from today. Follow the peaceful method to wipe out the last streak of British-Imperialism. Paralyse the government. You are your own leader. This is the last struggle. In it there is no compromise"*. The last sentence of the message was very meaningful, which made it clear that there was no scope for a dialogue with the Viceroy. From Bombay he despatched



this message to all the District Congress Committees of Orissa, which spread like wild fire. The innocent people of Koraput really believed the message to have come from Gandhiji himself.

Malati Devi and Surendranath Dwivedi left Bombay for Orissa on the evening of 9 August. To avoid arrest at Cuttack railway station both of them got down from the train (Madras Mail) at Bhubaneswar on 11 August 1942. Bhubaneswar was then a small town of pilgrimage and no political importance could then be attached to the city. They became guests of Bhubanananda Das, who was then a noted political figure of Orissa. But they did not consider it safe to prolong their stay at Bhubaneswar because of heavy police surveillance. Malati Devi and Surendra Nath set out for Cuttack separately. Both of them again met at the residence of Dukhishyam Mohanty of Urali, a village in the outskirts of the city of Cuttack on the other side of Kathjori river. On the way to village Urali, Surendranath met Gouranga Charana Das of Bagalpur, a brave and dedicated freedom fighter. Both of them hatched out a plan, how to effectively organise the underground movement in Govindpur and Jagatsinghpur area.

Both Malati Devi and Surendra reached Cuttack in the same night by crossing over the river Kathjori in a small boat. Malati Devi reached her Bakhrabad residence and the very next day morning she was arrested while proceeding to address a public meeting at the College square, Cuttack. The Police were searching for her from 9 August and her arrest created a great deal of excitement in the town. She was the chief guiding spirit in most of the revolutionary movements in Orissa.

Surendranath Dwivedi could manage to reach the residence of Udyanath Rath of Raja Bagicha, Cuttack who happened to be a man of his village. He operated from that place initially before shifting to his secret hide-out at Alisha Bazar. There he confabulated with some of his trusted friends and acquaintances including some government servants secretly about the proposed underground movement in Orissa.

From Raja Bagicha Surendra Nath shifted to Alisha Bazar in Cuttack town with the

help of his friend Radhanath Pandit who was then working as a Hindi teacher in the Cuttack Convent School. Biswanath Pandit, who happened to be his (Radhanath's) younger brother also got himself actively associated with the secret movement. The novel feature of the August Revolution was the spontaneous mass upsurge. People voluntarily came forward to help the spread of the movement. With such a consideration Mathurananda Sahu, the eldest son of Nanda Kishore Sahu (popularly known as Nandi Sahu) of Alisha Bazar provided the young revolutionaries an abode in that area (Prusti Gali, Gauda Sahi, Alisha Bazar) from where they operated clandestinely. There they concentrated on three things - (1) Publication of bulletins through which instructions were issued and their circulation, (2) establishment of contact with different places inside the province for the spread of the movement, and (3) contact with persons at the National level.

Alisha Bazar became the headquarters of the secret organisation and branches were opened at different parts of the province. Surendranath Dwivedi was described as 'C.O.' meaning the Central Office or the Chief Organiser and persons in charge of the branches of the Organisation were known as 'B.O.s', Branch Officers or Branch Organisers. They selected certain persons to be used as "accommodation addresses" which means, persons who would not be suspected by the police as being members of the Congress Organisation. Letters, leaflets and bulletins were to be sent to those accommodation addresses and then distributed and published in different parts of the province through their field workers. The C.O. was to receive reports from the B.O.s., as to the happening in different parts of the province and those reports would be incorporated in bulletins to be issued by the C.O. The organisation asked the people to indulge in different kinds of acts of sabotage; for example, fomenting strikes in schools and colleges, asking government servants to resign their posts, taking possession of 'thanas', burning public records in offices, and removing railway lines and fish plates with a view to disrupting the rail-link. A bulletin named "*Congress-Barta*" was circulated soon.

For the publication of bulletins, Mathurananda Sahu arranged a lithography



machine. Incidentally, the machine which was used for the national cause was stolen from the Ravenshaw College, Cuttack, a few days before. Banamali Mishra, the Hindi-teacher of the Mission High School became associated with the secret movement. As his handwriting was good, he was entrusted with the duty of copying down the material in the litho-paper. The first bulletin, when circulated, created a great deal of flutter in the city. Police failed to get any trace of it. Mainly the distribution of the bulletins and leaflets was carried on by the students. Satchida Nanda Mishra, who happened to be a personal friend of Surendra Nath Dwivedi and a teacher in a local school, remained in charge of the distribution. He utilised the services of some of his obedient and faithful students for the work. Banka Behari Das, a B.A. student of Ravenshaw College became also an activist of this underground organisation. Within a few days, a well-knit organisation emerged. Banamali Mishra, Biswanath Pandit, Mathurananda Sahu, Satchidananda Mishra, and Banka Behari Das remained in charge of different departments of the organisation. But Radhanath Pandit was entrusted with discharging the most difficult work secretly. He was virtually the soul of the organisation. He used to go to Calcutta in disguise, carrying messages to and from Calcutta office of the underground movement. He was also very proficient in collecting secret information of the government from different quarters.

With this out-fit, the underground activities were carried on in Orissa. After the arrest of the leaders at Bombay, the main centre for underground activities was shifted to Calcutta. The activists of Orissa had established contact with the Calcutta centre, where leaders like Aruna Asaf Ali, Ram Manohar Lohia, and Annada Prasad Chowdhury were directing the underground activities. On the whole, people in different parts carried on their own organisation and acted keeping an eye on the local conditions.

During this period, a young man namely Bhairab Chandra Mohanty who was working in the Education Department of the Government, resigned from service on 12 August, 1942 for the nationalist cause. He became involved with the underground organisation and Sambalpur became his sphere of activity.

Surendra Nath Dwivedi before going underground was the manager of the United Press Agency at Cuttack. Then, Bhikari Mohanty was working as his assistant in that office. When the underground activities started, Bhikari served a very useful purpose. Through him the litho paper and ink were procured and the messages were sent to different persons. Seth Seo Chand Rao, a broker in the Cuttack Malgodown, who was also a Congress man used to supply the entire litho-paper and the ink for the publication of the bulletins.

Anil Kumar Ghosh, who belonged to a family of the freedom fighters, remained in charge of organising the movement in the interior of the Cuttack district. Uttara, the younger daughter of Naba Krishna Chowdhury and students like Banamali Patnaik, Jaya Krishna Mohanty etc. also got themselves actively involved with the work of distributing secret bulletins.

In the meantime, Rama Nandan Mishra, a prominent leader of the Socialist group and Secretary of the All India Kisan Sabha reached Cuttack. The clandestine meeting between him and Surendra Nath took place on 19-20 August, 1942 at the residence of Prana Nath Mishra, who was the proprietor of Orissa Book Emporium. Pranath Mishra was an active supporter of the movement. Correspondence with different persons in Orissa was carried on secretly in the name of the Emporium. Usually the bulletins and leaflets in the form of book packets were sent from Cuttack in the name of book-sellers of different places to avoid suspicion. During the course of his discussion Rama Nandan mainly emphasized two things - (1) to destroy the rail-link so that the mobilization of troops would be affected in the south-eastern region and (2) to persuade highly placed officers of the Government to resign for the national cause. In a feat of excitement, he decided to meet the then Collector of Cuttack, L.P. Singh (who was a man of his district in Bihar) in a bid to persuade him to resign. But unfortunately in the process he was arrested. Rama Nandan was lodged in Berhampur jail and then shifted to Bihar.

In course of time, contact was established with All-India Central underground organisation. Instructions and bulletins were sent by the Central organisation to different provincial



units. Surendra Nath Dwivedi was known by different names here in Orissa like 'Babaji', 'C.O.', 'Bhai' etc. Similarly those who were organising the movement at the national level, were known by different names. Sucheta Kripalini was known as "Didi or Bahenji", Baba Raghav Das as "Dadi", Ram Manohar Lohia was called "Doctor", Aruna Asaf Ali was known as "Kadam", and Achut Patwardhan was known as "Kusum". Different pen-names were used because in case of interception of the mail, the police would not be able to identify the person.

At first the office of the Central organisation was housed at Bombay and then transferred to different places. But regular contact was maintained with other provincial and regional out-fits. Bulletins and instructions were sent to them and news from different regions were collected. But it would be a mistake to infer that the underground activities in the country were either conducted or directed by them. The organisers at the national level only met occasionally at different places like Delhi, Benaras, Bombay and Calcutta to take stock of the situation. It was difficult on their part to meet frequently in the face of heavy police surveillance. On the whole, leaders at provincial, regional and sub-regional level mobilised masses in their areas taking into consideration the local conditions and the popular response. The activists in Orissa used to keep contact with the Calcutta centre. Even an emissary of Subhas Chandra Bose met once the leaders of Orissa organisation and imparted certain instructions.

The active units in this struggle were individuals and not mass formation dependent for every move on extraneous command. The appeal was made directly to the individual. This movement was decentralised, individualistic, anarchical, yet it had a direction and its anarchy was deliberate and purposeful. The movement did not conform to a uniform pattern in all areas for this reason. The particular local grievance, which was most acute in the area should be taken up and each such problem would be the focal point for the initiation of the movement in that area. There was no class or section, no social or functional unit which was not disaffected against the state. The purpose was to exploit the discontent and frustration in each layer of the society and to nurse that into a

disruptive force. The strategy was to make the people understand that colonialism was at the root of their plight and the movement was to continue till the overthrow of the colonialism. The termination of the alien rule being the goal, whatever seemed helpful for its attainment, looked permissible and legitimate.

The issue of leaflets, bulletins, directions to the fighting line, raising of funds etc. was carried on secretly by the organisation. Side by side freedom of action was allowed to the units at every level. Bulletins and leaflets which were distributed were in part an account of what had been done and in part an incitement to do more. Through them a clarion call for committing acts of bravery was given.

The headline of bulletin was "Cuttack people ought to drown". It started with a reference to what had been happening in Bihar, where it was said that the people had truly responded to the call of the Congress. As a result, no trace to railway lines or telegraph lines could be found in some regions. Also Post-Offices, Police-Stations and Government Offices had been burnt and destroyed. At the end, the people of Cuttack were reproved because they had not followed the example.

Another bulletin which was issued on the occasion of 'Gandhi Jayanti', it was said that the funeral pyre of the weak Government was burning in flames throughout the country....At places Government buildings were razed to dust and at places the Government was made a ghost of straw and burnt away. The fire was not to be extinguished. The fire must wipe out foreign government from this country...On the grave of this sinful kingdom would be erected the government of peasants and workers and the administration of justice and righteousness.

Another bulletin named '*Congress Barta*' poured venoms against the-then coalition-ministry in Orissa (Bulletin No. 11, dated 17 September 1942) and the ministers were severely castigated as the agents of the British. Having dealt with the ministers the author selected Khan Sahab Musaheb Khan, the then A.D.M. of Cuttack for attention. He was described as an incarnation of oppression, as he was responsible for the devastation at Bari. That particular bulletin further exhorted the



people to "violate the laws of the Government, carry on meetings and processions in towns and villages. Close the bazars. Like revolutionaries, rise in excitement, burn the police stations, law courts, post offices and other offices of the Government. Remember that salvation lies in destruction. If you retreat, Gandhi's life will pass away. The hat factory set up at Cuttack for supply to the war has been burnt. Stop all efforts for the war. Do not become soldiers. Set fire to the aerodrome at Choudwar". After this advice an account was given of an independent Panchayat, that had been set up at Dhusuri in Bhadrak sub-division. Then the bulletin went on to another matter that was the incitement of the government officers to abandon their duty. It was said that "the people of Ersama Police Station gheraoed the District Magistrate of Cuttack and demanded of him to give up service. He was taken seven days' time more to taste the sweetness of slavery". But this supposition was not a fact.

Another bulletin was entitled "open-rebellion". People were recommended to form Independent Panchayats.....They were told to capture thanas, Dak-Bungalows, Revenue Office, Sub-Registrar's Office etc. Further they were asked to occupy the Civil Courts and the Collectorates in the Sadar towns. They were instructed to destroy the railway bridges and disrupt postal and telephone services.

A leaflet issued detailed instructions as to how to capture Police Stations. Police Stations were regarded as the backbone of the provincial administration and if they were captured then there would be nothing to fear. It was, therefore, suggested that five-six hundred people should be collected and taken to the police stations. Before their arrival, all communications with the police-station should be cut and Post Offices should be raided to prevent the authorities from giving information. People should carry *lathis* and sticks with them, because that would add to their courage and boldness. But the bulletin cautioned that the leader among them should be very careful to see that no one among them should use the *lathis* and sticks.

Another bulletin was addressed to all the officers of the Government including the Police Department to resign. All these bulletins

were found to have been circulated throughout the province.

Rumours, baseless in nature, were spread as regards the activities of the underground organisation. People believed Surendra Nath Dwivedi to be a ferocious man who was out to kill the British officials including the Chief Secretary. The entire atmosphere during these days was full of tension and excitement amidst great expectation. Detective stories were circulated about the underground work of Surendra Nath which projected him as a great hero and in the process imprinted an anti-colonial impression in the mass-mind. In the latter period when Kamal Lochan Mohanty wrote two detective books in Oriya namely '*Ferar Dwivedi*' and '*Biplavi Dwivedi*', they were sold like hot-cakes in the market.

By October 1942, the whole of Orissa was in ferment. The Police were trying frantically to locate the underground organisation and to round up the activists. Finally the Police could manage to get the clue from his handwriting (as he used to write the address) and arrested Banka Behari Das on 8 October 1942 from the 'Kalyanpur Mess' where he used to reside. He was followed by Satchida Nanda Mishra and his uncle Prananath Mishra. The arrest of Banka Behari Das and Satchida Nanda Mishra caused a great set-back to the underground movement. In the meantime, the Government in a Gazette notification threatened to confiscate the movable and immovable property of the family, unless Surendra Nath Dwivedi surrendered within the stipulated time. Many people were arrested from different parts of Orissa and it became difficult to carry on the movement. As the Police became very alert, Surendra Nath had decided to escape to Calcutta. But before actually he left, he was nabbed by the police at about 2.00 pm on 11 Oct. 1942 while writing his last bulletin "*Devi-Aradhana*". The secret hideout at Alisha Bazar was raided and the police seized the litho machine, workers' list, some bundles of bulletins and other materials. Alongwith him was arrested Nabaghan Behera, who was an absconder from Dhenkanal. Basing upon the clues from the papers found there (secret-hide out at Alisha Bazar), the police arrested 86 persons from different parts of Orissa. Surendra Nath Dwivedi was sent to Berhampur jail. After his arrest, the



underground activities continued for some days by his compatriots like Radhanath Pandit, Biswanath Pandit, Anil Kumar Ghose, and Banamali Mishra. They established their link with the Calcutta Centre and the activities continued for about two months. Baishnab Charan Mohanty provided them the hide-out in Oriya Bazar from where they operated. During this phase of the movement, the role of a physically crippled man (as he was a leper), Madhaba Nanda Singh by name was very commendable. He was entrusted with the duty of sticking posters in different parts of Cuttack town at night hoodwinking the Police. But they could not sustain for a longer period. Biswanath Pandit and Anil Kumar Ghose were arrested. Surendra Nath Dwivedi and fifteen others were tried in what was known as the "Orissa Conspiracy case" (special case No. 1c of 1943). Fourteen of them were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. They were Surendra Nath Dwivedi, Nishamani Khuntia, Banka Behari

Das, Narayan Prasad Mohanty, Narasingha Charan Mohanty, Lokanath Mishra, Adikanda Alias Nabaghan Behera, Biswanath Parida, Goura Charan Das, Piarimohan Das, Dukhishyam Padhi, Ramakanta Das, Ghanashyam Patnaik and Bhairab Chandra Mohanty. The remaining two accused namely Satchida Nanda Mishra and Jadumani Jena were acquitted.

The circulation of bulletins and leaflets roused public emotion and mob-violence erupted in many parts of the province and the princely States of Orissa. But the brutal repressive policy pursued by the Government succeeded in suppressing the mass upsurge by the end of 1942.

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### VISIT OF REVENUE MINISTER, ORISSA TO FLOOD-AFFECTED AREAS

Minister 'Revenue' Orissa Shri Jagannath Patnaik visited the flood affected areas of Nuapada, Kalahandi and Bolangir Districts from 26.8.97 to 30.8.97. Shri Patnaik also reviewed the relief measures undertaken by the respective district administration and gave direction to give utmost importance for repair and restoration of roads, houses and public properties damaged by the flood and cyclone of August 1997. He also urged upon the district administration to give top priority for repair and restoration of L.I. Points affected by flood and make functional to the defaulted L.I. Points. On 30.8.97 Minister, Revenue also reviewed the flood situation of the state in a high level meeting attended by Revenue Secretary; Joint Commissioner, Relief; Joint Secretary, Relief, Revenue & Excise Department. Reports so far received that, 25 persons have died due to flood, 19,03,663 people in 3090 villages have been affected. At least 319255 Hect. of paddy lands have been inundated by flood water and so far 6854 qtls. of rice, 722 qtls of chuda, 61 chahies of Guda, 35,000 sarees, 34,000 Dhoties, 43000 garments and 1786 rolls of Polythene have been distributed among the flood victims. Out of 30 districts 13 districts have been badly affected by flood and cyclone of August, 1997. However, Minister disclosed that the detailed reports in this connection have been sent to the centre for more grants and aid from the Central Government. On 31.8.97 Minister Revenue also visited the flood affected areas of Balasore District and reviewed the flood situation there where Shri Kartika Mohapatra, M.P., Sri Arun Deo, M.L.A. and Shri Jayanarayan Mohanty, M.L.A. and district officers were present. Minister also hoisted the Flag on the occasion of Local-Self-Government day at Balasore Municipality. On 1.7.97 Shri Patnaik also visited the flood affected areas of Kanas, Krushnaprasad and Brahmagiri Blocks of Puri district alongwith the local M.L.A Shri Lalatendu Vidyadhar Mohapatra.



# AN AGITATION FOR BETEL-LEAF

*Avaya Kumar Behera*

(Gandhiji's call for mass participation in the Non-Cooperation Movement had a magic spell, felt even in the inaccessible rural pockets of Orissa, like the one in the Mahal hat a place about 15 kms from Kendrapara. The aftermath of World War II led to escalation of prices of essential commodities which hit the masses. A voice of protest gradually got built up, and in the process, the people gained courage to thwart imperialistic onslaughts in whatever form)

The Gandhian leadership changed ideology, direction and the nature of the Indian Struggle for Independence. In December 1920, the Indian National Congress at Nagpur Session adopted the agitational programme of Gandhiji on the principles of non-cooperation.<sup>1</sup> His clarion call awakened all starting from the urban elites to the illiterate rural masses. In response the students gave up studies, employees resigned from the government services, lawyers boycotted the courts and the representatives of the people resigned from the legislatures.

Young Jadumani Mangaraj attended the Nagpur Session alongwith other representatives of Orissa like Gopabandhu Das, Harekrushna Mahatab and others.<sup>2</sup> Just after this session of AICC, a separate Congress organisation, the Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee, came into being for Orissa in place of Bihar-Orissa Pradesh Congress Committee.<sup>3</sup> Jadumani Mangaraj was entrusted with the organisation and functioning of the Congress in Kendrapara subdivision of Cuttack district. This was the development in March 1921.

The organising ability and the agitational art of Jadumani Mangaraj stunned the British Government within a very short period. He preached the message of non-cooperation among the students by establishing close personal contact. A network for communication was established among the students of different places. He could inspire everybody by his inflammatory speeches and his art of propaganda initiated thousands of students. Between January and March of 1921, he emerged as the undisputed student leader of Cuttack. Observing his agitational activities police reported confidentially, "The spirit of non-cooperation permeated to the students of Cuttack Division in January 1921. One Jadumani Mangaraj, a student of the 4th year class of Ravenshaw

College, took the lead. He had many friends throughout the Cuttack Division and he had regularly been informed of the situation of the different places....Specially the inflammatory speeches of Jadumani preached the cult of non-cooperation among the students".<sup>4</sup> Even the DIG (CID) Police, Mr. Macrae admitted and communicated about the important role played by Mangaraj to Mr. E.L.L. Hammond, the Chief Secretary of Bihar and Orissa Government.<sup>5</sup>

By 1922 Jadumani was organising the non-cooperation movement and keeping a vigilant watch on the Kanika peasants' agitation from the Swaraj Ashram at Kendrapara.<sup>6</sup> His words and works were closely watched by the Police. In the meantime some cyclostyled anonymous leaflets were posted from the post offices of his native village Karilopatana which was seized by the police on 15 February 1922.<sup>7</sup> Through these leaflets the author exhorted the people to join the mainstream of the Non-Cooperation Movement and called them for direct action against the English. Even the leaflets spoke, "Whenever you meet the Englishmen and their officers, beat them with lathis."<sup>8</sup> Though the British Government failed to produce any direct evidence against him still confidentially recorded in the police file, this being the work of the one and only Jadumani Mangaraj. As a result Karilopatana and its neighbouring areas became very sensitive for the government. The non-cooperators of this area were falsely accused of incendiarism, theft, intimidation and even sedition. In some cases the agitators were convicted for punitive fines and rigorous imprisonment. One such false police case led to the imprisonment of the people in the Mahal hat (market), a place about 15 kilometers from Kendrapara and a small bi-weekly market adjacent to Karilopatana.<sup>9</sup>



During the post-World War I prices of essential commodities soared skyhigh. Specially excessive high prices of salt, kerosine, betel-leaf, etc. made the life miserable everywhere in Orissa. The businessmen, the government and the money-lenders formed a nexus to encourage the price rise. But the government was spreading the rumour deliberately that the price hike was the result of the non-cooperation movement which would ultimately lead to anarchy. Actually the Congress non-cooperators were making all efforts to control the rise in prices. In this connection Mr. Foley wrote to Mr. Hammond, "The non-cooperators are trying to control the prices of articles sold at *hats* (markets), especially of *pan* (betel-leaf), the price of which has risen considerably".<sup>10</sup>

Mahal *hat* was under the Union VIII of Kendrapara. By that time the local self government was in operation under the Union Board and Tahasil Panchayats, Congress had its representatives who were the freedom-fighters and the non-cooperators. Govinda Nayak was the Tahasil Panchayat of Mahal area. Under his leadership the Congress workers were attempting to control prices in that locality. This was not palatable to the businessmen and the government.

Kendrapara area was famous for extensive cultivation as well as consumption of betel-leaf. For social and religious ceremonies, for entertainment of guests and for daily use there was great demand for betel-leaf. Neighbouring Zamindari of Kujang was famous for production of high quality betel-leaf and there was special demand for this variety of betel-leaf in the markets of Orissa. Mahal *hat* was supplied with betel-leaf from the zamindari of Shivendra Pada Banerji who was residing at Cuttack.<sup>11</sup> Netra Malik and his staff were looking after the business in betel-leaf. Betel-leaf was being sold at high price by the tacit understanding of the zamidar. On 15 February 1922 (Monday market day) Dama Nayak and Turti Lenka, two non-cooperators, peacefully protested against such business. Both of them persuaded Netra Malik and his staff to sell betel-leaf at a reasonable price and dissuaded people from purchasing the same at high price. As a result there occurred exchange of hot words between the two parties over price. Netra Malik and his staff manhandled the non-cooperators as their business transaction suffered.<sup>12</sup> Dama Nayak and Turti Lenka never thought of any sort of false police case for peaceful protest.

But the post-event development took ugly turn. On the day of occurrence Netra Malik rushed to the zamidar to appraise of the incident. On his

return from Cuttack he lodged a complaint with the police of Kendrapara on 18 February. The local police, specially the Inspector Akshaya Kumar Chakravarti who had been discredited by the non-cooperators a month ago,<sup>13</sup> found the pretext to revenge on them. He ordered to record the F.I.R. under intimidation and forcibly taking away the basket of betel-leaf and the sale proceeds of two rupees three annas.<sup>14</sup> Further Inspector Chakravarti took special interest in this case due to good personal relation with the zamidar Banerji. On 19 February (Friday) Sub-Inspector Durga Charan Das conducted spot enquiry and reported in favour of Netra Malik in spite of the witness of the vendors of Mahal *hat* against the false allegation.

On 22 February Inspector Chakravarti, Sub-Inspectors Durga Charan Das and Gunanidhi Nayak alongwith three constables arrested Dama Nayak and Turti Lenka. The police paraded both the accused through the market with hand-cuffs and ropes around waist. It was 7 O'clock evening and punishment as well as humiliation to the innocent freedom fighters provoked the people.<sup>15</sup>

Further Dama Nayak was the brother of Govinda Nayak and both of them were respected and extremely popular in the locality. As such the political situation of Kendrapara Subdivision was tense on account of the Kanika movement. Agitated people cordoned the police, forcibly rescued the prisoners and proceeded in a victory procession through the market raising slogan "Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai".

Unity and courage of the people put the police party on their heels. Inspector Chakravarti took shelter in the house of Ananda Maharana whereas Sub-Inspector Das hid himself in the house of Zamidar Sahadev Kanungo. Sub-Inspector Nayak escaped in the dark evening and reported the incident to S.D.O. Mr. Vangriekon at Kendrapara. Truly the people never had the intention of causing harm to police. They had the only objective to rescue the freedom fighters as admitted by the Commissioner, Orissa Division. The police was guided to Tahasil Panchayat and was forced to unlock the hand-cuffs.

On receiving the news Mr. Vangriekon was about to leave for Mahal *hat* when the police party returned unhurt. Later, with the help of armed police, 18 persons were arrested and on 4 July 1922 Mr. Vangriekon acquitted 4 persons and convicted 14 others under 147/225 IPC for rigorous imprisonment ranging from six to twenty four months.<sup>16</sup> The convicted were Govinda Nayak,



Dama Nayak, Turti Lenka, Bama Nayak, Netra Nayak, Laxmidhar Padhi, Kshetrabasi Nayak, Yujesthi Nayak, Chintamani Nayak, Jagu Rana, Mani Nayak, Gopinath Nayak, Kapila Nayak and Lakhi Nayak. The people appealed in the court of officiating Session's Judge Satish Chandra Mitra who acquitted all of them.<sup>17</sup> This was a severe blow to the power and prestige of the police as well as the government. The District Magistrate of Cuttack appealed in the High Court against the decision and Justice Bucknil and J.J. Mullick convicted all 14 persons each for three months rigorous imprisonment.<sup>18</sup> In addition the Judges commended the actions of Ananda Maharana, Zamidar Sahadev Kanungo and his servant Arjoon Samal and recommended for reward. In response, the District Magistrate of Cuttack sanctioned a grant of a printed certificate of praise to Zamidar, a reward of 10 rupees to his servant and 30 rupees to Ananda Maharana.<sup>19</sup>

By this time the government was conducting judicial enquiry under the Deputy Magistrate, Kendrapara against Inspector Chakravarti for unnecessary interference on the religious procession at Kendrapara (13.1.1922).<sup>20</sup> Also the Inspector incurred added displeasure of the higher authorities for this incident. The S.P., Cuttack visited the spot accompanied by the Deputy Magistrate, Kendrapara and found the situation extremely 'quiet', people respectful and cooperative to the police, and ruled out the deployment of special police at Mahal *hat* as it would 'stir up the agitation'. Even the Chief Secretary, Bihar and Orissa, Commissioner, Orissa and Superintendent of Police, Cuttack reacted seriously on the actions of Kendrapara police for spoiling the image of police department. The Commissioner wrote that arresting and handcuffing the accused was the wrong act of the Inspector that provoked the people to take the situation out of control of police.<sup>21</sup> S.P., Cuttack, taking serious exception to the police actions, noted, "Nothing would have happened if the Inspector had not hand-cuffed the accused...The police behaved badly".<sup>22</sup> Finally the Chief Secretary expressed serious concern about the efficiency of police and wrote, "Within the last two months the authority of the police has been successfully defied at Kendrapara in Cuttack."<sup>23</sup>

At last the Deputy Magistrate, Kendrapara, found the Inspector guilty of undue police action in the religious procession and recommended for departmental proceedings. The District Magistrate, Cuttack, upheld the findings of enquiry but suggested to drop the proceedings against the

Inspector who was on the verge of retirement. Further, he wrote, any such disciplinary action would demoralise the police specially at the time when political situation was highly feverish. Thus, Inspector Chakravarti was transferred to Puri and Sub-Inspector Nayak to Angul. No doubt the non-cooperators lost the legal battle but achieved a moral victory. To fight a battle on the principle of resisting the undue price hike of consumable articles was undoubtedly a rare feat to be emulated.

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22. File No. 61 of 1922, Bihar and Orissa Government (Confidential) Political Department (Special Section).
23. D.O. No. 1091-C dt. 12.3.1922, E.L.L. Hammond to B.Foley.

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# SECOND CONGRESS MINISTRY IN ORISSA

(1946-50)

## Its Role in Promoting Agriculture and Liberating Farmers

*Dr. Hemanta Kumar Mohapatra*

The second Congress Ministry led by Harekrishna Mahatab felt that the first priority of the government should be the introduction of agrarian and land reform legislation. But as they were very complex and needed time and energy, the government had to divert its efforts to improve agriculture through other methods. Agriculture being the main occupation of the people of Orissa and the supply of farmland was limited, there was tremendous pressure on the existing amount of land. So it was felt necessary to relieve the pressure of population on land by diverting their attention towards upcoming industrial sector. But that did not mean that agriculture was considered a secondary sector for improvement. Agriculture was always first on the agenda of the government schemes of economic developments. A number of infrastructural measures were taken by the government to establish a sound base of agriculture in Orissa.

### TENANCY MEASURES :

Revolutionary tenancy reforms were necessary to give the real cultivators the right on the land they tilled. During the tenure of the Second Congress Ministry very moderate attempts were made to bring agrarian reforms through legislation. Prominent among them were, Orissa Tenancy (2nd Amendment) Bill and the Orissa Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1948. In October, 1947 the Land Revenue and Land Tenure Committee recommended to the Government of Orissa to abolish the system of "permanent settlement" and for the state acquisition of the Zamindari. The ruling Congress party was very anxious to introduce legislation in this regard but preferred negotiations before actual implementation. In the floor of the Legislative Assembly the then Prime

Minister of Orissa, Mahtab assured the members that necessary legislation would be introduced as soon as the final report of the Land Revenue and Land Tenure Committee was made available and considered by the Government. Such a bill was also introduced in the Orissa Legislative Assembly by Mahtab himself. But the bill could not be passed during his tenures in office from 1946 to 1950.

### AGRICULTURE FINANCE :

The impoverished farmers were constantly under the clutches of village money lenders which led to the problem of 'rural indebtedness'. The government had to free the farmers from the monopoly of the village moneylenders and provide them with suitable alternatives to arrange finances. Especially the loans on easy terms were made available by government agencies in the sowing seasons. The farmers were saved from desperate sale of their farm product in harvesting seasons. This was made possible when the government provided them with suitable marketing facilities with remunerative prices.

The Government of Orissa tried to regulate the monopoly of village moneylenders through legislations. Prominent among those were the Orissa Moneylenders (Amendment) Bill, 1947, The Orissa Moneylenders (2nd Amendment) Bill, 1947, and the Orissa Debt Bondage Abolition Regulation, 1948.

Side by side the Government also tried to provide funds to the farmers by advancing loans under different schemes through co-operatives. Under the revised Post-War-Development Schemes, the office of the Registrar, Co-operative Societies was reorganised. Turmeric Grower's Sales Societies, Agricultural



Production and Multipurpose Societies for Backward Classes were reorganised and fund was earmarked in the budget of 1947-48. A Provincial Co-operative Bank was constituted and started functioning from the financial year of 1948-49. The government decided to purchase shares of the value of Rs. 7.50 lakhs of the Provincial Co-operative Bank within a period of five years. In 1948-49 a sum of Rs. 1.50 lakhs was paid and in the budget of 1949-50 an equal amount was provided. To regulate the anomalies of the existing Co-operative laws, the Government of Orissa introduced the Bihar and Orissa cooperative Societies (Orissa Amendment) Bill, 1947 and the bill was subsequently passed. The government also took measures to make co-operative movement more effective by co-operative training and propaganda.

Natural calamity was a regular feature in Orissa and the crops were being damaged due to the hurdles like abnormal or scanty rainfall, destruction of paddy by pests etc. Relief was afforded by advancing 'taccavi' loans and by suspending the loans which were due to be recovered. Loans were also granted under 'grow-more-food' campaign for reclamation of waste land, excavation of new tanks, renovation of old tanks, sinking of wells, purchase of bullocks and ploughs. Manures were also distributed on subsidy basis and at concessional rates.

#### UPLIFTMENT OF THE TRIBAL FARMERS :

The tribals of Orissa were living in remote tribal pockets. They were backward and ignorant. They had no specific and well defined profession. They were fond of hunting and collecting forest articles for their livelihood. They were also habituated to casual and occasional farming like *Poduchasa*, which was neither rewarding nor nature-friendly. There was no systematic law for tribal land ownership. Most of the time they were running short of cash and were depending upon the money lenders for their immediate monetary need. For this they had to undergo various types of exploitation, the worst being the system of *Gothi* (Bonded labour)

In this background the Second Congress Ministry in Orissa took steps to liberate these ignorant tribal farmers from the subjections to the plights like '*Gothi*' and rural indebtedness.

For their economic upliftment the following measures were to be adopted. They were, (i) provision of land for the tribals, (ii) restoration of lands taken away from the Scheduled Tribes by the non-scheduled ones, (iii) recovering them from indebtedness, (iv) prevention of all exploitations, (v) establishment of an organisation to sell cheaply and regularly essential articles.

The Agency Tracts Interests and Land Transfer Act, 1947 which prohibited alienation of lands of hill tribes to non-hill-men was not fully utilised to the benefit of illiterate hill tribes. In order to make it more useful the act was amended authorising the government officers to take action without waiting for an application by the affected person. Officers were appointed to enquire into restoration cases in Ganjam Agency. They took cognizance of 2121 acres of land restored to 1330 hill tribes in 1667 cases upto the end of January, 1949. 5400 acres of forest land in Bonai State was demarcated for settlement of Bhuyan villagers. 600 acres of land had been leased in Dhenkanal to the Scheduled Tribes.

Financial assistance was given to individuals to help them recover their family economy. 192 bullocks were supplied free of cost to the Bhuyans of Bamra and Bonai States. 3000 mounds of paddy were distributed in the Bhuyan areas of Pallahara. Rupees forty thousand as free grant of loan was given in Sundergath district.

Co-operative principles were applied to lessen exploitation. Multipurpose Cooperative Societies were opened to make available daily necessities of life at a reasonable cost. The government also made serious effort to dissuade the tribals from shifting cultivation and *Poduchasa* and persuaded them to come back to regular cultivation. 'Bhuyanpir Uplift Scheme' was started in Keonjhar and Pallahara States for settling of the Bhuyans for regular cultivation and for protecting the hill slopes from being denuded. In the Narasinghpur Colony Scheme, 800 acres of land was earmarked for development for the Bhuyans.

The Orissa Debt Bondage Abolition Regulation 1948 come into operation vide Law Department Notification on 17 June, 1948 to



abolish the system of debt bondage. Thus *Gothi* (Bonded Labour) was abolished and actions were taken to abolish '*bethi*' and '*begari*'. The Orissa Money Lenders Bill 1947 was adopted by the Orissa Legislative Assembly on 10 March, 1947. It was another statutory step to check slavery prevalent among the tribals.

#### AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING: IMPETUS TO INTENSIVE SCIENTIFIC FARMING :

The government made it a policy to depute students for training in degree colleges of agriculture outside the province. Students were also sent to other provinces to prosecute studies in post-graduate courses. Provisions were also made to send persons to foreign countries for specialised studies in agriculture. The government had decided to establish a college of agriculture in Orissa and a token monetary provision was made for the purpose in the budget estimates of 1948-49. Steps were taken to acquire land in the Mauzas of Baramunda, Joklandi, Ghatikia and Siripur (near Bhubaneswar) for the establishment of a provincial Agricultural Research Station. A Regional Coconut Research Station at Sakhigopal was contemplated in the budget estimates of 1948-49. Land acquisition for the purpose was started immediately after that. On the lines of the recommendations of the Royal Commission of Agriculture, of which Lord Linlithgow was the Chairman, a Provincial Agriculture Research Committee was constituted to co-operate and co-ordinate with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

The Government of Orissa formally did not accept the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture. But on the basis of its recommendation research work on soil and soil condition was started. To improve the fertility of the land, compost production schemes were undertaken and the result contour *bunds* (dams) in preventing soil erosion was demonstrated in the farms of G. Udayagiri, Pottangi and Bargarh. For proper utilization of available farm land various scientific experiments were conducted in the special sections reorganised under the supervision of the Department of Agriculture. These sections were the Botanical,

Entomological, Chemical and Engineering sections. The Engineering section was developing improved agro-machineries and was also in charge of Minor Irrigation Projects.

For the development of improved varieties of seeds necessary research was encouraged. The Rice Research Station developed paddy to suit local conditions and such seeds were supplied to departmental farms and district seed farms for multiplication. Two big seed farms at Barapalli and Sukinda were established to meet the increasing demand for improved varieties of Paddy seeds.

To increase the fertility of the land, manure treatment was introduced and experiments were conducted at Jeypore Rice Research Sub-station. Manurial experiments on turmeric were also conducted. Compost schemes were operated in the municipal areas and later on extended to the rural areas. In the initial stage fertiliser was sold at subsidised rate but gradually this system of subsidy was discontinued. The Department of Agriculture popularised oil cakes, bone meals, and other phosphetic fertilisers.

Modern agricultural implements were made available to the cultivators at cost price. Periodical exhibitions of those agro-machineries were organised. The cultivation of cash crop was encouraged. Agricultural propaganda was also made through advertisements in the newspapers, radio and by the distribution of departmental literatures. Exhibitions of agro-products were also organised. Demonstration of the improved method of cultivation was carried out in the cultivators' own field. Model farms to attract tribals were established in agency areas like G. Udayagiri and Pottangi. Research was encouraged to improve citrus fruit cultivation.

#### RECLAMATION OF WASTE LAND AND PLANT PROTECTION SCHEME :

Under food production campaign, measures were taken to increase production by extending the area under cultivation. For this, measures like reclamation of waste land by private parties and government agencies, drainage and other improvement work, construction of saline and flood embankment were adopted. Pest Control Schemes were



organised throughout the province and staffs were appointed to carry out the schemes. The plant protection schemes were reorganised.

#### IRRIGATION AND FLOOD CONTROL :

The multipurpose Hirakud Dam Project was being constructed to provide irrigation facilities in the district of Sambalpur and Bolangir. Flood control in the Mahanadi delta area of Cuttack would also be possible for this project. The Government also tried to implement certain other minor irrigation projects in the province. Loans were provided to the farmers to provide water facility to their land. Pumping plants were being hired out and given to the cultivators on nominal hire charges. The Well-Boring Section of the Agriculture Department sank tube-wells for irrigation in the lands of private persons at their cost.

#### AGRARIAN MOVEMENT :

During the tenure of the Second Congress Ministry in Orissa a few peasant movements were organised by the Communists and the Socialists. Towards 1946 in the district of Ganjam the peasants demanded reduction of rent and abolition of the 'Mustadari' system. Such a movement was encouraged by the Communist Party as well as by the Zamidari Rayat Sangh sponsored by the local Congress leaders. The situation became delicate and the police had to take precautionary measures to avoid breach of peace. In Puri district 'Dhulibhag' tenants of Khurda were advised by the local communities not to give more than one third. Some tenants did not pay the shares to the Zamidars and a number of civil cases were filed in the Court.

In 1947 a party paper entitled 'Krushak' was brought out by the Socialists. The Socialists were very much active in the districts of Cuttack and Balasore. But in the districts of Puri and Ganjam the Communists were able to organise the peasants and started the 'Tebhaga' movement. They also organised agitation in the Zamidari area to establish the rayat's right over the 'Heta' and 'Inam' land. There were acts of lawlessness, as a result of which 48 cases were started against the members and sympathisers of the party in the districts of Cuttack, Puri and

Ganjam.<sup>26</sup> They were set free on 15 August, 1947. After their release they raised volunteer bodies named 'Lal Bahint', 'Santi Sena' and 'Mukti Sena' and their remification was extended over the States of Nilgiri, Dhenkanal, Ranpur and Athgarh.

In 1948 the ryots of Takarda in Shergada of Ganjam district were incited to resist action by the police, who were searching for communist absconders hiding in the area. A mob armed with lathis and other weapon obstructed and resisted the police search parties and on 24 May a police party escorting some arrested leaders was attacked by the mob of about 500 persons. Firing had to be resorted which resulted in five deaths and sixteen injured.

In 1949 Communist sponsored Ryot agitation in the district of Ganjam lost its weight and strength. But in Kakatpur of Puri district the local Communists started a peasant movement against the Zamidars. The Socialists organised another peasant agitation at Mangalpur of Puri district. This movement was a Satyagraha which led to the arrest of twentytwo peasants and socialist workers. In 1950 the Socialist Party fomented agrarian conflict between the share croppers (Bhagachasis) and the landholders and made headway in forming 'Hind Kissan Panchayats' and 'Kissan Sabhas'. The Communists sponsored another agrarian movement with regard to 'Bhagchasa' land and encouraged the tenants for civil disobedience.

Thus the Second Congress Ministry in Orissa (1946-1950) not only welcomed the political liberation of India, but also made sincere effort to give the people of Orissa socio-economic freedom. It tried its best to improve the condition of the farmers and convert agriculture a rewarding profession. It was able to comprehend the problems of the peasants and took necessary steps to quell unrest among them.

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# 50 YEARS OF IRRIGATION IN ORISSA

*Dr. A.K. Dalua*

## 1. Orissa's Water Resources :

Orissa is richly endowed with both surface water and ground water resources. Rainfall is the only source of water resources in the State and its annual average is 1482 mm. But the whole of it is not available for utilisation. While a part of it percolates into the ground to form the ground water reserve, a part of it is lost as evaptransportation and the remaining is available as surface water in rivers and streams, ponds and lakes etc.

Until 1981, there was no systematic approach to the development of water resources in the State. In that year, a draft master plan was prepared to know about the total quantum of water resources and the quantum that could be utilised effectively. This draft master plan is presently being updated after making detailed river-basinwise planning and by strengthening the hydrological data. As per the draft master plan, the available water for exploitation is 151 lakh hectare metres (132 lakh hectare metres surface water + 19 lakh hectare metres ground water). But if the yield from the catchment areas of the rivers lying outside Orissa are excluded the surface water availability comes down to 95 lakh hectare metres. While the dependable yield for utilisation out of 95 lakh hectare metres of surface water is 70.03 lakh hectare metres, the exploitable ground water potential stands at 19 lakh hectare metres. They account for about 4.15% and 4.2% of the country's surface water potential and ground water resources respectively.

## 2. Scope of Irrigation :

Out of the total geographical area of 155.4 lakh hectares, the net sown area in the State is about 63 lakh hectares. It has been assessed that about 59 lakh hectares i.e., about 94% of the sown area can be brought under

irrigation through different conventional sources as follows :

a) Major & Medium Irrigation Sector	39.49 lakh Ha.
b) Minor (flow) Irrigation sector	10.00 lakh Ha.
c) Minor (Lift) Irrigation sector	9.51 lakh Ha.
Total	59.00 lakh Ha.

The assessment further reveals that the total surface water potential provides scope for construction of 183 nos. of Major and Medium Irrigation Projects and 5892 nos. of Minor Irrigation Projects. Similarly the ground water potential can create 5634 no. of tube wells, 7,51,246 no. of dug wells, 1,44,884 no. of dug well /bore well, 1868 no. of medium tube wells, 3688 no. of shallow tube wells and 5972 no. of filter point tube wells.

## 3. Need for Irrigation :

Water is the single major input for agricultural production and productivity. More than 70% of the State's population are directly or indirectly engaged in agricultural activities, contributing thereby more than 50% of the State's Domestic Product. Prospect of agriculture in the State depends on a good and timely monsoon rainfall. Although the annual average rainfall of the State (1482 mm) is good, it is neither uniform throughout the year, nor it is equally spread throughout the State. Firstly about 85% of the total rainfall occurs between June and September. Secondly if there is heavy flood in one area especially in the north and coastal areas, there is drought in other areas. Thus there is large variation in rainfall from region to region, season to season and year to year. Hence in areas where rainfall cannot be relied upon for a large part of the growing period of crops, necessity for irrigation becomes total; and in areas where crops cannot be grown with natural rainfall but additional water becomes necessary to improve the agricultural yield, irrigation becomes supplemental. In other words, the vagaries of monsoon have underlined the need for irrigated agriculture.



It is no denying a fact that irrigation acts as medicinal dose for agriculture. Susceptibility to droughts is less in those areas where irrigation has been provided. It has therefore been the endeavour of Government of India as well as the State Government to create more and more irrigation facilities by constructing various types of irrigation schemes. The conventional types are: large projects (more than 10,000 hectares ayacut), medium projects (between 2000 and 10,000 hectares ayacut), minor projects (less than 2000 hectares ayacut), ground water lift and river lift projects. Sprinkler and drip irrigation systems which are less water consuming devices and very useful in vegetable, floriculture and horticultural crops have not got the imagination so far in our State on commercial basis. On the other hand, there are the unconventional irrigation systems like dug wells and water harvesting structures.

#### 4. Development of Irrigation :

Col. Arthur Cotton is said to be the father of modern irrigation system in Orissa. He visited Orissa in 1858 and suggested a plan on the pattern of the Godavari and Krishna to construct anicuts across the Mahanadi, the Birupa and the Kathjuri and to have a network of canal systems with the threefold objectives of irrigation, navigation and flood moderation. This later developed into the Orissa Canal System in the coastal plains fed by the Mahanadi, Birupa, Kharsuan, Brahmani and Baitarani and the works were completed in 1883. Later the Rusikulya systems were completed in 1900. But, for about half century thereafter, there was practically no progress in irrigation. Balidiha, a diversion weir project was perhaps the only flow irrigation project worth mentioning constructed under the aegis of the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj. Tank irrigation, however was practised and encouraged by the ex-State rulers. At the time of independence of the country, there was about 1.77 lakh hectares of irrigated area during Kharif and a meagre 3890 hectares of Rabi area through all major and medium irrigation projects. Minor irrigation sector which was mostly confined to tank irrigation sector which was mostly confined to tank irrigation did not have any guarantee on account of their small size.

Independence of the country forced our planners, economists and politicians to give a serious thought to irrigation sector as with the partition of the country, most of our irrigated land fell into the share of Pakistan. The country wanted to be self-sufficient in food grains and

for which irrigation development in the country was given priority attention. Orissa enjoys the pride of constructing the first mega project "Hirakud" in India after independence. Although the foundation stone of the dam was laid by Sir Harthurn Lewis, the-then Governor of Orissa, in March 1964, a second foundation was laid on 12th April, 1948 by Pandit Nehru and the actual construction started in the middle of 1948. While power generation started in December, 1956, first canal water was released on the 2nd October, 1956. While starting the green revolution in the undivided Sambalpur and Bolangir district, Hirakud helped in stabilising the Orissa canal systems. Work of Hiradharbati weir, although was started prior to independence (1946) it was completed quite late in the seventies.

Like all other development activities, irrigation development got a fillip with the launching of five year plans in 1951-52. To give more thrust, an independent department of Irrigation and Power being separated from the State Works Department was created in 1962 to be responsible for major and medium irrigation projects and generation of power. Similarly the Rural Development Department was created from out of the Revenue Department in 1971 to take care of the minor irrigation sector. The Orissa Lift Irrigation Corporation was set up in 1973 to look after the utilisation of ground water potential. After several shuffle and reshuffle all the aforesaid three units excepting power generation are being looked after at present by the State Water Resources Department.

Irrigation sector got a further fillip when the World Bank came forward to assist financially in the execution of irrigation projects. Salandi is the first major project in this regard. This was followed by a number of medium irrigation projects under the Caption Orissa Irrigation I & II in the seventies and the eighties respectively. Four projects of the latter group are still under construction. The Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund, Japan also took interest for the first time in funding irrigation projects in India and that too in Orissa during the 7th plan period and the Upper Kolab Irrigation project (part) and Upper Indravati irrigation project (part) are two such projects now under construction. The race for foreign assistance continued and presently, the World Bank are funding a massive project called Water Resources Consolidation Project covering completion of five nos. of incomplete medium projects, execution of three new major projects, systems improvement of some of the



old projects alongwith the programme to transfer the responsibility of operation and maintenance of these systems to the Water Users Associations, Water Planning, institutional strengthening etc. For availability of dependable hydrological data, (both surface water and ground water ) the National Hydrology Project is also under execution with World Bank assistance. Under the World Bank aided Dam Safety Assurance and Rehabilitation Project, several large, medium and minor irrigation dams are being physically reinforced. In the meantime, the NABARD have also come forward in a big way to fund the execution of several medium and minor irrigation projects. The E.E.C. have also started funding the renovation of several minor irrigation projects. While central funding is done to execute the Potteru Project in Malkangiri district since 1972-73; under AIBP (Advanced Irrigation Benefit Programme) much awaited Upper Indravati Right Canal, Rengali Right Canal, Subarnarekha Canal and Extension of Anandapur Barrage System have been taken up since 1996-97 with Central Government assistance. Training need of the Irrigation Engineers has also been met to a great extent by the establishment of WALMI at Pratapnagari, Cuttack since 1984.

By the end of 1996-97, irrigation potential of 23,24,523 hectares Kharif and 7,19,398 hectares Rabi has been created in the State as follows :

Sector	Kharif (Ha)	Rabi(Ha)
1. Major & Medium Irrigation	10,69,980	4,66,130
2. Minor (Flow) Irrigation	4,10,302	62,757
3. Minor (Lift) Irrigation	3,14,241	1,88,511
4. Other unconventional sources	5,30,000	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,24,523 Ha</b>	<b>7,19,398 Ha</b>

The details of planwise financial expenditure and irrigation potential created are given in Table A & B respectively. The unconventional sources like dug wells and water harvesting structures are tapped by the Panchayati Raj and Agriculture Departments. Their dependability being not assured from irrigation point of view, the assured irrigation potential created through all conventional sources under the responsibility of Water Resources Department stands at 17,94,523 hectares Kharif and 7,19,398 hectares Rabi. In the Major and Medium irrigation sector there are 9 major projects and 41 medium projects completed in all respects and 8 major and 11 medium projects are under execution. In the minor irrigation sector, while there are about

4620 completed flow irrigation projects, there are 14781 L.I. Points. Both the figures include hundreds of partly derelict and fully derelict projects.

A comparison of the irrigation growth in the country and in Orissa after independence and during the plan period ending 1996-97 shows that while at the national level it is about 1450 thousand hectares gross annually through all the conventional sources, at the State level it has been about 50 thousand hectares gross only. About 30.4% of the total feasible irrigated area of 59 lakh hectares in the State has been covered under irrigation. (It does not include the unconventional sources). At this rate of irrigation growth, the State can achieve full potential creation by 2055 A.D. as assessed by the Working Group for Major and Medium Irrigation Projects during 7th plan. Other agriculturally developed States like Karnataka, Tamilnadu and Punjab will achieve it in 2012, 2002 and 2002 A.D. respectively. The State Government have declared that 50% of the feasible irrigated area will be irrigated by the turn of the century.

The growing mouths are to be fed. Hence foodgrains production of about 80 lakh metric tonnes per annum has to be raised to about 120 lakh metric tonnes. Further the yield rate of total rice (Autumn, Winter and Rabi) which stood at 12.13 quintals only per hectare in 1992-93 has to be raised in the minimum to reach the national average of 17.6 quintals per hectare. The dependance of the State on neighbouring States like Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Bihar for vegetables and fruits has to be done away with. Hence there is need for investing more money annually on creation of additional irrigation potential with priority attention to spread it to the drought prone areas. Further as against the tribal population of about 22% of the total population, irrigation has been provided in about 15% area in tribal areas. Hence there is need for its maximisation.

#### 5. Some Problems :

There are many problems which the irrigation sector in the State is facing. It needs a separate chapter for discussion. But some of the major problems are (i) time and cost over-run in execution of almost all the projects, (ii) wide gap in irrigation potential created and its utilisation, (iii) unwidely organisation which tells upon the availability of funds for operation and maintenance of the projects, (iv) improper investment planning, (v) Absence of conjuctive use of surface water and ground water, (vi)



improper water schedule, cropping pattern and water management, (vii) Unusually low water rate, (viii) lack of accountability on the part of implementing officers, and (ix) above all absence of people's participation.

It is heartening that the problems that beset the irrigation sector have been identified and a humble beginning for solution has been made under the World Bank aided Water Resources Consolidation Project. Our sincerity alone will help in overcoming the difficulties.

#### 6. Conclusion :

Water is a scarce natural resource. It is replenishable, but not inexhaustible. With growing population, urbanisation and industrialisation, irrigation sector is facing competition for water utilisation for drinking, power generation, industrial purposes etc. Monsoon in the State being highly erratic, there is need for conservation of this invaluable resource.

**TABLE - A**  
**Planwise financial expenditure on Irrigation in Orissa**  
(excluding unconventional sources)

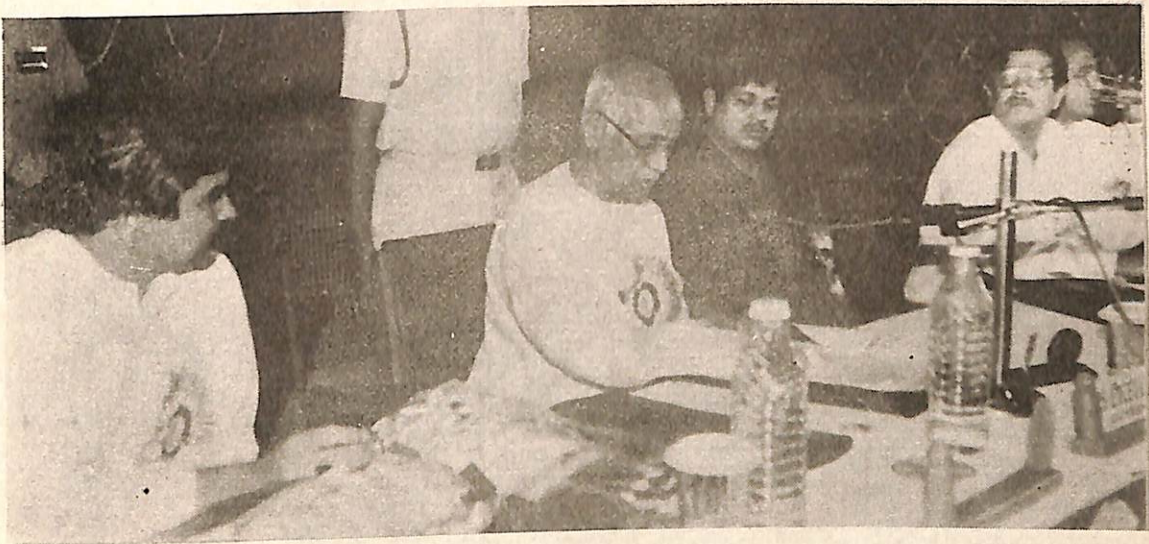
S.No. Plan period	Rs. in crores.		
	Major and Medium irrigation	Minor Irrigation Flow Lift	Grand Total
1. Ist Plan (1951-56)	55.28	N.A.	55.280
2. 2nd Plan (1956-61)	20.00	N.A.	20.00
3. 3rd Plan (1961-66)	26.22	3.702	32.440
4. Annual Plan (1966-69)	20.24	3.714	28.190
5. 4th Plan (1969-74)	20.89	18.979	45.972
6. 5th Plan (1974-78)	70.63	20.290	101.630
7. Annual Plan (1978-80)	67.81	16.220	96.110
8. 6th Plan (1980-90)	360.00	56.770	445.00
9. 7th Plan (1985-90)	623.61	82.680	800.760
10. Annual Plan (1990-1992)	344.57	41.040	444.840
11. 8th Plan (1992-97)	1050.74	142.100	1405.500
Grand Total	2659.99	385.495	3475.722

**TABLE - B**  
**Planwise irrigation potential created in Orissa-in Hectares)**

S.No. Plan Period	Major and Medium irrigation						Minor Irrigation		Total
	irrigation		Flow		Lift		Kharif	Rabi	
	Kharif	Rabi	Kharif	Rabi	Kharif	Rabi			
1. Pre-Plan.	176920	3890	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	176920	3890	
2. Ist Plan (1951-56)	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	
3. 2nd Plan (1956-61)	117080	-	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	117080	-	
4. 3rd Plan (1961-66)	92680	96630	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	92680	96630	
5. Annual Plan (1966-69) cumulative	34500	71540	164700	7439	N.A.	N.A.	199200	78979	
6. 4th kPlan (1969-74) cumulative	174440	23640	60665	13335	32100	19260	267205	56235	
7. 5th Plan (1974-78)	94390	93570	41109	-	29540	17700	165039	111270	
8. Annual Plan (1978-80)	47780	57270	19576	18176	26050	15630	93406	91076	
9. 6th Plan (1980-85)	111490	45450	36718	12237	99790	59868	247998	117555	
10. 7th Plan (1985-90)	78150	42150	41108	5371	62837	27702	182095	85223	
11. Annual Plan (1990-92)	25570	8330	4557	442	24200	14520	54327	23292	
12. 8th Plan (1992-97)	116980	25660	41869	5757	39724	23831	198573	55248	
	1069980	468130	410302	62757	314241	188511	1794523	719398	





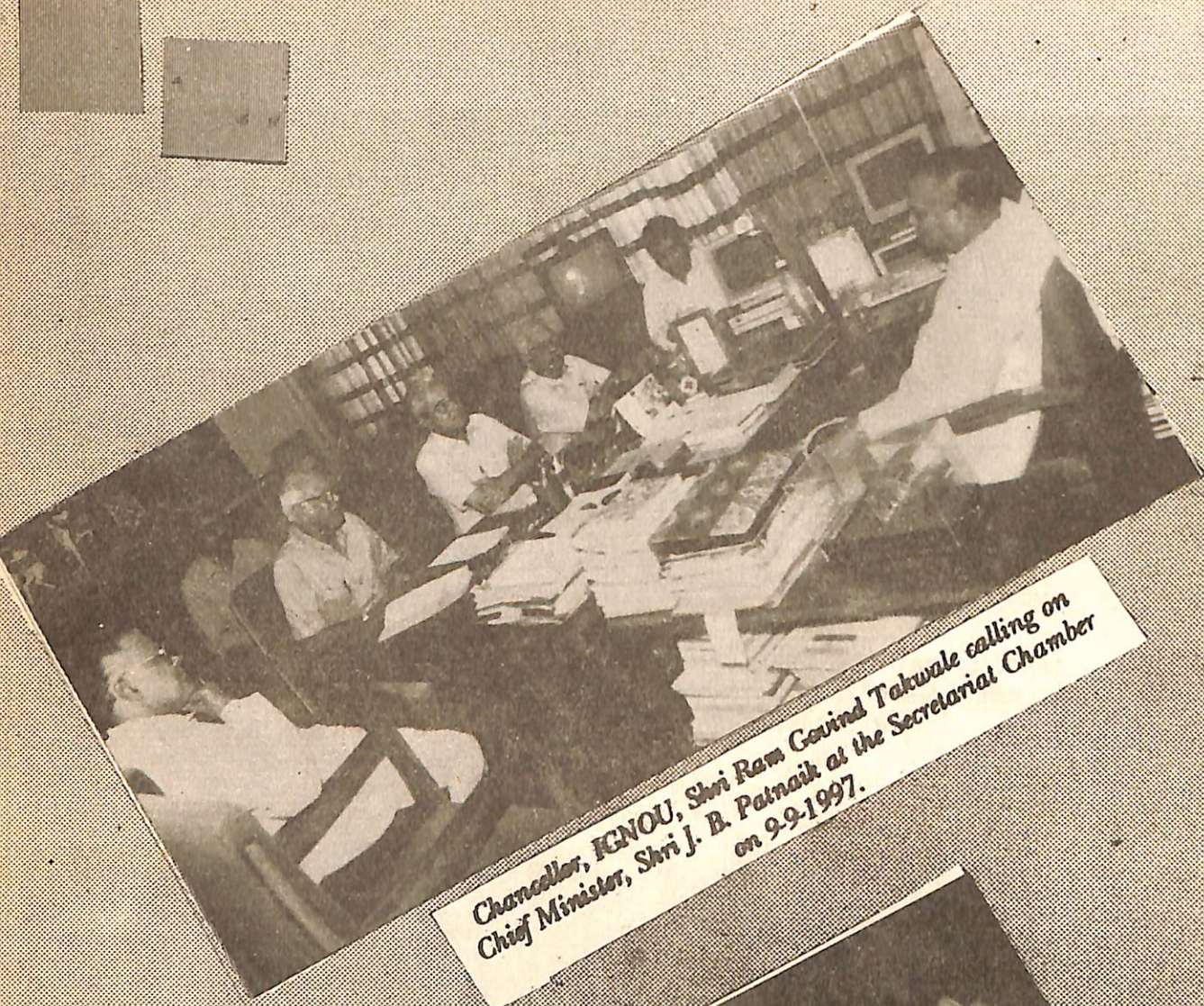


*Hon'ble Governor of Orissa Shri G. Ramanujam inaugurating the 12th Annual State Level Convention and Seminar organised by OASME at Soohana Bhavan on 12-8-1997.*

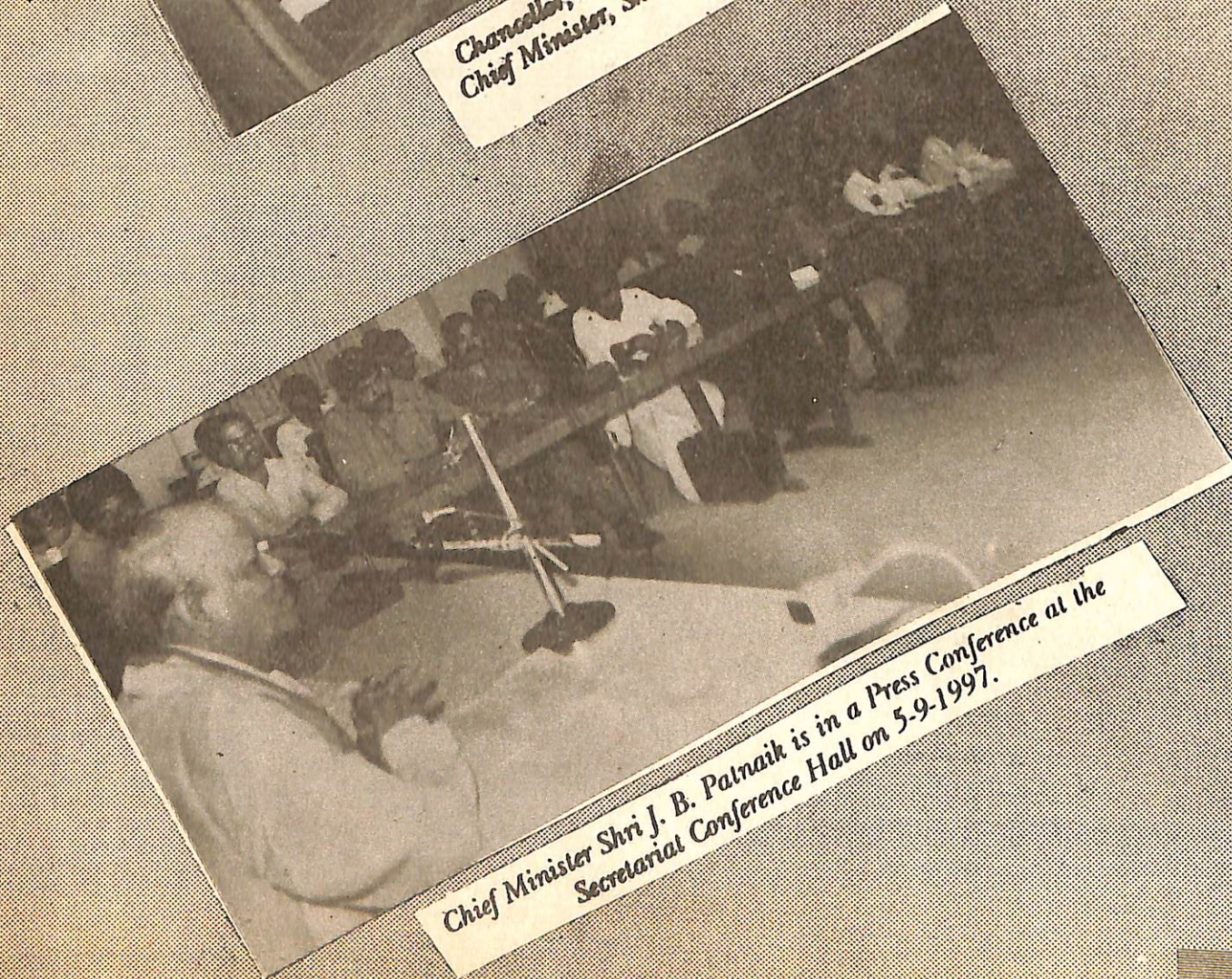


*Minister of State, Information and Public Relations, Shri Netrananda Mallick inaugurating the Information Centre at Chatagaon in the district of Keonjhar on 28-9-1997.*





Chancellor, IGNOU, Shri Ram Govind Takwale calling on Chief Minister, Shri J. B. Patnaik at the Secretariat Chamber on 9-9-1997.



Chief Minister Shri J. B. Patnaik is in a Press Conference at the Secretariat Conference Hall on 5-9-1997.



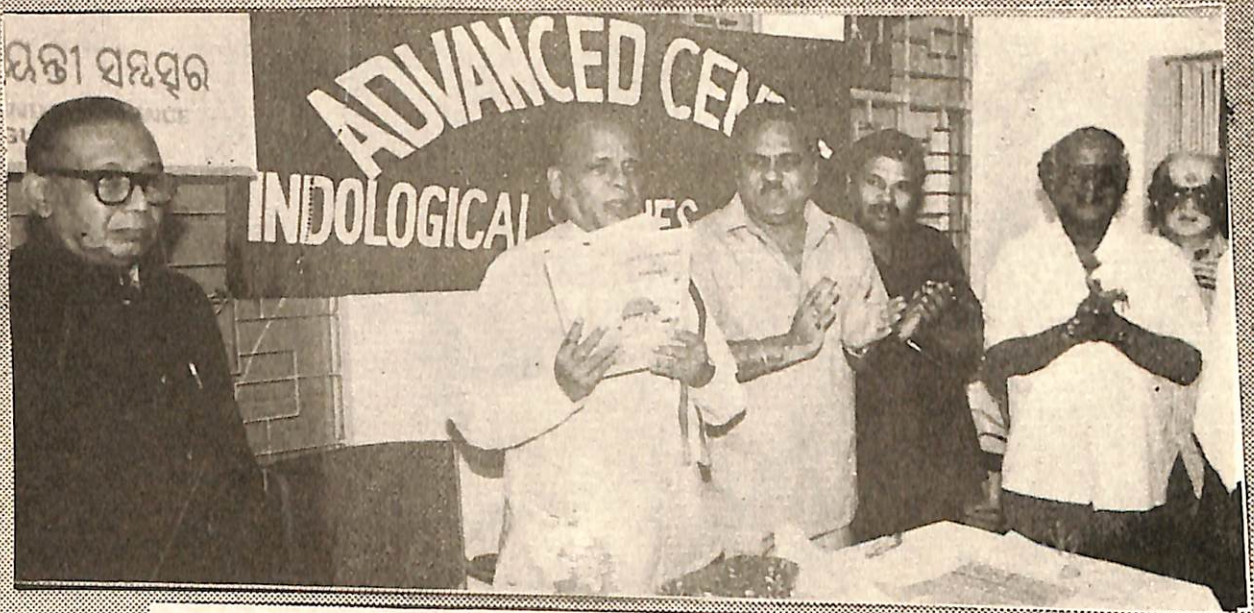


*Chief Minister Shri J. B. Patnaik inaugurating the Literacy Awareness Campaign at Saheed Bhavan, Cuttack on the occasion of International Literacy Day on 8-9-1997 organised by Cuttack District Literacy Samiti.*

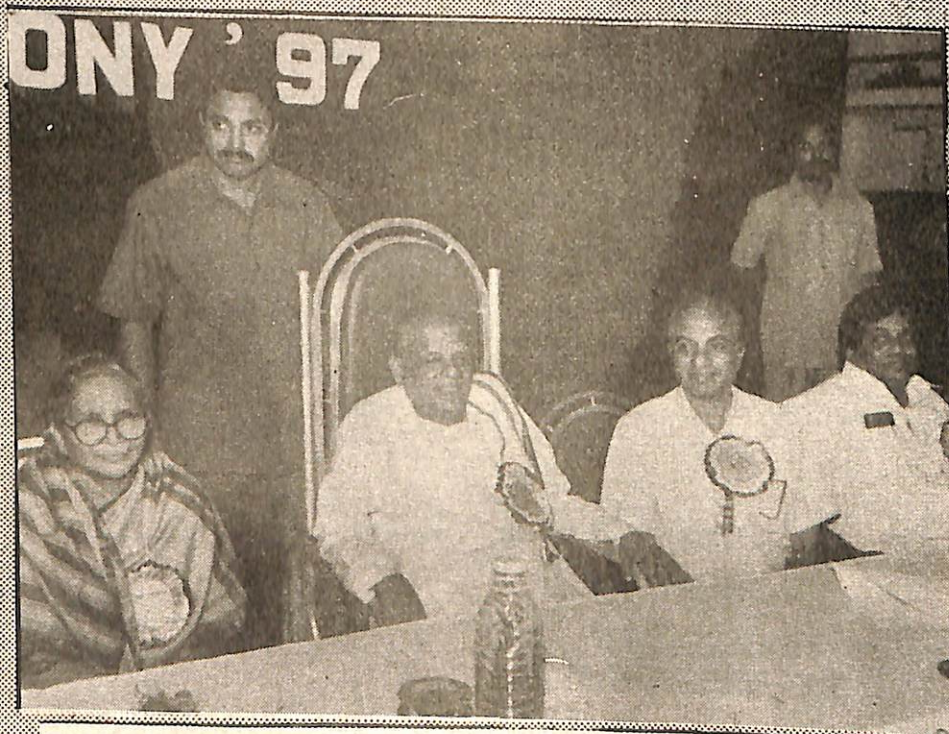


*Chief Minister Shri J. B. Patnaik inaugurating the new building of Saheednagar College at Lunia in Dhamnagar block on 22-9-1997.*



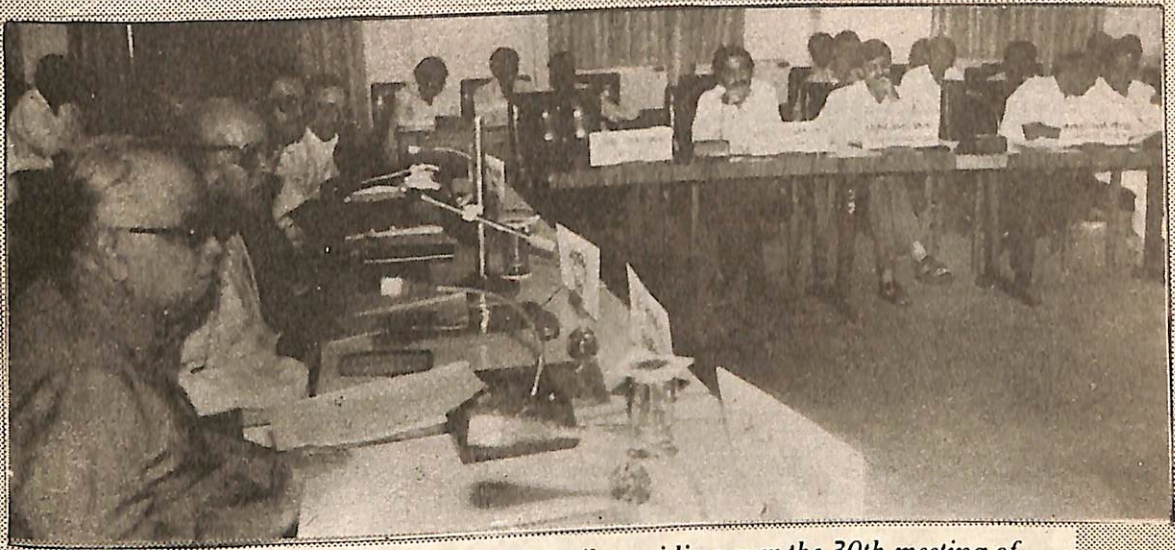


*Chief Minister Shri J. B. Patnaik releasing a book, 'Art Heritage of Orissa' published by "Advanced Centre for Indological Studies" in a function held at his residence on 5-8-1997.*



*Chief Minister Shri J. B. Patnaik gracing the annual function of Students' Union of S. C. B. Medical College, Cuttack as Chief Guest on 25-9-1997.*





*Chief Minister Shri J. B. Patnaik presiding over the 30th meeting of State Flood Control Council at the Secretariat Conference Hall on 13-8-1997.*

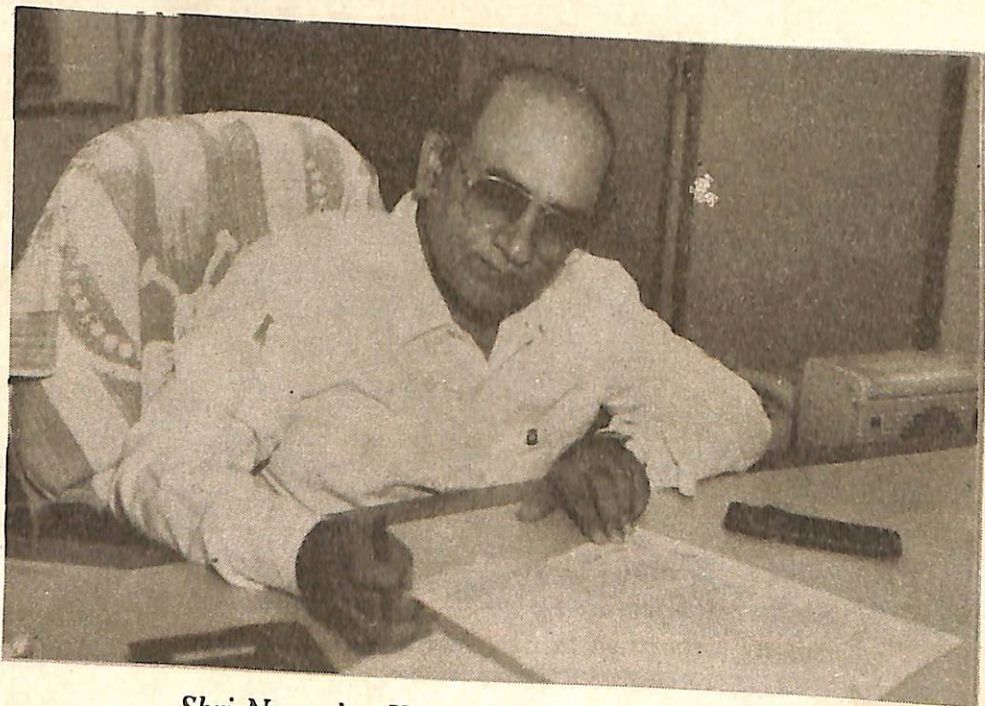


*Chief Secretary Shri Sudhansu Bhusan Mishra addressing the State Secretariat employees on 19-9-1997 at their annual prize giving ceremony (organised by Secretariat Recreation Club).*





*Chief Minister Shri J. B. Patnaik inaugurating the Rajasthan Bank Branch in Orissa at Ashok Nagar, Bhubaneswar on 4-8-1997.*

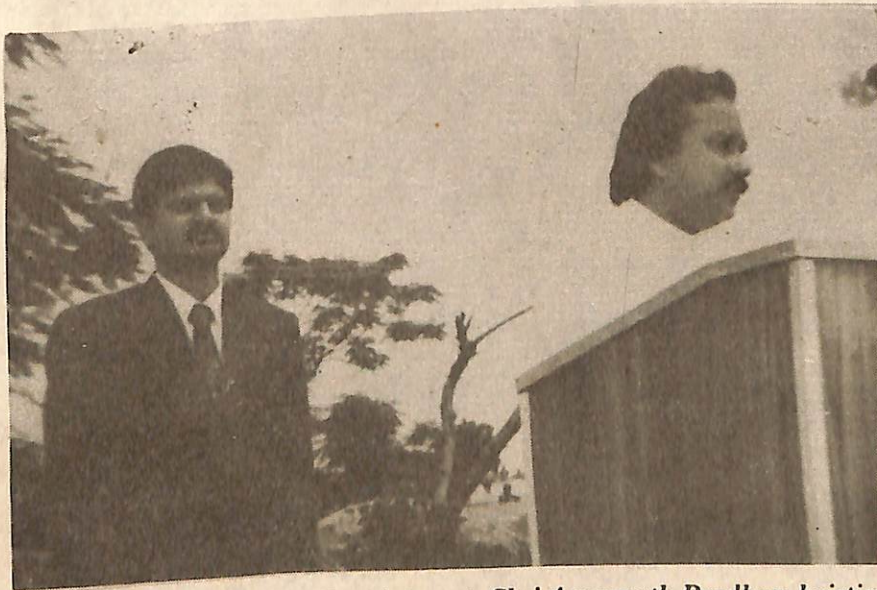


*Shri Narendra Kumar Mishra assumed office as Director, I. & P. R. on 5-9-1997.*



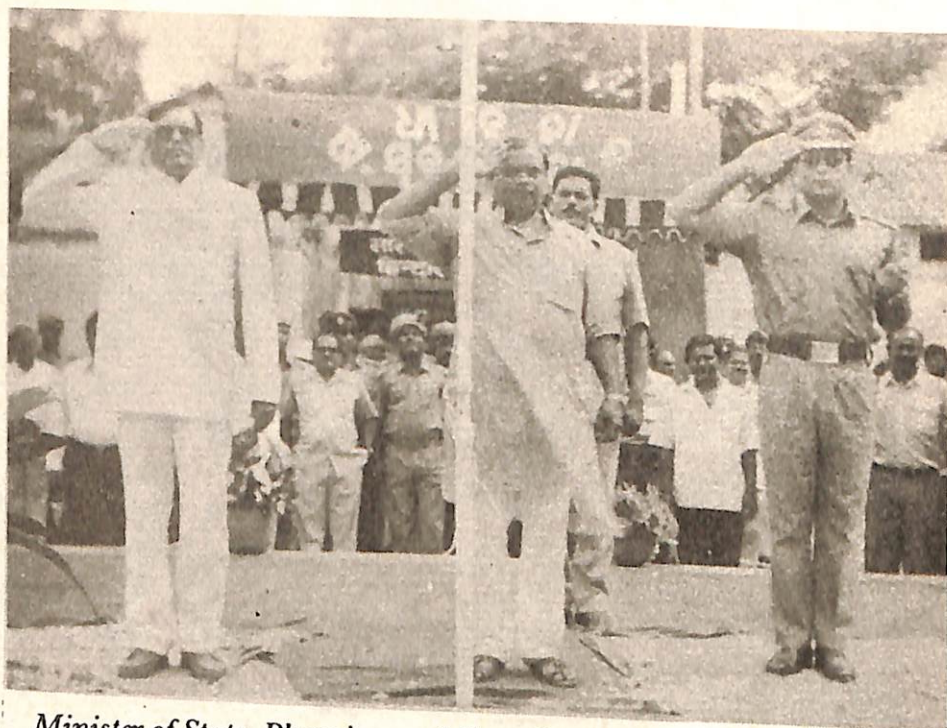


*Chief Minister Shri J. B. Patnaik presenting a shield at Soochana Bhavan on August 15, 1997 to Jatni N.A.C. for securing the second position in the State for its overall performances. Chairman Dr. G. P. Singh receiving the shield.*

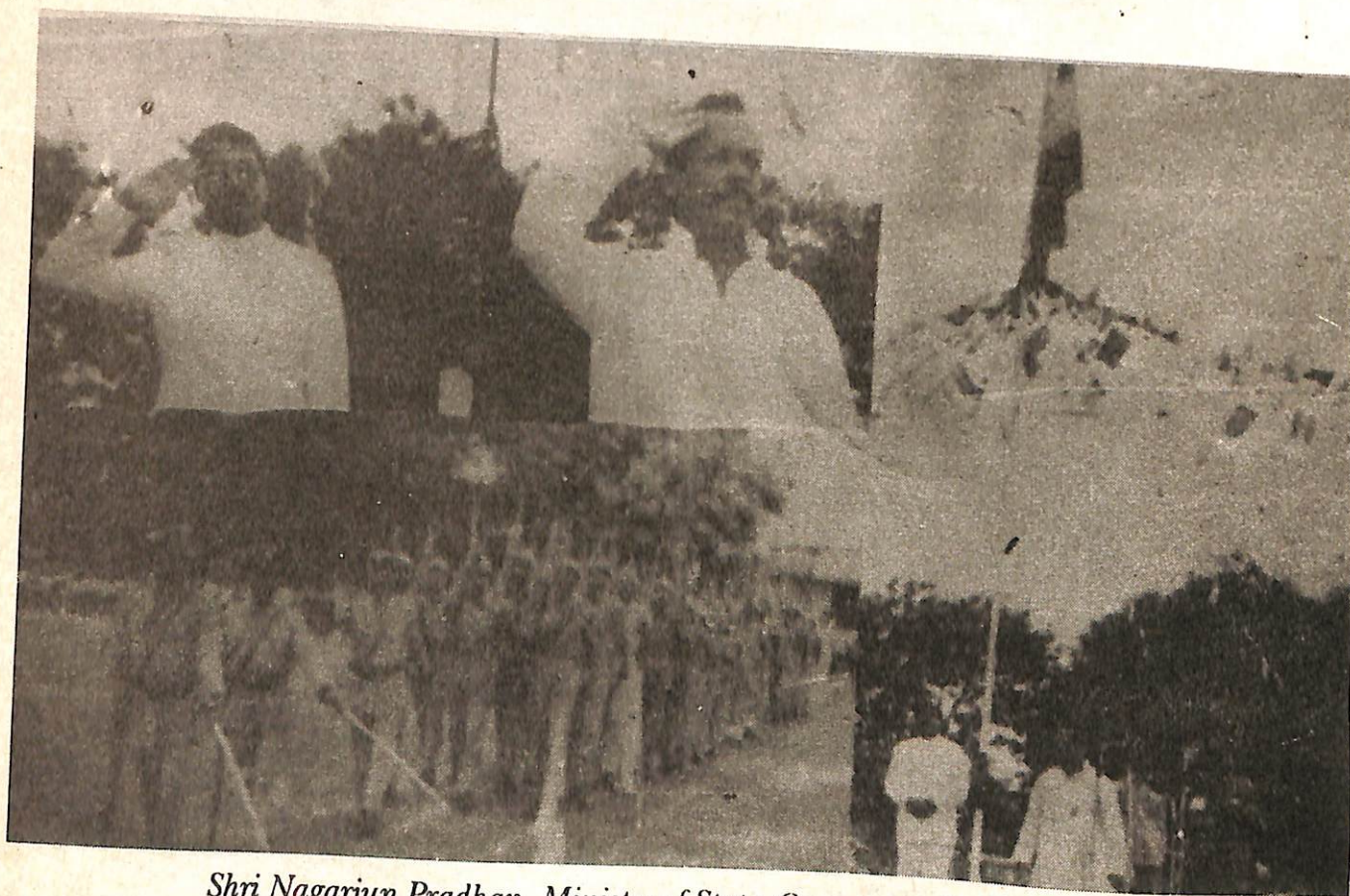


*Minister of State, Urban Development, Shri Amarnath Pradhan hoisting the National Flag and addressing the public at Jharsuguda on the Independence Day. Collector & District Magistrate Shri C. J. Venugopal is present.*





*Minister of State, Planning and Co-ordination Shri Haladhar Karjee receiving the salute at the parade in Rayagada on 15-8-1997.*



*Shri Nagarjun Pradhan, Minister of State, Commerce taking the salute at the Independence Day parade at Nuapara on 15-8-1997.*



# A LOOK INTO ECONOMY OF ORISSA DURING PRE AND POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

*Dr. K.K. Bal*

A culturally rich Orissa is one of the most economically backward states in India. The situation has not been changed even after 50 years of independence. One of the foremost reasons of poverty of our state is historical. Prior to British occupation of Orissa in the year 1803 the socio-political chaos under the regime of the Bhonsles of Nagpur was no less rapacious than the Muslim misgovernment and this explains the general reconciliation of the people to the British subjection of Orissa (Hunter: 175). But studies in the agrarian economy of Orissa would reveal that British misrule at least in its formative stages was no less atrocious for the people than that of their predecessors (Das: 10). People of Orissa looked upon the new regime as more unsympathetic and oppressive than that they were formerly under. Even the English officers, like Trower, Ewer etc., criticised their own policy which brought on the conquered people misery and unhappiness (De:95).

During British rule Orissa was a part of Bengal Presidency leading to economic drain to Calcutta. The permanent land tenure put the people of Orissa in dire poverty and utter negligence. An agrarian Orissa now faced the challenge of a middle class 'Baboo' society. The society was based on money speculation in the land tenure system leading to disastrous results in the then economy (Orissa Records, 1965 : 54-77). The intermediary tenancy rights created a big gap between rich and poor. The Zamindars were reduced to beggars, raiyats groaned under heavy taxation caused by thoughtless assessment and the depreciation of the value of cowries, the trade and commerce declined and the price of food articles rose (De:105).

The occasional occurrences of natural calamities in the forms of inundation, cyclone, drought etc. rendered the people too poor. The official reports explained the climatic and geographical hindrances as causative factors for

the traditional poverty of Orissa. Orissa has a long broken coastline which is always susceptible to hurricanes and cyclonic weather in autumn season. It has been contended that rainfall in Orissa in the average was 62.5 inches per annum. But its early cessation was fatal to the rice crop. The midland plain of Balasore, Cuttack and Puri districts were rich with fertile lands often interspersed with navigable rivers. But these rivers like Mahanadi and Baitarani were liable to ruinous inundations from the sudden overflow of rain water in the Chhotnagpur Plateau (Hamilton : 31-59). The destruction of the diversified basis of an alien capitalist economy and the rapid growth of rural population led to the concentration of man power on the land leading to the Subdivision land fragmentation of the holdings (Das).

In the second half of the 19th century deepening crisis in the agrarian economy of Orissa made the position of the cultivators still more deplorable. In the absence of rapid industrialisation the urban market for agricultural products remained more or less static, the ratio between urban and rural population remaining practically unchanged. Orissa throughout the century remained predominantly rural and its expanding grain trade was constrained by the poverty of the villagers. It was this underdevelopment of the rural economy of Orissa throughout the 19th century which exposed the exploitative nature of the British Raj, its failure to attain economic growth through industrialisation and increase in the volume of the agrarian products inspite of the manifold works of public utility undertaken by the alien Government of England (Das: 223).

During the first half of 20th century Orissa entered to an era of rising nationalism and struggle for a separate state, the ultimate objective of Oriya language Agitation. Utkal Union Conference was formed by M.S. Das in



1903. Sambalpur became a part of Orissa in 1905. Orissa was separated from Bengal presidency from 1 August 1912 and became a part of Bihar-Orissa. On 1 April 1936 it was declared a separate state with six districts of Cuttack, Puri, Balasore, Sambalpur, Ganjam and Koraput.

Several defects in the agrarian system fell heavily on the peasantry of Orissa. British introduced Zamindari system which took Orissa into a chaos which was reflected in many Kissan Agitations. Prajamandal movements in the feudatory states were also the product of wrong policy measures. The system resulted in the enhanced and excessive land revenue, rigid manner of the collection, harassing to the ryots, deterioration in agricultural production, inclination of the Zamindars and ryots in improving the conditions of their lands and finally the levy illegal cesses to make up losses. Taking advantage of the ignorance of the peasants zamindars or landlords raised rents to unbearable limits, compelled them to pay illegal dues and perform forced or beggar and oppressed them in diverse other ways. Illiteracy of the masses was serious obstacle to the economic progress of our State. These were the main causes for the growth of poverty and deterioration of agriculture during British rule.

The national movement had marked effect on the relation between landlords and tenants. It was first in Kanika in 1921-22 subsequently in other states after 1930. In 1938 the agrarian agitation became serious and made rapid progress, especially in the districts of Cuttack, Puri and Balasore. The agitation also spread to Ganjam and became manifest particularly in Khallikote and Athagada estates. With the support of Congress socialist group propaganda spread to Nilgiri, Dhenkanal, Talcher, Nayagarh and Ranpur (Mahapatra : 15-16).

When Congress came to power in 1937 it took some possible measures to develop the condition of the tenants. The Orissa Tenancy (Amendment) Bill 1937, Orissa Money-lenders Bill 1938 and Orissa Act XIX of 1947 were passed. Finally with the abolition of Zamindari and series of land reform measures attempts were made to give a right shape to the agrarian economy of Orissa. Accordingly the Land Revenue and Land Tenure Committee of Orissa was formed under Government Resolution No.

7533 R. dated the 15th November 1946 (Revenue : 75).

A major post independence event of Orissa was the merger of 24 Garjat or feudatory states with the British previously ruled Orissa in 1948-49. This merger not only added 27,475 sq. miles of new area to the Province's Original 32,695 sq. miles, increased the population by 40% but qualitative change in the socio-political character of the Province. Except one or two feudatory states the merged areas were very backward in all respects. On 26th January 1950, the territorial map of Orissa was redrawn with 13 districts in place of 6 old districts. The new districts formed by the merger of the native states are : Bolangir, Phulbani, Dhenkanal, Kalahandi, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanja and Sundergarh (Ghosh : 7-8).

Orissa after independence faced an uphill task to introduce various socio-economic measures in various areas and regions and bring about emotional integration of the people of Garjat and Moghalbandi areas which factor was largely responsible for political instability in the states for years. The psychological make-up of a great section of the people who are mostly tribals and their rulers who lived on the exploitation of their poor subjects was different from that of the people in the original district. This factor caused a maladjustment and generated disparate political forces that pulled in opposite directions throwing up political situations not only conducive to the well being of the province as a whole (Ghosh: 7-8). Congress took responsibility to rule from 1946-56 which is considered to be the development decade first under the Chief Ministership of Mahatab (1946-50) and next under Nabakrushna Choudhury (1950-56). Besides the present capital at Bhubaneswar, Hirakud Multipurpose Dam project and Rourkela Steel Plant were established. Abolition of Zamindari and measures on land reforms were some of the revolutionary steps to create a developed State (Mahanti: 84-85)

Orissa Under Plan Period:

The Total state plan outlay in Orissa was Rs. 18 crores in the First Plan which was increased to 2700 crores in the 7th Plan. In constant Prices (1970-71) these outlays will be respectively Rs. 41 crores and 753 crores rise about 17.2 times. Similarly the per capita plan outlay in 1970-71 prices will be Rs. 5.43 in First Plan and Rs. 51.89 (Prov) during 7th Plan.



### State Plan outlay in Orissa from the First Plan to the Seventh Plan.

Period	Total outlays		Average annual per-capita outlay	
	(Rs. in crores)		(In Rupees)	
	Current Prices	1970-71 Prices	Current Prices	1970-71 Prices
1	2	3	4	5
1. First Plan (1951-56)	18.42	41.02	2.44	5.43
2. Second Plan (1956-61)	86.59	172.49	10.49	20.89
3. Third Plan (1961-66)	224.60	356.24	24.52	39.00
4. Annual Plans (1966-69)	124.95	140.69	20.28	23.40
5. Fourth Plan (1969-74)	249.34	223.91	22.72	20.41
6. Fifth Plan (1974-79)	640.00	362.24	51.47	29.05
7. Annual Plan (1979-80)	195.00	89.70	74.67	34.35
8. Sixth Plan (1980-85)	1512.00	545.48	115.50	48.11
9. Seventh Plan (1985-90)	2700.00	753.30	185.98	51.89

This however exhibits a continuously increasing trend in terms of total outlay as well as annual per capita plan outlay over different plans except in 3rd and 4th plan. In 3rd Plan the outlay was proportionately higher and in 4th Plan it was relatively lower. In 1961 mid term election Congress for the first time got 82 seats and Biju Patnaik became the Chief Minister. Political stability paid prices in terms of higher allocation plan outlay nearly 2.6 times increase of previous plan period. Though Biju Patnaik remained in power for a few years Orissa entered to an era of Industrial progress, spread of technical and primary education and development of communication in an expeditious manner. Paradeep Port was built in 20 crores and 150 kms. of express highway in 17 crores (Mohanti: 87-88).

The huge discrepancy in the rate of per capita state plan outlay during First Plan and 2nd Plan was very much reduced from 3rd plan onwards compared to poorer states in India but far below to richer states like Haryana, Punjab and Maharashtra. It is rather a positive sign that Orissa made a significant recovery in its rate of investments in the State Plan during last 2 Plans i.e. 6th and 7th Plans. It is important to mention here that the decade 1980-90 covering last 2 plans was a stable one having J.B. Patnaik as Chief Minister. Between Independence and 1977 Orissa had 15 ministries including three coalitions headed by ten persons. The average life of a Ministry was a little over two years indicative of the instability that has been the most

compulsive political reality in Orissa since independence (Ghosh :8). Thus it can be presumed that the stability of Government is essential to carry the state in the ladder of economic development. The growth rate during different plans have been fairly reasonable except during Second Plan compared to national average. However, due to instability of production in agriculture sector on account of flood, drought and other natural calamities there were wide fluctuations in the growth rate. Agriculture contributes more than 60% to the state income, the state income fluctuates widely with the increase or decrease in agricultural production. Total food grain production in Orissa which was only 24.39 lakh tonnes by the end of First Plan (1955-56) increased to 70.01 lakh tonnes during 6th Plan (1983-84) which was the highest so far achieved. It was admitted by a Government Report that the increase in total production in agriculture sector as a whole was mainly attributed to increase in area than the productivity.

The Planning Commission utilised the achievements of the first plan a simple projection of economic growth over a period of 30 years from 1951 to 1981, so that the national income might be doubled by 1967-68 and per capita income by 1973-74. The increase in population and likely trend would make it difficult to maintain a sustained rate of growth in national income of around 6 percent per annum, doubling the 1950-51 level of income per head by the middle of the 5th Plan (Third Plan : II). Orissa had fulfilled that objective was a marked feature in the history of economic development of State.

The Sixth Five year plan was implemented in the state with considerable success. The achievements in the key sectors of development and the overall growth of the economy suggested that achievement of a higher rate of growth and significant reduction in the incidence of the poverty would be an attainable goal. Due to the pre-eminently production oriented operational strategy adopted in the 6th plan, however not only was the economic set back restored, but the process of further growth also received a marked impetus (Annual Plan, 1986-87 :1).

Agricultural growth during sixth plan was the highest among the preceding years. Not only was the production of food grains higher but was also obtained the highest yield in the production of the staple food crop rice, which in 1983-84 reached 51.21 lakh tonnes mark about 16 per cent higher than 1978-79. The irrigation facilities was increased from 12.90 lakh hectares to 17.02 hectares, a step up of about 31.94% in the Sixth plan, thus increasing the percentage irrigated



sown area from 19.78 to 27.59. In power sectors the level of generation increased from 3,272 MU to 4,073 MU, 91 major and medium industries were set up in the state, assistance was provided to 36,981 Units in the handloom sector and 3,65,916 artisan units were assisted in Sixth Plan. Almost all identified water scarcity villages got drinking water facilities and Medical and Health care largely expanded. In order to attain universalisation of primary education 90.54% of enrolment in schools was achieved in the age group of 6-11 and 39.96% in respect of age group 11-14. Adult education was emphasised and 8,512 Adult Literacy Centres were opened. The primacy was given to the promotion of science, technology and environmental improvement. The reduction in the level of poverty by about 14% through productive employment was one of the highlights of the Sixth Plan. The target of aggregate growth of 6.1% was achieved. This was a hopeful note for future development particularly for seventh plan (Annual Plan, 1986-87 : 1-3).

During the Sixth Plan (1980-85), the major thrust was on poverty amelioration and attainment of self reliance in agriculture and industrial production. Besides, the Sixth plan also emphasised accelerated economic growth, power generation, irrigation and flood control and strengthening of agriculture and industrial infrastructure. Poverty eradication, expansion of employment opportunities, augmentation of agricultural and industrial production were the basic objectives of the Seventh Five year plan. Besides emphasis was also given on power generation, irrigation and flood control and provision of shelter to the homeless per capita plan outlay estimated at the initial level was Rs. 931 (Survey, 1989-90:4).

The achievement of seventh plan got set back due to natural calamities but the last year of the Seventh plan i.e. 1989-90 was the best in the last four decades due to a still more favourable monsoon. The agricultural production (Kharif) touched a new peak of 58.4 lakh M.T.s during that year. This enabled the state to register an overall growth rate of about 5% for the seventh plan period thus fulfilling the plan target. It is corroboration of the fact that the nature continued to play a decisive role in the growth of the state economy (Eighth Plan: 1).

The economy of the state is predominately agrarian in nature, analogous to that of the national economy. Higher rate of agricultural production coupled with increased industrial production due to abundant supply of agrobased raw materials act as the catalyst for the growth of economy. The large deficit financing has an inflationary impact affecting

directly the vulnerable sections both at the national and state level. The per capita incidence of tax is consequently in the increase in view of the need for harnessing additional resources for developmental expenditure (Survey 1989-90 : 1).

No doubt Orissa achieved a sound progress in post independence era, particularly in the plan period, it can not be denied that the economic progress of the State depends on nature God. The agro-based economy only can be strengthened by the increase of agriculture output. The irrigation facilities be provided and consumption of fertilisers per hectare be increased. It was hardly 0.76 kgs. in the first plan per hectares, increased to 17.03 kgs in the Seventh plan, of course, in a steady manner. The rising trend of wholesale Price Index over 6% has affected the condition of the common people. Poverty is result of unemployment and underemployment. Similarly unemployment is caused due to lack of skill. Hence development of human resources by imparting skill on required lines has to be made to tackle poverty and unemployment. The state needs not only a stable Government but also economic progress in an expedite manner to make it an advanced state.

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# AGRICULTURE IN ORISSA — ITS PRESENT POSITION AND FUTURE STRATEGY

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Agriculture is the most important economic activity in Orissa. Its contribution to the state Domestic Product comes to 33.24 percent in 1994-95 at 1980-81 prices. This sector is also dominant in the state from the point of view of providing employment to our working population. The population of the state is estimated to be about 317 lakh according to 1991 census. The estimated worker population in the state comes to 118.83 lakh, out of which the cultivators and agricultural labourers taken together constitute 63.8 percent. All these imply that both, from the point of view of income generation and employment creation, agriculture is the most important sector in Orissa and will continue to dominate the economic scene of the State for quite sometime. Therefore, the development of agriculture will not only meet the increasing foodgrains requirement of the growing population and absorb population through creation of different productive activities, but also, its development will gear up other allied activities and reduce inequity in rural asset structure to a great extent.

On the basis of these premises, the present study is an attempt to analyse the development of agriculture during the post independence period alongwith the strategy needed to further its growth in coming years.

## CHANGES IN THE CROPPING PATTERN :

Let us begin with the change in the cropping pattern. As Table-1 shows, in the year 1950-51, rice covered about 64 percent, total cereals about 67 percent, pulses hardly 0.6 percent and oilseeds only 3 percent area. By 1993-94 there has been substantial change in cropping pattern, rice and cereals have fallen to 47 and 52 percent and pulses and oilseeds

increased to about 22 and 11 percent respectively. Cropping intensity has also substantially gone up in the state from 108 in 1970-71 to 156 percent a 1995-96. Due to development of irrigation facilities, more areas have been brought under HYV seeds. The area under HYV paddy has come to 1816000 hectares during 1995-96. This is around 40 percent of the total paddy area in the state.

Table-2 shows the increase in production of rice, cereals, pulses and oilseeds, the most important crops of the state during the last five decades. What is noticed, there has been a remarkable rise in production of these important crops in Orissa over the period. Between this period, while the production of rice and cereals has increased three-fold, pulses have gone up by five times and that of oilseeds by more than thirteen times. The regression model (Table-3) shows that there has been substantial rise in the production of pulses and oilseeds in the post-green revolution period (1971-72—1995-96) as compared to pre-green revolution period (1951-52—1970-71). Interestingly the production performance of rice has exhibited some exceptions. What is seen, the annual growth rate in the production of rice in the pre-green revolution period seems higher than that in post-green revolution period. This implies that as area under HYV rice (irrigated HYV paddy area forms only 19 percent of the total rice area in the state, not much changes have occurred in the production of rice after green revolution. Major rice production in the state continues to be under rainfed condition. And in this regard more efforts should be made to raise the rice production in the state by evolving new high-yielding varieties suitable to rain-fed conditions.



## GROWTH PERFORMANCE IN PRODUCTIVITY:

The growth performance in agriculture during a given time period is better judged from yield growth rate. Accordingly the annual compound growth rate in the yield of major crops has been worked out. As the modern technology in agriculture was introduced in the state in the beginning of seventies we have calculated the yield performance of rice pulses and oilseeds, the major crops during the period from 1971-72—1995-96. Observation from Table-4 shows that the yield growth rate in rice happens to be little more than that in pulses and oilseeds. To add to this, however when we look to the instability in yield rate of different crops across time, higher instability is noticed in case of rice as compared to pulses and oilseeds (Table-4).

## CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS :

The aforesaid discussion brings into the fact that the Orissan agriculture is still in a poor state and requires a lot for development. Interestingly the production and yield performance of rice, the staple food-crop of the state have remained at a low ebb. Moreover, there is also enough room to increase the productivity of pulses and oilseeds. Added to this, there is serious instability in the crop-yield in the state. Particularly for rice the instability is quite a matter of concern. As contended by the scholars, natural factors do constrain agricultural development in a big way in Orissa.<sup>1</sup> The report of the Sen Committee also amply demonstrates too many abnormal years caused due to frequent occurrence of flood and drought at regular intervals.<sup>2</sup> Yet there are certain areas where a number of things can be done to achieve a higher rate of growth in our agriculture. Taking into account the vagaries of rainfall, and frequent droughts the main thrust of development strategy in Orissa has to be in the area of irrigation, drainage and water management. In the year 1992-93, the net sown area in the state was about 63 lakh hectares, out of which only about 21 lakh hectares were irrigated. This constitutes about 33 percent of the net sown area. The National Agricultural Commission has estimated

in its report that the gross irrigated area required for Orissa by 2000 AD is 43 lakh hectares. This is more than double of the present irrigated area.

Alongwith the creation of additional irrigation potential emphasis should be given on its efficient use. It is pointed out that there lies a big gap between gross irrigated potential which has been created between 1950-51 and 1986-87 and the potential which is utilised the gap is not less than 25 percent. This gap is much more in the major and medium projects than in minor projects. So future irrigational development strategy calls for bridging the gap between potential created and its actual use.

Besides, canal irrigation has created, over the years the menace of water logging. As a result every year a good deal of agricultural land are destroyed due to water logging and salinisation. As per the latest available data, the total land area under water logging condition comes to more than 3 lakh hectares.<sup>3</sup> This according to WALMI constitutes 5.20 percent of the net sown area in the state. In this context, we have made a study to calculate the efficacy of drainage project to reclaim the water logged land. It is seen that from the cost benefit point of view as well as its overall economic benefit to be gained, the drainage project is very much worthwhile to the Orissan economy.<sup>4</sup>

Recently, in the year 1996, the government of Orissa has brought out its Agricultural Policy. Its basic thrust is to make agriculture a remunerative and profitable venture. Towards this end a number of programmes have been laid down in the policy. No doubt the policy is laudable but its implementation raises serious doubt. No doubt the problems facing agriculture in our state is multi-dimensional and hence calls for attention from many angles. Yet, in this context, we have to conceptualise the need, identify the priorities and allocate resources accordingly. In this context, the first choice should be on developing irrigation and making its efficient use in the state. We must look to the success of Punjab in agriculture and this has been possible because of the development of irrigation in the state.



TABLE - I

CROPPING PATTERN OF PRINCIPAL CROPS  
(Percentage of area)

CROPS	1950-51	1970-71	1993-94
Rice	64.37	66.13	46.74
Cereals	67.05	72.40	52.10
Total Pulses	0.60	12.50	21.84
Total Oilseeds	2.97	4.88	11.45

TABLE - II

INCREASE IN PRODUCTION OF MAIN CROPS DURING PAST FIFTY YEARS ('000 tonnes)

CROPS	1950-51	1971-72	1995-96
Rice	20.06	36.20	6220
Cereals	2181	3964	6729
Total Pulses	213	390	1194
Total Oilseeds	62	243	855

TABLE - III

ANNUAL COMPOUND GROWTH RATE OF PRINCIPAL CROPS IN ORISSA BETWEEN 1951-52 TO 1970-71 & 1971-72 to 1995-96.

CROPS	PRODUCTION	
	1951-52 to 1970-71	1971-72 to 1995-96
Rice	4.63	2.53
Pulses	4.38	6.20
Oilseeds	5.24	8.47

Regression Model fitted :  $Y = ab^t$

TABLE - IV

ANNUAL COMPOUND GROWTH RATE IN PRODUCTIVITY OF PRINCIPAL CROPS BETWEEN 1971-72 to 1995-96

CROPS	GROWTH RATE IN PERCENTAGE
Rice	2.58
Pulses	0.83
Oilseeds	0.93

Regression Model fitted :  $Y = ab^t$

TABLE - V

INSTABILITY IN THE PRODUCTIVITY OF IMPORTANT CROPS BETWEEN 1971-72 to 1995-96

Crops	Mean Yield	C.V.
Rice	1059.43	25.00
Pulses	509.36	13.20
Oilseeds	701.52	12.43

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### MARINE FOOD EXPORTERS IN ORISSA HAVE A BRIGHT FUTURE

Nearly 200 firms and 15 export houses in Orissa transact a marine product business of 700 cr. The procurement areas lie in the sea-coast of Balasore, Chudamani, Dhamara, Paradeep, Astarang, Puri, Konark, Balugaon and Gopalpur. Orissa shrimps which command a greater price (US \$ 15 per unit as against Kerala's US \$ 4) are being exported to Japan, Europe and United States. What Orissa badly needs now are preprocessing, packaging, a refrigeration plants as proper transportation and shipping facilities.



# DEVELOPMENT OF MINERAL BASED INDUSTRIES AND PROGRESS OF MINERAL EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION IN THE STATE

## during 50 years after Independence

The State of Orissa is richly endowed with mineral resources. Before independence, the mineral bearing areas of Orissa, as we see today, were located within erstwhile princely States, Estates and Zamindaries which were amalgamated to form the present geographical boundaries of Orissa in 1948 and 1949. At that time, the working mines were confined to the iron ore mines of Gorumahisani, Suleipat and Badampahar in Mayurbhanj District leased out by the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj to the TISCO for supply of iron ore to their Steel Plant at Jamshedpur in Bihar. Similarly, the chromite mines of Sukinda Valley were exploited by TISCO and Misrilal on lease from the Zamindar of Sukinda. In addition to this, the underground coal mines at Talcher i.e. Handidhua and Dera were operating on lease granted by the Raja of Talcher.

2. After Independence, Govt. of India set up an office of the Geological Survey of India at Bhubaneswar to explore the mineral potential of the State. Similarly, the State Govt. formed a separate Directorate of Mining & Geology in 1955-56 for administration, exploration and regulation of grant of lease of the mineral resources in the State. Later, the Orissa Mining Corporation, the first of its kind in India, was established to explore, exploit and market the mineral resources of the State.

3. Exploration conducted by the above agencies and reports brought out indicate that Orissa has got a high grade of iron ore to the extent of 3120 M.T. accounting for 36% of India's reserve. It has got chromite reserve of 183 in M.Ts and Bauxite reserve of 1626 million tonnes which are 98.4% and 69.7% of the total reserve in India respectively. Besides, the State has got a reserve of 44527 Million tonnes coal (23.8%), Manganese 82 Million Tonnes (31.8%), 220 Million Tonnes Nickel.

4. Largescale exploitations of minerals are mostly confined to open cast mines. During

earlier years of independence mineral productions in the State were limited to 7 minerals i.e. iron ore, manganese, limestone, dolomite, coal, chromite, fire clay, china clay and graphite. The total annual productions from all those minerals were in the order of 2.8 in million tonnes during 1947 which gradually increased to 4.05 million tonnes in 1956, 8.85 million tonnes in 1961, 12.45 million tonnes in 1969, 14.59 million tonnes during 1980, 18.14 million tonnes in 1985, 31.08 million tonnes in 1990 and 51.43 million tonnes during 1995-96. At present there are 581 leases out of which 350 mines undertake regular mining. The total area of working leases is 91,943 hectares. The State produces nearly 10% of the mineral produced in the country. The amount of royalty collected from minerals produced was in the order of Rs. 17.90 lakhs in 1955-56 which gradually went up to Rs. 268.12 crores during 1996-97 both from major and minor minerals. This is second source of State's revenue earnings after Commercial Tax.

5. The export of minerals was almost nonexistent in earlier years of Independence. It gradually increased from 0.41 million tonnes during 1963, 1.79 million tonnes in 1969, 1.73 million tonnes in 1974, 1.34 million tonnes in 1980, 1.68 million tonnes in 1985 and 2.04 million tonnes in 1990. This was again reduced to 1.26 million tonnes during 1996.

6. However, Govt. did not remain complacent only with export of minerals. The emphasis was shifted to gainfully utilise the major mineral with the establishment of core sector industries like Steel and Alumina under public sector. With this in view, integrated steel plant was established at Rourkela by Steel Authority of India during 1960s followed by a large number of secondary steel product units like Sponge iron, Pig iron, Ferro Alloys Plants. During 80s, the vast reserve Bauxite deposit in Koraput district prompted Govt. of India to set up Alumina smelter and Alumina Refinery units



under the aegis of National Aluminium Company (NALCO) in Angul district and at Damanjodi of Koraput district.

7. Taking advantage of the liberalised economic policy of Govt. of India, the State Govt. tried for value addition to the major minerals like Iron ore and Bauxite reserve located in the State by way of promoting the mineral based industries like Steel and Alumina Complexes in the State during '90s. The efforts of the State Govt. for rapid industrialisation of the State with a view to augmenting the revenue of the State and creating avenues of employment yielded desirable result in as much as 14 private entrepreneurs came up with their proposal to set up Steel, Pig Iron and Sponge Iron and Stainless Steel Plants in different locations of the State. A Joint Venture Company named NINL was also formed to set up a Steel Plant. It is expected that the total capacity production finished steel of those 15 plants would be approximately 15 Million tonnes per year. It would be pertinent to indicate that the State Govt. is supporting those industries by way of development of infrastructure facilities at different complexes like Duburi in the district of Jajpur and Gopalpur in the district of Ganjam. State Govt. have also formulated Policy guidelines for linkage of captive iron ore to the Steel Plants. Out of 15 Steel Plants, the progress made by Mideast Integrated Steel Ltd. (MESCO), Neelachal Ispat Nigam Ltd. (NINL) at Duburi and Tata Iron and Steel Company Ltd. (TISCO) and L & T at Gopalpur is encouraging. As per the schedule, those steel plants are expected to be commissioned by the end of the Century or latest by 2001. It is expected that other Steel will also come up.

8. On the otherhand, the vast reserve of Bauxite deposit in the district of Koraput, Rayagada, Kalahandi, Bargarh and Bolangir district attracted attention of National and International Companies to set up their Alumina/Aluminium Plants in the State. The Orissa Mining Corporation, a PSU of the State Govt., is pioneer in that respect. It has entered into MOU with those companies for Joint Venture to develop the Bauxite reserves in the State. State Govt. have also formulated a policy for linkage of captive bauxite reserves to those companies. So far, OMC has signed Memorandum of Understanding with M/S INDALCO, M/S HINDALCO, M/S INDORAMA SYNTHETIC of Indonesia. Each of these Alumina Industries will have 1 million tonnes capacity of Alumina/Aluminium per year.

9. In addition to this, the State is not lagging behind in its effort for development of

the noble metals. Systematic exploration of diamond both from primary as well as secondary sources commenced from 1993 in the State with UNDP assistance. Discovery of diamond in the Mahanadi river bed during 1986-88 as well as discovery of diamond bearing Kimberlitic rocks in Raipur ( M.P.) adjacent to Nuapada district prompted the State Govt. for a detailed exploration programme. The exploration programme taken up in Nuapada district and Mahanadi river course from Athamalik to Sambalpur as well as collection and testing of samples indicate that diamond would perhaps be available, If detailed exploration programme is done.

10. On the otherhand, exploration of gold in Orissa was carried by Geological Survey of India and State Directorate of Mining and Geology right from 1970. The investigation conducted reveals that gold may be available in Gopur-Gajipur and Suleikana-Kalima of Keonjhar District, Dhusra Pahar and Surda-Joshiipur-Suriagoda in Mayurbhanj District, Digajharan, Malidihi and Rengali in Sundergarh District, Rongapat, Garia, Collaru, Battiguda, Dasmatur-Gobindapalli, Hirapur in undivided Koraput district. Of the places mentioned above the gold bearing vein quartz are found in Gopur area of Keonjhar district, Suleipat area (Dhusra Pahar) of Mayurbhanj district and Sorada-Joshiipur and Suriagoda sector of Mayurbhanj district.

11. With the above findings, State Government have formulated the Policy guidelines for development of diamond and gold resources in the State. It is under finalisation. The Orissa Mining Corporation has been entrusted as the sole agent of the State Government to explore and exploit the diamond and gold resources in the State through joint venture with the National /Multi-National Companies. Of late OMC has so far shortlisted 9 parties, 4 for gold and 5 for diamond. The proposal is under consideration of the Government.

12. In addition to this, Orissa is famous for its gemstone resources. There is abundant reserve of ruby, cat's eye, garnet, aquamarine and other varieties of gemstones in different parts of the State. State Government have also formulated the policy guidelines for development of gemstone resources in the State and promotion of lapidary units not only to harness the resources but also to provide employment facilities in the far-flung areas of the State. It is under finalisation.



# THE PLACE OF KENDRAPARA IN THE NATIONAL STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

*Umakant Mohapatra*

British Imperialism dug its own grave on Indian Soil. Of course, the effect of the-then international politico-economic conditions in the process can not be undermined. In order to safeguard its own interest, the British Government initiated a number of changes in social physiognomy of Indian Society, which in their latent effect, enlightened many progressive Indians with the message of Renaissance and Reform. Unification of the Country under one rule, establishment of "Pax-Britanica" Railway, Post and Telegraph, all India network of trade and commerce, introduction of English education based on science and rationality, restructuring of land revenue system, different norms for governance and administrative bureaucratic set up all combined together gave a mortal blow to the peculiar feudal framework which divided Indian society for millennium. The impact of western values of equalitarianism, humanism, scientism, ethical-positivism, liberalism, freedom and sovereignty brought about a socio cultural renaissance and contributed towards emergence of a number of socio-religious reform movements. Bramho Samaj (established in 1828 by Raja Rammohan Roy), Prathana Samaj (established in 1867 by M.G. Ranade), Arya Samaj (founded in 1875 by Swami Dayananda Saraswati), Ram Krishna Mission Movement (inspired by Ram Krishna, the saint) Theosophical Society (led by Mrs. Annie Besant), the movement of Tiyas (launched by Sri Narayan in 1890), The Bharat Dharma Mahamandal Society (started in 1902) were some such important movements. In addition to these movements several other movements against social evils like, 'Satee', Child marriage, untouchability, prohibition of widow-remarriage were also launched by persons of outstanding capability and political eminence. All the reformers and new intelligentsia had the strong conviction that no real reform and progress was possible without political freedom. In course of

time, these socio-religious reform movements culminated into the great national struggle for freedom. The message of freedom movement stirred the whole nation. It crossed all the age old barriers created by primordial loyalties of a tradition ridden feudal social structure and acquired a 'Pan-Indian' character. The millions of men, women, young and old from different corners of the country plunged into the mainstream of the movement with indomitable spirit and commitment.

In this glorious national roll-call, Kendrapara did not lag behind. She sacrificed many of her valiant youths, soft babies, wise and old persons. Kendrapara can boast of having the first popular revolt known as "Kanika Paika Rising" against British occupation of Orissa when many a kings and chiefs from the shore of Chilika to heart of Cuttack surrendered before the British Colonel, Harcourt on his march for occupying Orissa in 1803. Two Muslim commanders named Murad Khan and Saha Beg Khan with their Paikas rose in revolt. The British colonells were perturbed at such news of revolt. Robert Ker, the British Commander failed to control the revolt. It started gathering momentum. Finally, Captain Mearthy and Commander Siva Prasad were sent with large contingents. The Paikas put up a brave fight with them on the river bank of Baitarani.

But they had to loose the battle as neither they got the support of local 'Rajas' nor had they enough of modern weaponry to fight against a large imperialistic contingent. Being a coastal region, Kendrapara had its distinct role in the movement against monopolised salt trade of East India Company. A large number of insurgents plundered the 'salt-chauki's at Pattamundai and Asureswar when Khurda was burning with Paika Rebillion. (around 1817 A.D). During the famous 'Sepoy Mutiny' in 1857 A.D. the district of Kendrapara was by and large silent, only except one incidencé of



uprising. One Zamindar of Balia, Sri Rama Krushna Samantsinhar alongwith two other tenant leaders Dinabandhu Mohapatra and Upendra Jena raised the voice of the revolt. The then Magistrate of Cuttack arrested all of them, and sentenced Ram Krushna and Dinabandhu for five years of imprisonment. Their landed properties were also confiscated.

The freedom struggle in Kendrapara got new strength and spirit after the formation of Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee, in 1921. During this time Sri Jadumani Mangaraj was given the responsibility of organising congress activities in the Sub-division of Kendrapara, now the district. Sri Mangaraj, by virtue of his exceptional organisational skill and exploding speeches brought pride and dignity for Kendrapara among other regions, in the history of freedom movement. He worked in close association with veteran congress leaders like Hare-Krushna Mahatab and Nab Krushna Choudhury. Under the heroic leadership of Sri Mangaraj the programmes of national congress gained wide popularity. The collection of 'Swaraj fund', boycott of British schools, courts, goods and distribution of "Charakha" were quite successful in the sub-division of Kendrapara. When, the demands of 'Khalifat movement' was taken up by national congress, the Sub-division of Kendrapara got charged with new spirit. A large number of men, women and clergies of the mosque jumped into the movement. Congress activities got massive popular involvement. The students of Kendrapara High School boycotted classes and picketed in the court campus. The insurgent students in Rajkanika High School declared the school as 'National High School'. The situation became so warrenting that the then 'Raja' of Kanika closed the School. The School was re-opened after 25 years.

During this time the peasant unrest started growing up in Kanika. The British Govt. did not interfere in the internal administration of Kanika estate. As per agreement with the Govt. the "Raja" of Kanika was paying Rs. 20, 407. 13 annually to the British Govt. (Kanika palace old case record sources). As such, the peasant community was left at the mercy of the 'Raja' who ruled and collected tax through his henchmen. Many illegal exactions were made and land rent was increased arbitrarily.

In between 1893-94 to 1922 the taxation system was changed for three times. People were

forced to pay a number of illegal taxes. The imposition of tax was maximum during the rule of Raja Rajendra Narayan Bhanjadeo. During his reign the forest-cess was raised from four annas to six annas in 1910. Although all the peasants were forced to pay forest-cess, they were not allowed to enter the forest. Pasturage tax at the rate of eight annas per head was imposed on bufaloes. (Swain Kelu Charan, O.A.S. Ex-Tahasildar, Pattamundai. His doctoral thesis on peasant movement in Kanika, Unpublished. This agitated the milkmen and cowherds. At the time of natural calamity the "Raja" tried to derive as much profit as he could by exploiting the poor peasantry. For example, the crops failed in a year because of drought. In the subsequent year again the crop was severely affected by heavy rain and flood. During this time the "Raja" purchased all the stock from paddy-holders and after hoarding it for a while started selling at a higher price. When the Govt. wanted to distribute rice in Kanika the "Raja" denied the Govt. and promised that he himself would distribute the rice to needy persons. Because of the visit of the then Collector, the Raja had opened three rice distribution centres. Just a short while after the visit of the Collector, the rice was again sold at a higher price. The needy persons were not allowed to borrow from village money lenders. They were forced to take loan from the estate of the "Raja" at a higher rate of interest. Alongwith these economic explanations the "Bethi" (forced labour without wage) was imposed on people. The womenfolk of the peasant community were used for the pleasure of the Raja's henchmen. All these made the whole community restless, and, the revolutionary spirit of the people got ignited.

The message of such exploitation spread outside Kanika. The leaders of national congress took up the issue. The prominent leaders like Jadumani Mangaraj, Ekram Rossol, Bhagirathi Mohapatra, Babaji Ram Das, Sarala Devi rushed into Kanika. (Das Prafulla in his Lecture on Utkal Divas, 1997 in Kendrapara Municipality Hall, 1.1.97) The people of Kanika accepted them with great honour as 'Raja' was closely associated and identified with British imperialism. The movement got more community involvement when Chakradhar Behera, Ananda Chandra Jena and Jayaram Rai joined the movement. Chakradhar Behera was an estate employee who resigned on protest and joined the movement. Sri Jena and Sri Rai were teachers who were dismissed from



their jobs because of their straightforwardness in criticising the oppression of the "Raja". Other local leaders were Dinabandhu Khandit Ray, Asvin Kumar Pallai, Damodara Mohapatra, Purnananda Bal and many others. Ananda Jena wrote "*Dukhini Kanika*" a book which boiled the people in anger against the exploitation of the 'Raja'. By 1922 Congress activities and anti-'Raja' movement had gathered a heavy momentum in the area. Different *Gram Sabhas* and circle *Sabhas* were formed to implement the agitational activities of National Congress. The "Raja" of Kanika took all the tricks to convince the British Govt. that the agitation in Kanika was engineering by Congress leaders to provoke people against "British Raj". He also persuaded the British Govt. to take resort to police action to suppress the movement. The Raja was successful in his trick. At first, legal action was initiated. Twentysix non-cooperators were taken to custody. The book of Ananda Jena was declared proscribed and he was arrested. All these made the agitators more aggrieved. During such time, four peons were sent to Patrapur to serve notice on some peasants. They were assaulted and returned back by the angry peasants. When the Inspector of Police attempted to arrest the accused, about 2000 militant peasants came to the rescue of those accused persons. Getting such message the-then Superintendent of Police Sri SriKrishna Mohapatra moved to Kanika. When people got the message of S.P's coming, they came to meet him and tell him about their sufferings on 23rd April at about 11 A.M. But the Raja had convinced the S.P. that people came in anger. Without waiting to listen from the people the S.P. ordered for firing on anticipation of attack from the people. Bisuni Madhual died on the spot. Basu Sethi was chased by police and shot dead at village Joral. Prafulla Das, describes Basu Sethi and Bisuni Madhual as "the first two Martyrs of Gandhian movement in Orissa". Apart from those two casualties, a number of other persons were severely injured. While describing the incidence Dr. Swain goes on to write, "The aftermath of the firing was even more horrible. There were police atrocities of different kinds, such as looting of properties, setting houses on fire, molestation of women. Houses were robbed... The outrages committed by police went to the extent of molesting a housewife in presence of her husband tied to a pole... A good many tenants were forced to flee from Kanika. They became wandering paupers". (Swain Kelu Charan - Op. cit.)

The movement which started against feudal exploitation in Kanika, gradually got merged with the freedom movement launched by National Congress against British imperialism. In the national struggle for 'Purna Swarajya', 'Salt' and 'Swadeshi Vastra' were taken as symbols. During this time the people of Kendrapara and Kujanga (now in adjacent Jagatsinghpur district) joined together to break the salt law at Kujanga. Jadumani Mangaraj was arrested earlier. Under the leadership of Ramadevi, Malati Devi, Narayan Birbar Samant and the Rani of Kujanga, a number of Satyagrahis from Kendrapara marched to Kujanga and broke the salt law. A large number of them from Aul, Rajnagar, Patkura, Indupur and Mahakalpara were arrested on the way. But nothing could stop the turbulent current of nationalism. It simply charged thousands of rural folk with patriotic spirit. During this movement a 'Banar Sena' was constituted in Kendrapara. Some of the, 'Banar Sena' members are alive till to-day in their white hairs. They picketed in front of liquor shops and bore the brunt of police atrocity. Many of these salt-law brokers were released after Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed in 1931.

'Harijana Pada Yatra' of Gandhiji was launched in 1934. During this time, Kendrapara had the distinction of hosting Gandhiji for five days. He camped at several places in the district from 26th to 30th May, 1934. The main places of his haltings were Kaktia, Salar, Bhagabatpur (Balua), Garapur, Barimul and Indupur. During this 'Pada Yatra' a number of Congress leaders including Jadumani Mangaraj and Sahadev Das were with him. During Quit India Movement, the people of Kendrapara took part in large number. Govt. schools were closed. The telegraph and telephone system was made defunct. A number of youths and students were arrested in course of the movement.

In this manner, Kendrapara remained in the mainstream of national struggle till the dawn of freedom on 15th August 1947. In the long course of this struggle she has gifted more than four hundred of her sons and daughters as obeisance to Mother India.

*Sub-divisional Information  
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Kendrapara.*



# INSURANCE INVESTMENT IN ORISSA

*B.N. Biswal*

Being one of the premier financial institutions of the country, the investments of Life Insurance Corporation has a severe impact in the economic stability of the country. Endowed with the privilege of mobilising the savings on a long term basis, the Corporation contributes to the national economy keeping in view the principle of people's money for people's welfare.

During the last four decades of its existence the Corporation has reflected sustained growth in new business, ceaseless endeavour to spread the message of life insurance far and wide; constant increase in the yield on the funds invested with full concern for safety alongwith improvements on the bonus rates. Besides this, the Corporation contributed substantially to the nation both in terms on funds pooled in for national development and share of profits as income tax and 5 percent share of surplus and relentless pursuit to enhance customer satisfaction. The funds of the Corporation have become a major source for the annual budgets and the five year plans of the country. It contributed over Rs. 12,500 crore for the 7th Five Year Plan and expected to contribute over Rs. 25,000/- crore for the rejuvenation of the national economy during the 8th Five Year Plan. Its contribution to the 8th Five Year Plan is likely to be five percent of the total national outlay and 10 percent of the share earmarked for the public sector.

The LIC investments in the Indian economy has increased from Rs. 381.90 crore in 1957 to a whopping Rs. 59,979 crore in 1994-95. While investing these money which are held in trust, the Corporation keeps in view the national priorities and obligations of reasonable returns. In pursuance on this objective, LIC has, over the years, been

investing a major part of its funds in the socially oriented sector and the balance into the Co-operative sector and the private sector.

The investment of LIC of India in the state of Orissa have increased from Rs. 216.68 crore in 1986-87 to Rs. 768.55 crore in 1994-95. Public sector claimed the major portion which had increased from Rs. 166.68 crore in 1986-87 to Rs. 606.63 crore in 94-95 witnessing a growth of 264% over the period of nine years. Investments in the private sector increased from Rs. 36.65 crore in 1986-87 to Rs. 121.97 crore at the end of March, 1995 which recorded a growth of 234 percent. Similarly the investment in the Co-operative sector marked a threefold increase during the period. Investments in the Co-operative sector stood at Rs. 39.95 crore in 1995 which has increased from Rs. 13.35 crore in 1986-87 with an increase of around 200 percent. In total the investment of LIC of India in the states of Orissa marked a growth of 255 percent over the period of last nine years.

In the public sector, investments in the State Government securities marked a faster growth. These investments increased from Rs. 39.41 crore in 1986-87 to Rs. 335.77 crore in 1994-95. Investments in the State Financial Corporation have stagnated for the last four years at Rs. 1.07 crore. Loans to the State Government for housing and investments in the State Electrical Board marked nominal growth. Loans to the Municipalities slightly fluctuated. The Corporation's investment in the State Road Transport has considerably come down from Rs. 6.33 crore in 1986-87 to Rs. 3.74 crore in 1994-95. Almost 79 percent of the total funds were invested in the public sector during 1994-95. At the national level the Corporation has invested 83 percent of its total investments in the public sector, during the same year.



Investments in Shares, Debentures and Loans to the companies are the major portions in the private sector. These investments marked a growth of 234 percent over the period of last nine years. During the year 1994-95, they account for 15.87 percent of the total investments of the Corporation in the State's economy. At the national level, the Corporation has invested 13.78 percent of its total investments in the private sector.

In the Co-operative sector, Land Development Banks, Loans to Sugar Co-operatives and Loans to Co-operative Housing Boards are the three major outlets through which the Corporation is investing its money. Loans to Sugar Co-operatives are almost stagnated whereas the investments in the Land Development Banks come down considerably from Rs. 4.59 crore in 1986-87 to Rs. 0.47 crore in 1994-95. Investments in the Co-operative Housing marked a five fold increase. These investments which stood at Rs. 8.71 crore in 1986-87 increased to Rs. 39.44 crore in 1994-95 witnessing an increase of 353 percent. The Co-operative sector claimed 5.20 percent of the total investments of the Corporation in the State during the year 1994-95. At the national level, LIC of India invested 3.35 percent of its total investments in this sector.

The total investments of LIC of India, in the country as a whole, has increased from Rs. 12,812 crore in 1986-87 to Rs. 59,979 crore at the end of March, 1995 witnessing a growth of 368 percent. In the State of Orissa, the percentage of growth stood at 255 percent. Keeping in view the backwardness of the State, there is every need to accelerate the investments in the State's economy.

**SECTORWISE INVESTMENT OF LIC IN ORISSA**  
(Rs. IN CRORES)

Year	Public Sector	Private Sector	Co. Operative Sector	Total	Percentage of Increase
1986-87	166.68	36.65	13.35	216.68	-
1987-88	169.59	44.84	15.23	229.66	5.99
1988-89	189.26	48.00	19.04	256.30	11.60
1989-90	227.02	48.48	22.54	298.04	16.25
1990-91	264.75	68.72	24.69	358.16	20.17
1991-92	345.54	75.22	28.21	448.97	25.35

1992-93	422.61	95.35	31.71	549.67	22.43
1993-94	528.97	128.70	37.07	694.74	26.39
1994-95	606.63	121.97	39.95	768.55	10.62

Source : Compiled from various issues of Orissa Economic Survey.

**INVESTMENT OF LIC IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR OF ORISSA**

(Rs. IN CRORE)

Year	State Govt. Securities	State Ele. Boards	State Fin. Corp.	Loans to govt. for Housing	State Road Trans. Orga.	Loans to Municipalities	Total
1986-87	39.41	87.48	0.18	26.16	6.33	7.12	166.68
1987-88	35.35	91.98	0.18	27.69	6.33	8.06	169.59
1988-89	52.40	92.66	0.08	29.42	6.20	8.50	189.26
1989-90	74.93	103.04	0.08	33.04	6.20	9.73	227.02
1990-91	102.91	108.45	1.07	38.20	3.95	10.17	264.75
1991-92	143.39	144.83	1.07	42.54	3.95	9.76	345.54
1992-93	207.85	151.59	1.07	48.91	3.95	9.24	422.61
1993-94	280.80	179.40	1.07	54.91	3.95	8.84	528.97
1994-95	335.77	187.61	1.07	61.03	3.74	8.41	597.63

Source : Various issues of Orissa Economic Survey.

**INVESTMENT OF LIC IN THE CO-OPERATIVE SECTOR OF ORISSA**

(Rs. IN CRORE)

Year	Land Development Banks	Loan to Sugar Co-operatives	Loan to Cooperative housing	Total
1986-87	4.59	0.05	8.71	13.35
1987-88	3.43	0.05	11.75	15.23
1988-89	2.90	0.04	16.10	19.04
1989-90	2.23	0.04	20.27	22.54
1990-91	0.51	0.05	24.13	24.69
1991-92	0.34	0.04	27.83	28.21
1992-93	0.47	0.04	36.56	37.07
1993-94	0.47	0.04	36.56	37.07
1994-95	0.47	0.04	39.44	39.95

Source : Compiled from different issues of Orissa Economic Survey

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## NOTE ON THE RECENT VISIT OF CHIEF MINISTER & THE STATE DELEGATION TO UK

Discussion with Ms. Clare Short, Minister for International Development, Government of UK :

Referring to Mahatma Gandhi's observation regarding Orissa as epitome of poverty, the Chief Minister highlighted the determined efforts of the State Government in tackling the enormous problem of poverty. In this context, he mentioned about the development of irrigation potential, commercialisation of agriculture, supply of foodgrain at subsidised price, provision of mid-day meals for school children and free kitchen for the old and infirm.

In spite of these, there are still 45% of people below the poverty line. Hence, massive efforts are to be made to eradicate poverty from the State. In this context assistance of the British Government for the following programmes was sought for :

- (a) To promote small agricultural enterprise in the rural areas with provision of Minor Irrigation Projects like bore well, lift irrigation points etc. The objective is to provide employment to the poor rural families through sustained agriculture operations.
- (b) To promote agro and farm forestry programmes in the rural areas such as timber, fuel wood, bulk wood, bamboos, medicinal plants, oil seeds, edible fruits fodder, plantation on degraded forest land etc. The objective is to revive degraded forest, provide employment to the poor people and improve their economic condition. Local Panchayats will be in charge of forest to ensure protection and management.
- (c) To promote a large number of women Co-operative as self help groups to take up various economic activities in the rural areas. Besides, these Societies would also arrange for training in production technique, child care, population control awareness etc. Financial assistance from Government

of UK was sought for margin money assistance and infrastructure support.

Ms. Clare Short appreciated measures taken by the State Government and also mentioned that due consideration will be given to the above mentioned poverty alleviation programmes.

**Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC) Mr. Roy Reynolds, Chairman & Others:**

Chief Minister suggested to CDC Chairman and others present in the meeting to consider the advantages of the State of Orissa and decide on investments in the State. CDC Chairman mentioned that India is one country where they are committed to invest and they are interested to invest in power development in Orissa and development of Industrial Park like Bang Packong of Thailand. Chief Minister also mentioned that any unhappy past experience, if any, elsewhere in India may be forgotten and fresh proposal furnished by the State should be considered on merit. The State Government were prepared to intervene on their behalf with Government of India to expedite clearances. Dr. P.M. Mohanty, Chairman, Orissa Sponge made representation of his billet plant project to be set up at BAMRA and sought the CDC's assistance. They assured him to look into this project and respond to him in a month's time.

**Mr. Christopher Reeves, Chairman, Merrill Lynch Europe PLC Mr. Gordon Young, Managing Director, International Equities :**

European Chairman of M/s. Merrill Lynch and other senior Executives were present during discussion. They very much appreciated the initiative taken by the Chief Minister in promoting industrial/infrastructure ventures in the State. They have assured the Chief Minister that they would be sending a Team to Orissa in September to study various projects in mining and infrastructure sectors and thereafter decide on investment. They appeared to be quite serious.



**Kvaerner Construction International Limited.**  
**Brian C Devenish, Managing Director :**

This is a UK based group with worldwide operations. They are in power projects, steel plant, water supply, oil and natural gas exploitation and ship building, besides construction projects. They seemed interested in development of the Gopalpur-Talcher road and also laying of the railway line. Interested in negotiated agreement with the State Government. They would visit Orissa in October, 1997 to study the commercial viability of Gopalpur-Talcher road/railway project and also other infrastructure projects.

**Balfour Beatty International Limited.**  
**Subhendu Paul, Project Director BICC Group:**

This Company is based in England and are interested in infrastructure, power and construction projects. Doubling of the Paradeep Railway line, construction of Haridaspur-Paradeep line and Gopalpur-Talcher line were suggested to them. They seemed quite interested also in development of minor ports. Likely to visit India in September, 1997 for a detailed discussion.

**Genesis Transglobal Group.**  
**Jesus M. Cardona, Chairman :**

They are interested to put up a 100% EOU Oil Refinery with a 900 MW Captive Power Plant. They were told that land can be made available at Paradeep or Gopalpur little away from the Port area. About Power Plants captive to steel plant or other project within the state they were advised to negotiate with the concerned Companies including Bang Packong of Thailand.

They are interested to put up a 4000 Power Plant MW at Gopalpur in Ib Valley for transmission power to Meerut/Agra grid. They are also interested in putting up a modern hospital and automobile component unit and development of minor Ports. They were assured of possible help from the State Govt. including seeking clearances on their behalf from Govt. of India. They were advised to concentrate one project in the first phase and thereafter consider

other projects. Expected to visit Orissa during 3rd week of September, 1997.

**GEC Alsthom-Cegelec Substation Projects**  
**Richard A Stone, Export Director :**

They are interested in power distribution and Hydro Power Rehabilitation Project. They were informed about the establishment of Electricity Regulatory Commission in Orissa. They can discuss their proposals with CEPA/ HIRMA and sort out the related issues.

**WS Atkins International Ltd.**  
**Roger Mc Glynn, Business Development Director :**

They are a construction and consultancy Company incorporated in UK having 20 overseas outfits including one at Bangalore. They have taken up projects in Tamilnadu, Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan and have also involvement in minor irrigation projects in Orissa getting assistance from European Commission. They are also involved with Ispat Group and CDC doing the deligence study for steel plant.

**Power Eng. V.G. Sheno, Energy Projects Consultant :**

They seemed interested in putting up oil refinery based on power project. They were advised to associate themselves with the parties putting up oil refineries in Orissa. State Government would help them getting environment clearance.

**Hope Hospital Complex :**

Chief Minister visited the Hope Hospital Complex at Manchester with a view to studying their organisational pattern. This is one of the largest general hospital complexes in U.K. Hope Hospital has speciality facilities in the following disciplines.

- (a) Neuro-Surgery
- (b) Neurology
- (c) Neonatal Intensive Care
- (d) Gastro-enterology
- (e) Renal Medicine

They were willing to assist us in research and training programmes.





Hon'ble Shri Ranganath Mishra former Chief Justice, Supreme Court felicitating Chief Minister Shri J. B. Patnaik with Shramika Bandhu Award at Soochana Bhavan on 22-8-1997 on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee Celebration of India's Independence organised by All-India Trade Union Congress.



Smt. Jayanti Patnaik, M. P. addressing the audience on Health Awareness on 24-8-1997 at Cuttack Town Hall.





Chief Minister Shri J. B. Patnaik taking salute on the 50th year of Independence in the colourful parade held at Mahatma Gandhi Marg, State Capital, Bhubaneswar on 15th August, 1997.



Deputy Chief Minister Shri Basanta Kumar Biswal felicitating freedom fighters at Cuttack during the Golden Jubilee Celebration of India's Independence.



Shri Netrananda Mallick, Minister of State, I. & P. R. inspecting the parade on the occasion of 50th year of Independence at District Headquarters, Boudh on 15-8-1997.