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## A study on the state legislative assembly elections in Odisha (1952-2024)

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### Abstract

Elections are the cornerstone of democracy. Without elections, the essence of democracy can never be gauged. Election plays vital role in the institutionalization and realization of sovereignty of the public. Election bridges the gap between two extreme views and help in the smooth running of the political system of any country. Odisha is a developing state and there is a slow development after the independence. One of the reasons ascribed to its slow development is the political instability in the state during initial years after India's freedom. This paper attempts to explore the results of assembly elections in Odisha since the first general elections of 1952. The state of Odisha witnessed seventeen assembly elections since independence. This paper covers a detail study of the position of political parties in Odisha after each election since 1952. The present paper also briefly highlights the formation of various governments after every assembly election in Odisha and important stakeholders of each and every assembly of Odisha from 1952 to 2024. Complete political situation of Odisha after independence to till now has been shortly touched in this paper.

**Keywords:** Election, democracy, independence, political, government

### Introduction

India as a parliamentary system as defined by its constitution, with power distributed between the state government and the union government. Elections enable every adult citizens of the country to participate in the process of government formation. Elections are used as a tool for selecting representatives in modern representative democracies [1]. As a Federal Parliamentary Democratic Republic, in India the President is the head of the whole India and the Prime Minister is the head of the government. In our country, elections are conducted for members of the Parliament in Lok Sabha and members of Parliament in Rajya Sabha, Members of State Legislative Assemblies and Legislative Councils and for members of Rural and Urban Councils/bodies.

With the implementation of Government of India Act of 1935, Provincial/State Assembly elections were took place for the first time in India in the year 1937 before independence. The modern state of Odisha which was created on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1936, witnessed its first assembly election in 1937. Before independence, the strength of Odisha Legislative Assembly was 60 and it rose to 91 with the merger of 26 princely states with Odisha after independence.

After the commencement of the new constitution of Indian Republic in 1950, the strength of Odisha State Legislative Assembly was fixed at 140. The first General Elections on the basis of universal adult franchise were held in the year 1951-1952. In which, both the elections to Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assembly took place simultaneously [2].

### First Assembly Election of Odisha (1951-1952)

Under the constitution of India which came into force from 26 January 1950, the first assembly election for 140 members of Odisha State Legislative Assembly was held on the basis of universal adult franchise. The process of election took 36 days, from 20 December 1951 to 24 January 1952. In this assembly election, the Congress Party secured 67 followed by Ganatantra Parishad with 31 seats. The Communist Party of India (CPI), Praja Socialist Party and Forward Bloc secured 7 seats, 10 seats and 1 seat respectively. The independent members captured 24 seats [3]. The members of first assembly took oath on 4 March 1952. The first session of first assembly was held on the same day at Sardar Patel Hall, Bhubaneswar. Nabakrushna Choudhury, Leader of Congress Legislative Party became the

Chief Minister of Odisha on 20 February 1952. Out of 24 independent members, 7 members declared their support to Nabakrushna Choudhury. Shradhakar Supakar, leader of Ganatantra Parishad Legislative Party became the Leader of Opposition of the first assembly. Nanda Kishore Das and Maulavi Mohammad Hanif were elected as Speaker and Deputy Speaker of first assembly of Odisha respectively. In 1956, Nabakrushna Choudhury resigned from the post of Chief Minister and Harekrushna Mahatab took the charge of Chief Minister in place of Nabakrushna Choudhury<sup>[4]</sup>.

### **Second Assembly Election of Odisha (1957)**

Four months after Harekrushna Mahatab assumed office as Chief Minister of Odisha, General Election for the second assembly was held from 24 February to 12 March 1957. The party position of the second assembly in 1957 was follows; Congress Party - 56, Ganatantra Parishad - 51, Praja Socialist Party - 11, Communist Party of India - 9, Jharkhand Party - 5 and Independents - 8<sup>[5]</sup>. The Congress Party managed to get an assurance support from the Communist Party and Jharkhand Party. Besides some independent MLAs and later some Ganatantra Parishad MLAs defected to the Congress and assured support to Harekrushna Mahatab's government. Thus Harekrushna Mahatab formed a Congress government on 6 April 1957 though for all practical purposes it was an unstructured coalition. Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo, leader of Ganatantra Parishad Legislative Party was declared as the Leader of Opposition<sup>[6]</sup>. Pandit Nilakantha Das and Jadumani Mangaraj were elected as the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of second assembly respectively. However this government resigned in 1959 and a coalition government of Congress Party and Ganatantra Parishad formed on 22 May 1959. This was the first coalition government in Odisha after independence. Leader of Ganatantra Parishad, Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo joined the cabinet of Harekrushna Mahatab along with his four party colleagues. The coalition government resigned on 21 February 1961 due to differences in the Congress Legislative Party. After it, President's Rule was imposed for the first time in Odisha on 25 February 1961. The second assembly had 7 sessions with 254 sitting days.

### **Third Assembly Election of Odisha (1961)**

It was expected that the President's Rule in Odisha might continue upto the third General Elections. But the decision to hold a mid-term election in Odisha was announced by the Union Home Minister in Lok Sabha on 27 March 1961. The mid-term election to third assembly of Odisha was held from 2 June 1961 to 8 June 1961<sup>[7]</sup>. This election result completely changed the political scenario with Biju Patnaik, leader of Congress Party creating a history by getting 82 members of his party elected to the 140 members House. The position of other political parties were as follows; Ganatantra Parishad - 37, P.S.P - 10, C.P.I - 4 and Independents - 7. For the first time after independence, Congress Party provided a stable government to the state winning a clear majority of seats on its own with a vote share of nearly 44 percent. The Odisha Legislative Assembly was shifted from Sardar Patel Hall to the new assembly building where the elected members took oath on 26 and 27 June 1961. Biju Patnaik, leader of Congress Party sworn-in as the Chief Minister on 23 June 1961 and formed his ministry with Biren Mitra as the Deputy Chief Minister.

Lingaraj Panigrahi was elected as the Speaker of third assembly on 1 July 1961 and Lokanath Mishra was elected as the Deputy Speaker of third assembly on 28 August 1961. The third assembly witnessed the appointment of three Chief Ministers in between 1961 to 1967. In 1963, when Biju Patnaik resigned from the office of Chief Minister, Biren Mitra became the Chief Minister and continued for a period of two years from 1963 to 1965. In 1965, Sadashiv Tripathy became the Chief Minister and continued till the dissolved of third assembly. Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo was the Leader of Opposition of third assembly. The third assembly had total 10 sessions with 335 sitting days which dissolved on 1 March 1967.

### **Fourth Assembly Election of Odisha (1967)**

The election to the fourth assembly was held on 21 February 1967. It was for the first time that the poll was conducted on one day through-out Odisha without any difficulty<sup>[8]</sup>. The Odisha Congress Unit was divided into two parties before the fourth assembly election with the formation of Jana Congress Party by Harekrushna Mahatab in 1966. The Ganatantra Parishad was merged with the Swatantra Party in 1962. The newly formed Jana Congress Party had a pre-poll tie-up with the Swatantra Party. The alliance wrested the power from the Congress Party which had to remain satisfied with only 31 seats. The position of other political parties in the House was as follows; Swatantra Party - 49, Jana Congress - 26, Praja Socialist Party - 21, Sanyukta Socialist Party - 2, C.P.I - 7, C.P.I (M) -1 and Independents - 3. The newly elected members took oath on 17 March 1967. Swatantra Party and Jana Congress Party formed the coalition government with Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo, the Leader of Swatantra Party as the Chief Minister. Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, the Leader of Jana Congress Party became the Deputy Chief Minister. Sadashiv Tripathy, the Leader of Congress Party declared as the Leader of Opposition in the fourth assembly. On 18 March 1967, Nanda Kishore Mishra was unanimously elected as the Speaker of the fourth assembly. Harihar Bahinipati was elected as the Deputy Speaker of the fourth assembly on 29 March 1967<sup>[9]</sup>. Due to the differences between the coalitional partners, the government resigned on 9 January 1971. The President's Rule was promulgated on 12 January 1971. The fourth assembly had 10 sessions with 197 sitting days<sup>[10]</sup>.

### **Fifth Assembly Election of Odisha (1971)**

Harekrushna Mahatab, founder of Jana Congress Party joined the Congress (R) Party in 1971 with his supported MLAs. Biju Patnaik's expulsion from Congress (R) Party in 1970 was followed by a decision of the Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee to break away from the Congress (R) Party and by the formation a regional party known as Utkal Congress. The Utkal Congress Party was supported by 23 out of 31 Congress (R) Party MLAs elected in 1967. The above incidents made the fifth assembly election of Odisha interesting. The fifth assembly election was held on 5 March 1971 and for the second time the poll was conducted in a single day in Odisha. The position of political parties in Odisha Assembly as per the result of election was as follows; Congress (R) - 51, Congress (O) - 1, Utkal Congress - 33, Swatantra Party - 36, P.S.P - 4, Jana Congress Party -1, C.P.I - 4, C.P.I (M) -2, Jharkhand Party - 4 and Independents - 4. The elected members of fifth assembly took their oath on 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> April of 1971<sup>[11]</sup>.

The Utkal Congress Party along with Swatantra Party formed the Coalition Government with Biswanath Das as the Chief Minister on 3 April 1971. Biswanath Das was elected from Rourkela Assembly Seat in the by-election as Independent candidate. Nanda Kishore Mishra (Swatantra Party) was elected as the Speaker of fifth assembly on 12 April 1971 and Narayan Birabar Samant (Utkal Congress) was elected as the Deputy Speaker on 6 MAY 1971. Binayak Acharya of Congress (R) Party was the Leader of Opposition of Odisha Assembly from 1971 to 1972. Due to the defection of large number of members from ruling Utkal Congress Party, the government fell and Biswanath Das resigned on 14 June 1972<sup>[12]</sup>. Nandini Satpathy, the Leader of Congress (R) Party formed the government on 14 June 1972 with the support of Congress (R) Party MLAs and the members of Utkal Congress Party who defected to Congress (R) Party. Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo, leader of Swatantra Party became the Leader of Opposition on 14 June 1971 and continued till 9 February 1973. A new political outfit named Pragati Legislature Party was formed with the Utkal Congress and Swatantra Party and others and Biju Patnaik, leader of Pragati Legislature Party became the Leader of Opposition on 9 February 1973 and continued till 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1973. The defection in Congress (R) Party led to the fall of Nandini Satpathy government leading to imposition of President's Rule on 3 March 1973. The fifth assembly had only five sessions with 97 sitting days.

#### **Sixth Assembly Election of Odisha (1974)**

On the basis of 1971 census figures, the strength of Odisha Legislative Assembly was increased to 147 from 140 by the Delimitation Commission. The sixth assembly elections to Odisha State Legislative Assembly were held on 22, 24 and 26 February 1974 to elect 147 members. The position of political parties in sixth assembly election as per the election result was as follows; Indian National Congress – 69, Utkal Congress - 35, Swatantra Party – 21, C.P.I - 7, C.P.I (M) – 3, Jana Congress -1, Jharkhand Party – 1, P.S.P - 2, Independents - 7 and one seat was vacant due to zero nomination. That assembly constituency was Chilika.<sup>13</sup> Nandini Satpathy leader of Congress became the Chief Minister on 6 March 1974. The members of sixth assembly took oath on 11 March 1974. Biju Patnaik, leader of Pragati Legislature Party became the Leader of Opposition of sixth assembly on 19 March 1974 and continued till 10 December 1974. It was in the month of December 1974, a new all India Party named Bharatiya Lok Dal was formed with the merger of seven political parties including Swatantra Party, Utkal Congress and S.S.P. Pragati Legislature Party was renamed as Bharatiya Lok Dal Legislature Party and again Biju Patnaik became the Leader of Opposition in 1974 December and continued till 24 March 1977<sup>[14]</sup>. On 16 December 1976, Nandini Satpathy resigned from her post of Chief Minister. In place of Nandini Satpathy, Congress High-Command selected Binayak Acharya as the new Chief Minister of Odisha. When the National Emergency (1975-1977) was going on the Janata Party was formed with the amalgamation of Congress (O), Socialist Party, Jana Sangha and Bharatiya Lok Dal in early 1977 to counter Indira Gandhi and Indian National Congress. On 31 March 1977, the formation of Janata Legislature Party was announced in the House and Ram Prasad Mishra declared as the Leader of Opposition and he continued in such post till 30 April 1977. Binayak Acharya continued as the Chief Minister of Odisha

till 30 April 1977. When Janata Party government came into the power at centre after the general elections of 1977, they dismissed nine congress governments in different states of India<sup>[15]</sup>. Binayak Acharya resigned from the office of Chief Minister on 30 April 1977. The state Odisha was again witnessed President's Rule from 30<sup>th</sup> April 1977 till the formation of new government under the leadership of Nilamani Routray. Braja Mohan Mohanty was the Speaker and Chintamani Jena was the Deputy Speaker of sixth assembly. The sixth assembly had all total 9 sessions with 150 sitting days<sup>[16]</sup>.

#### **Seventh Assembly Election of Odisha (1977)**

After a brief spell of President's Rule in Odisha, a mid-term election for the seventh assembly was held on 10 June 1977<sup>[17]</sup>. The position of political parties contested for seventh assembly election in Odisha were as follows; Janata Party – 110, Indian National Congress – 26, C.P.I – 1, C.P.I (M) – 1 and Independents – 9. The elected members took oath on 29 June 1977. Nilamani Routray was elected as the Leader of Janata Legislature Party and became the Chief Minister of Odisha on 26 June 1977. Chintamani Panigrahi, Leader of Congress Legislature Party became the Leader of Opposition and continued till 20 February 1978. The division in the Congress Party in 1978 at national level forced Chintamani Panigrahi to resign from the post of Leader of Opposition. Out of 26 Congress MLAs, 15 joined Congress (I) and 11 MLAs joined Congress (U). Brundaban Nayak, Leader of Congress (I) Legislature Party became the leader of Opposition on 20 February 1978 and continued in such post till September 1979. In 1979, the split in Janata Party at national level resulted split in Janata Legislature Party in Odisha. 28 members of Janata (O) Legislature Party were given recognition and its leader Prahallad Mallick was declared as Leader of Opposition on 3 September 1979. He continued in such post till 13 February 1980. After the split in Janata Party, the Janata Legislature Party which was in power having 82 members was renamed as Lok Dal Legislature Party on 13 February 1980. Ananta Narayan Singh Deo of Janata Legislature Party became the Leader of Opposition in place of Prahallad Mallick on 13 February and continued till 17 February 1980. It was after the seventh Lok Sabha election in 1980 when the Congress Party became victorious at Centre Indira Gandhi became the Prime Minister, she dismissed the Janata Party ruled governments in different states of India. As a result, Nilamani Routray's government was dismissed on 17 February 1980. President's Rule was imposed in Odisha on that same day. Satya Priya Mohanty was the Speaker and Surendra Nayak was the Deputy Speaker of seventh assembly<sup>[18]</sup>. The seventh assembly had 7 sessions with 121 sitting days.

#### **Eighth Assembly Election of Odisha (1980)**

The election to eighth assembly of Odisha was held on 31 May 1980. The result of eighth assembly was as follows; Janata Party (S) - 13, Janata Party (J.P) -3, Congress (I) Part – 117, C.P.I – 4, Congress (U) Party – 2 and Independents – 7. The election to Nimapara assembly seat was postponed due to the death of Congress (I) Party candidate, Nilamani Sethi. The newly elected members took oath on 11 June 1980. On 12 June 1980, Somanath Rath was elected as the Speaker of eighth assembly and continued as such till 11 February 1984.

On 22 February 1984, Prasanna Kumar Dash was elected as the Speaker of Odisha Legislative Assembly in place of Somanath Rath. Himanshu Sekhhar Padhi was elected as the Deputy Speaker of eighth assembly on 2 July 1980<sup>[19]</sup>. Janaki Ballav Patnaik Leader of Congress (I) Legislature Party became the Chief Minister on 9 June 1980. The elected members of eighth assembly took oath on 11 and 12 June 1980. None of the opposition parties secured the required number of seats for official Opposition Party, as a result of which, there was no recognized leader of the opposition in 8<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. Sarat Kumar Deb was declared as the leader of the largest opposition group in the Assembly. The eighth assembly had all total 11 sessions with 188 sitting days.

#### **Ninth Assembly Election of Odisha (1985)**

The election to ninth assembly was held on 5 March 1985. Except two assembly constituencies of Kakatpur and Keonjhar, elections to other 145 assembly seats took place. Due to certain reasons, elections to these constituencies were postponed. Riding on the sympathy wave, after the death of Indira Gandhi, the Congress Party repeated its performance of last assembly election and won 117 seats. Janaki Ballav Patnaik was again unanimously elected as the Leader of Congress Legislature Party and took oath on 10 March 1985 as the Chief Minister of Odisha heading a 16 member council of ministers<sup>[20]</sup>. Seats occupied by other political parties in ninth assembly election were as follows; Janata Party – 19, C.P.I - 1, B.J.P – 1 and Independents – 7. On 22 March 1985, Biju Patnaik, leader of Janata Legislature Party was declared as the Leader of Opposition and continued in such post till 1990. Prasanna Kumar Dash was the Speaker and Chintamani Dyan Samantaray was the Deputy Speaker of ninth assembly of Odisha. It was after the debacle of Congress Party in 1989 Lok Sabha election in Odisha, Janaki Ballav Patnaik resigned from the post of Chief Minister on the ground of morality on 7 December 1989 and Hemananda Biswal became the Chief Minister on the same day. Hemananda Biswal continued as the Chief Minister till 3 March 1990. The ninth assembly was dissolved on 3 March 1990. The ninth assembly had all total 11 sessions and 188 sitting days<sup>[21]</sup>.

#### **Tenth Assembly Election of Odisha (1990)**

Tenth assembly election of Odisha was held on 27 February 1990. The Congress Party which was in power from 1980 to 1990 had lost the confidence of the people because of continuous intra-party squabbles and allegation of corruption. Under the leadership of Biju Patnaik, the Janata Dal created a new record by getting 123 MLAs elected to state assembly. The Congress suffered a worst electoral drubbing with only 10 seats and did not even qualify to become a recognized Opposition Party in the state assembly. Other political parties captured assembly seats as follows; B.J.P – 2, C.P.I - 5, C.P.I (M) – 1 and Independents – 6. There was a pre-poll alliance between Janata Dal and two Communist Parties prior to assembly election of 1990.<sup>22</sup> Biju Patnaik, leader of the Janata Dal became the Chief Minister on 5 March 1990. The newly elected members took oath on 6 and 7 March 1990. None of the opposition parties secured requisite number of seats for becoming official opposition party in tenth assembly. Yudhisthir Das was the Speaker and Prahallad Dora was the Deputy Speaker of tenth assembly. The tenth assembly had all total 17 sessions

and 239 sitting days. The tenth assembly was dissolved on 15 March 1995.

#### **Eleventh Assembly Election of Odisha (1995)**

The elections to eleventh assembly of Odisha were held on 7 and 9 March 1995. Indian National Congress became victorious by getting 80 seats in assembly election. The ruling party of tenth assembly, Janata Dal became the chief opposition party by getting 46 seats. Position of other political parties in eleventh assembly election were as follows; B.J.P- 9, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha – 4, Jharkhand Peoples Party – 1, C.P.I – 1 and Independents – 6.<sup>23</sup> The elected members of eleventh assembly took oath on 20, 21 and 22 March 1995. Janaki Ballav Patnaik was elected as the Leader of Congress Legislature Party and was sworn as the Chief Minister of Odisha for third time on 15 March 1995. Kishore Chandra Patel of Congress Party was unanimously elected as the Speaker of eleventh assembly on 22 March 1995. Chintamani Dyan Samantaray was elected as the Deputy Speaker on 28 March 1995. Hemananda Biswal and Basanta Biswal were sworn as Deputy Chief Ministers of Odisha. Kishore Chandra Patel was inducted into the cabinet of Janaki Ballav Patnaik hence he resigned from the post of Speaker in 1996. In place of Kishore Chandra Patel, Chintamani Dyan Samantaray was elected as the Speaker on 16 February 1996. Janaki Ballav Patnaik resigned on 12 February 1999 and in place of him, Giridhari Gamango took charge as Chief Minister on 17 February 1999. Giridhari Gamango continued as the Chief Minister till 6 December 1999. Hemananda Biswal took oath as the Chief Minister on the same day and continued till the dissolved of eleventh assembly. Bibhuti Bhusan Singh Mardaraj was unanimously elected as the Deputy Speaker on 15 March 1996. The eleventh assembly witnessed five number of Leader of Opposition from 1995 to 2000. Biju Patnaik continued as the Leader of Opposition from 23 March 1995 to 20 May 1996. Ashok Das continued as the Leader of Opposition of Odisha Assembly from 22 May 1996 to 18 December 1997. After the death of Biju Patnaik, a new regional political party named Biju Janata Dal was formed on 26 December 1997. 28 members out of 46 members Janata Dal Legislature Party joined the newly formed Biju Janata Dal. Ramakrushna Patnaik, leader of Biju Janata Dal became the Leader of Opposition on 22 February 1998 and continued up to 16 November 1998. Prafulla Samal of Biju Janata Dal continued as Leader of Opposition from 16 November 1998 to 1 December 1998. On 1 December 1998, Sachidananda Dalal declared as Leader of Opposition and continued in such post till the dissolved of eleventh assembly<sup>[24]</sup>.

#### **Twelfth Assembly Election of Odisha (2000)**

The elections to twelfth assembly of Odisha were held in two phases i.e. on 17 and 22 February 2000. Before the election, there was a pre-poll alliance in between BJD and BJP. As per the pre-poll arrangement, BJD contested on 84 seats and BJP contested on 63 seats. Out of 84 seats in which BJD contested won 68 seats whereas BJP won 38 seats. Congress Party won in 26 seats, JMM won in 3 seats, JD(S) won in 1 seat, TMC won in 1 seat, CPI won in 1 seat, CPI (M) won in 1 seat and Independents won in 8 seats.<sup>25</sup> On 25 March 2000, Naveen Patnaik, Leader of BJD Legislature Party took oath as the Chief Minister of Odisha. The elected members of twelfth assembly took oath on 7

and 8 March 2000. Sarat Kumar Kar was elected as the Speaker of twelfth assembly on 10 March 2000 and Ramchandra Panda was elected as the Deputy Speaker of twelfth assembly on 27 March 2000. The Leader of Congress Legislature Party, Ramakanta Mishra was declared as the Leader of Opposition of twelfth assembly on 21 March 2000 and he continued in such till the dissolved the twelfth assembly. One year before the tenure, Naveen Patnaik dissolved the twelfth assembly on 6 February 2000. The twelfth assembly had all total 13 sessions and 214 sitting days <sup>[26]</sup>.

#### **Thirteenth Assembly Election of Odisha (2004)**

The General Elections of 2004 witnessed the elections to fourteenth Lok Sabha and thirteenth assembly of Odisha simultaneously. The elections to thirteenth assembly of Odisha were held on 20 and 26 April 2004. As per the pre-poll arrangement of 2000, BJD and BJP fought the thirteenth assembly election. Out of 84 seats in which BJD contested won in 61 seats. Similarly out of 63 seats in which BJP contested won in 32 seats. Congress Party won in 38 seats, JMM won in 4 seats, Odisha Gana Parishad won in 2 seats, CPI won in 1 seat, CPI (M) won in 1 seat and Independents won in 8 seats <sup>[27]</sup>. The alliance of BJD and BJP formed the coalition for second consecutive period in 2004. The elected members to thirteenth assembly took oath on 19 and 20 May 2004. Naveen Patnaik, the Leader of coalition took oath as the Chief Minister on 16 May 2004. Maheswar Mohanty, M.L.A of Puri Assembly Constituency elected as the Speaker of thirteenth assembly on 21 May 2004 and continued in such post till 31 May 2008. Prahallad Dora was elected as Deputy Speaker of thirteenth assembly. After the resignation of Maheswar Mohanty from the post of Speaker, Prahallad Dora acted as Acting Speaker of Odisha Assembly from 31 May 2008 to 19 September 2008. Kishore Kumar Mohanty, M.L.A of Jharsuguda was elected as the Speaker on 19 September 2008 and continued in such post till the dissolved of thirteenth assembly. Janaki Ballav Patnaik, Leader of Congress Legislature Party was declared as Leader of Opposition of thirteenth assembly and continued in such post till 24 January 2009. Ramachandra Ulaka became the Leader of Opposition in place of Janaki Ballav Patnaik on 24 January 2009 and continued in such post till the dissolved of thirteenth assembly <sup>[28]</sup>.

#### **Fourteenth Assembly Election of Odisha (2009)**

After eleven years of friendship, the BJD and BJP alliance came to an end in the year 2009. The election to fourteenth assembly of Odisha was held in two phases on 16 and 23 April 2009. After the breakup of alliance with BJP, BJD contested the fourteenth assembly election in a pre-poll arrangement with two other political parties; Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and Communist Party of India. BJD formed the government singlehandedly after the assembly election of 2009 by securing 103 seats. The fourteenth assembly election of Odisha witnessed that BJD was the first regional political party in the state of Odisha to have its own government. Congress Party won in 27 seats, BJP won in 6 seats, NCP won in 4 seats, CPI won in 1 seat and Independents won in 6 seats. Naveen Patnaik, the leader of BJD Legislature Party sworn-in as the Chief Minister on 21 May 2009 <sup>[29]</sup>. Bhupinder Singh, Leader of Congress Legislature Party was declared as the Leader of Opposition on 27 May 2009 and he continued in such post till 7 March

2014. From 8 March 2004 to 16 May 2014, Surendra Singh Bhoi worked as the Leader of Opposition. Pradip Kumar Amat was elected as the Speaker of fourteenth assembly on 25 May 2009 and continued in such designation till the dissolved of the assembly. Lal Bihari Himirika was elected as the Deputy Speaker of fourteenth assembly on 10 June 2009. He continued in such charge till his resignation on 19 May 2011. After his resignation, Sanand Marandi was elected as the Deputy Speaker of Odisha assembly. Sanand Marandi acted as the Deputy Speaker till the dissolved of fourteenth assembly. The fourteenth assembly was constituted on 19 May 2009 and expired on 24 May 2014 <sup>[30]</sup>.

#### **Fifteenth Assembly Election of Odisha (2014)**

The election to the fifteenth assembly of Odisha was held in two phases on 10 and 17 April 2014. Biju Janata Dal again performed well in the assembly election of 2014 and for second consecutive period it formed government single handedly without support of any other political party. The seats captured by the political parties in fifteenth assembly election were as follows; Biju Janata Dal – 117, Congress Party – 16, BJP – 10, CPI (M) – 1, Samata Kranti Dal – 1 and Independents - 2. Naveen Patnaik, leader of BJD Legislature Party sworn-in as the Chief Minister of Odisha for the fourth consecutive term on 21 May 2014 <sup>[31]</sup>. Narasingha Mishra, the leader of Congress Legislature Party performed the role of Leader of Opposition in fifteenth assembly from 11 June 2014 to 29 May 2019. Niranjan Pujari was elected as the Speaker of fifteenth assembly on 24 May 2014 and he continued in such post till his resignation on 6 May 2017. Pradip Kumar Amat was elected as the Speaker on place of Niranjan Pujari on 16 May 2017 and continued as the Speaker of Odisha assembly till the dissolved of fifteenth assembly. Sanand Marandi, Deputy Speaker of previous assembly was again elected as the Deputy Speaker on 16 June 2014 and continued in such designation till the dissolved of fifteenth assembly. The fifteenth assembly started on 5 May 2014 and expired on 29 May 2019 <sup>[32]</sup>.

#### **Sixteenth Assembly Election of Odisha (2019)**

The election to sixteenth assembly election of Odisha held in the month of April 2019 in four phases; April 11, 18, 23 and 29. Except election to the Patkura Assembly Constituency where the contesting candidate Bedprakash Agarawal died, elections to other 146 assembly seats were held. The nature of the verdict of 2019 assembly election is described as both a miracle and historical. First, it is miracle because Naveen Patnaik swept the polls fighting against the Narendra Modi wave and anti-incumbency factor. It is historical because for the first time Congress Party not only suffered its most humiliation and worst electoral drubbing with only 9 seats but also it lost its position for becoming the main opposition party in assembly. In the sixteenth assembly election, BJD won in 112 seats, BJP won in 23 seats, Congress won in 9 seats, CPI (M) won in 1 seat and Independent won in 1 seat <sup>[33]</sup>. Naveen Patnaik was sworn-in as Chief Minister of Odisha for fifth consecutive term on 29 May 2019. Pradeep Naik, BJP M.L.A of Bhawanipatna Assembly Constituency was declared as the leader of BJP Legislature Party. He assumed the office of Leader of Opposition on 25 June 2019 and continued in such post till 30 July 2022. On the same day, Jayanarayan Mishra was appointed as Leader of

Opposition in place of Pradeep Naik and acted in such post till June 2024. Surya Narayan Patra was elected as the Speaker of sixteenth assembly on 1 June 2019 and continued in such post till 4 June 2022. Bikram Keshari Arukha acted as the Speaker of sixteenth assembly from 13 June 2022 to 12 MAY 2023. On 22 September 2023, Pramila Mallick was elected as the Speaker of Odisha assembly. She was the first female Speaker of Odisha. She continued in her position till the dissolved of sixteenth assembly. The sixteenth assembly witnessed the work of two Deputy Speakers within five years. Rajanikanta Singh acted as the Deputy Speaker from 27 June 2019 to 8 November 2024. Saluga Pradhan performed the charge of Deputy Speaker from 21 November 2023 to 3 June 2024.

### Seventeenth Assembly Election of Odisha (2024)

The election to seventeenth assembly of Odisha was held in the months of May and June in four phases; on 13, 20 and 25 May, and 1 June 2019. The Bharatiya Janata Party won a simple majority with 78 seats and created a history ending 24 years rule of Biju Janata Dal and its leader Naveen Patnaik. In the assembly election of 2024, BJD won in 51 seats, Congress Party won in 14 seats, CPI (M) won in 1 seat and Independents won in 3 seats.<sup>34</sup> Mohan Charan Majhi declared as the Leader of BJP Legislature Party and was sworn-in as Chief Minister on 12 June 2024. Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo and Pravati Parida took oath as Deputy Chief Ministers on the same day. After 24 years, former Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik took new role becoming the Leader of Opposition of seventeenth assembly. Prasanna Kumar Acharya became the Deputy Leader of Opposition. Senior BJP leader, Surama Padhy was elected as the Speaker of Odisha assembly on 2 June 2024.

### Conclusion

An analysis of political development since the first assembly election in Odisha provides an interesting data. The state of Odisha witnessed seventeen assembly elections since 1952. The electoral history in Odisha can be divided into five district phases. The period from 1952 to 1961 was an era of political instability. The second phase ranging from 1961 to 1967 when Congress Party was in power was the era of political stability. The third phase ranging from 1967 to 1977 was the phase of political coalitions. The fourth phase from 1977 to 2000 was the phase of positive electoral choice. The last phase comprising the period from 2000 onwards was the phase of non-Congress governments in Odisha and twenty four years dominance of Naveen Patnaik in Odisha politics. The fate of the political parties in Odisha have never been smooth because of in-built differences among the leaders, electorates and understanding of the major issues at the time of elections.

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