CHAPTER - VI

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES WHILE NABAKRUSHNA CHOUDHURY WAS IN POWER
Nabakrushna Choudhury, a man with vision and dynamism, was one among the few Odias who had come out of the cocoon of luxury and dedicated his entire life for the reconstruction of the state. He remained within the doom of British prison's cells for quite a period for the independence of the country and to create a new country, free from dogmatism, exploitation and poverty. The fact remains that Nabakrushna Choudhury has helped Orissa to overcome many crises by laying the most pragmatic foundation of democracy, secularism, planning and socialism.

As a man of thought and action, industriousness, acumen, conviction and commitment, Nabakrushna Choudhury was unique. For his crusade against injustice and exploitation, firm faith in the principle of truth and non-violence, his motto of "simple living and high thinking", he could be the real symbol of Indian ethos and ideology. For him politics or power was not the means of earning name, fame or wealth, rather it was a mission to serve the common people (Mohanty 1994:52).

Nabakrushna Choudhury, who had contributed a lot towards the social development of the state of Orissa through his programmes and policies. In this process of development, he had given special importance towards the people belonging to the rural areas, tribal people and backward sections of the society in the field of education, health, sanitation, eradication of untouchability, ensuring legal right of the farmers on land and advocating and practicing the equality of human being, both during his tenure as the revenue minister and the chief minister of the state.
In 1933, “Utkal Congress Workers Communist League” was formed by half a dozen of young congressmen. They promised not to possess any private property of their own and whatever private property they might have possessed, that would be given to the league. Nabakrushna Choudhury and his wife Malati Choudhury set the first example in that. They donated the small agricultural farm, they had owned in Anokhia village of the then Cuttack district and Malati Choudhury donated all her ornaments for the purpose of the league and its progress (Ghosh, 1991, 29).

The league became the nucleus of the congress socialist party and the instrument of future peasant’s movement in Orissa. The socialists launched a newsletter “Sarathi” which primarily highlighted the problems and grievances of the peasants, (with the headline “workers of the world unite”) and soon it became the mouthpiece for socialists in Orissa. Later on, another journal was founded by Nabakrushna Choudhury to uphold the cause of peasants not to lie prostrate before the landlord but to stand erect and politely fold the hands as equals, had the desired effect (Mohanty, 2005, 320).

In 1935, “Utkal Kishan Sangha” was formed as a forum of agriculturists. The prominent leaders of this forum were Nabakrushna Choudhury, Malatí Choudhury, Surendranath Dwivedi, Goura Chandra Das, Manmohan Choudhury, Bhagirathi Panigrahi and Rabindra Mohan Das. The main objectives of this group were the amelioration of the economic grievances of the peasants and to fight for the abolition of the zamindary system, which was the root cause of all problems and suffering of
the peasants. The league slowly and steadily progressed successfully in the rural Orissa and built up a strong peasant movement through numerous organizations and councils formed for the same cause. Later, this league merged with the All India congress socialist party.

**CONGRESS SOCIALIST PARTY**

The formation of Congress Socialistic Party (CSP) in 1934 was a landmark in the history of the socialist movement in India. There were various factors which were responsible for its formation. Many young men, undergoing imprisonment in different jails, were critical of the congress leadership and its manner of operating the national liberation movement. They were dissatisfied with the Karachi resolution on fundamental rights and wanted to go ahead of its limited aims. They were also not happy with the civil disobedience movement launched by Gandhi in 1930 and 1932. Considering the Gandhian ideologies as inadequate for bringing political liberation and social reconstruction, they were attracted towards the rising socialist movement in the west, particularly in Soviet Russia. They stood for combining the revolutionary forces of nationalism with the economic programmes against exploitation. The kisan organizations which were already set up all over the country started to mobilize the peasants and the landless workers. The nation with wide support and mass upsurge during the civil disobedience movement gave birth to various radical and revolutionary groups. New socialist and Marxist ideas spread among the intellectuals. Differences over, how to win independence, and what would be the socio-economic programmes in post-independence India have caught the imagination of the intelligentsia. After the failure of the civil disobedience
movement in 1932, the younger generation inside the National Congress got disillusioned with the Gandhian methods. Many young congressmen undergoing imprisonment in different jails were critical of the congress leadership and the way it was organizing the national liberation movement. These disillusioned congressmen, finding socialism as the panacea of all social evils, took the initiative of organizing socialistic groups. They organized socialistic groups in various parts of India like Bihar (1931), later in the Nasik central prison (1932-33), and also in Uttar Pradesh and Bombay provinces (1933-34). The main purpose of organizing these groups was to create a progressive and radical leadership and to provide a new dimension to the struggle for freedom.

The first conference of this socialist group was held at Bombay on 21st October 1934. In this conference, Sampurnananda was unanimously elected as its chairman and the conference was attended by 150 delegates. Prominent among those who attended this conference were Dr. Ram Monohar Lohia, F.M. Ansari, Jayaprakash Narayan, Mohanlal Goutam, M.R. Masani, Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, Achyut Patwardhan and P.K. Pillai. The formation of congress socialist party in 1934 was regarded as a landmark in the history of the freedom struggle in general and the socialist movement in particular. The congress socialists uphold the principle of cooperation and organized themselves into a separate group but within the congress not outside the congress (Congress Socialist 1934).

The congress socialist party took the initiative of organizing the peasants in the country. It was under the influence of the congress socialists that the peasants were made aware of their position and strength of their unity. All-India Kisan Sabha
was formed in 1936. It became a regular practice to hold the annual session of the Kisan Sabha along with annual sessions of the Indian National Congress.

In order to broaden the base of the anti-imperialist struggle, the congress socialists always wanted that the congress should enlist the support of the peasantry. Sampurnanda issued a pamphlet on 3rd April 1934, outlining the goals of the congress socialists, that contained a number of socialist programmes, such as, abolition of zamindari with due compensation, reduction of rural indebtedness, consolidation of land holdings, nationalization of key industries, insurance facilities to workers, fixation of salaries subject to a minimum of Rs 500/- per month, provision of maternity leave for female workers, medical leave for all workers, indirect election to the legislature, freedom of worship and eradication of communalism in any shape.

The congress socialists were critical of Gandhi, of his self-imposed limitation on issue of non-violence and his ethical approach to politics and his theory of "trusteeship" (Nanda 1972).

The congress socialists party as a Marxist group laid emphasis on national revolution as a pre-condition to social change. During the initial year of its existence, the congress socialists party set itself to two objectives. In the first place, it tried to convince the congress leadership that the successful waging of national struggle for independence demanded the broadening of the base of movement by active participation of workers and peasants. Secondly, the congress socialists tried to convince the masses that their struggle for better living and working conditions were intimately allied with the political struggle for freedom from the alien rule.
NABAKRUSHNA CHOUDHURY’S ROLE IN CONGRESS SOCIALIST PARTY

In Orissa, Nabakrushna Choudhury, Malati Choudhury and Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi took the leadership in forming the congress socialist party. Nabakrushna Choudhury and Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi became its secretary. The first session of Orissa congress socialist party was held in the residence of Nabakrushna Choudhury at Cuttack in 1934, which was presided over by Acharya Narendra Deva, the principal of Kashipur Vidyapitha (Dwivedi, S N 1984).

In October 1934, in a meeting held at Bombay, All-India congress socialist party was organized with delegates from thirteen States. On 10th June 1935, a peasant conference was held in the Cuttack town hall under the chairmanship of Godavarish Mishra. On 10th August 1935 the socialists of Orissa formed a ‘Kishan Sangha’ (Organisation of Agriculturists) with Harekrushna Mahtab as the president. In April 1936, the annual sessions of Indian National Congress and all India Kishan Sabha were held at Lucknow. S N Dwivedi and Nabakrushna Choudhury attended the subject committee of all India Kishan Sabha held in Lucknow under the presidentship of Swami Sahajananda of Bihar. From Orissa, the followings were elected as the members of the working committee of All-India Kishan Sabha, such as Harekrushna Mahtab, Nabakrushna Choudhury, Malati Choudhury, Dibakar Patnaik and Gatikrushna Swain (De 1964).

After the Lucknow session of Indian National Congress, All-India Kishan Sabha meetings were held in different places and the socialist leaders like Nabakrushna Choudhury, Prananath Patnaik, Gangadhar Mishra, Gatikrushna Swain, Gokul Mohan
Rai Chudamani, Mohan Das, Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi and others tried to unite the peasants under the socialist banner. In a meeting held at Puri on 10th May 1936, a committee was formed, consisting of Nabakrushna Choudhury, Harekrushna Mahtab, Godavarish Mishra, Jagabandhu Singh and Gorachand Patnaik to look into peasant's grievances and consult public opinion regarding the amendment of Orissa Tenancy Act (Pradhan 1997).

A meeting of the working committee of Utkal Provincial Kishan Sabha was held at Puri on 14th August 1936. A sub-committee was formed, consisting of Harekrushna Mahtab, Nabakrushna Choudhury, Rajakrushna Bose, Lingaraj Mishra and Malati Choudhury to inquire into the grievances of peasants and submit a report to provincial congress committee (Mahtab 1969). On 20th August 1936, the working committee of the Puri district kishan sangh passed a resolution authorizing Prananath Patnaik and Gajendra Mishra to carry on investigation into the condition of peasants and submit their findings to a high level three-men committee (consisting of Gorachand Patnaik, Nabakrushna Choudhury, Harekrushna Mahtab) who would move the government for reduction of rent (Pradhan 1997). On 1st September 1936, All India Kishan Day was observed in different places of Orissa and resolutions were passed, demanding reductions of rent, amendment of tenancy laws and to scrape peasant's old outstanding debt (Mahtab 1969).

In 1938-39, when the congress socialist movement was at the peak of its popularity, most of its prominent young political elements, like Bhagabati Panigrahi, Ram Krushna Pati, Banamali Das, Guru Charan Pattanaik, Ananta Pattanaik and others who were the members of congress socialistic party, had worked and devoted
themselves for the socialist cause under the leadership of Nabakrushna Choudhury. Seven youngmen of the group came in contact with communist leader, PC Joshi, when he visited Dhenkanal in 1938 to observe the people’s movement, then raging against the feudal rules of the small states. This contact was maintained later by Bhagabati Panigrahi who had been to Bombay to discuss the matter with Jhosì. Nabakrushna Choudhury and Malatì Choudhury correctly suspected the link and termed them as concealed communists. In 1939, Jaya Prakash Narayan dissolved the congress socialist party unit of Orissa fearing the dominance of communists in congress and appointed Nabakrushna Choudhury as the new leader of Orissa congress socialist party. Biswanath Das resigned as the prime minister of Orissa in 7th November 1939 and Harekrushna Mahatab was emerged as the undisputed leader of congress party. Nabakrushna Choudhury came closer to Mahtab and disassociated himself from congress socialist party. Thus, the congress socialist party was virtually remained defunct in Orissa (Gosh 1991 53).

PRINCELY STATES OF ORISSA AND NABAKRUSHNA CHOUDHURY

Orissa had 26 princely states, which were not directly governed by the British government. The ruling chiefs were directly governing their respective states according to their own whims and fancies, by paying a royalty to the British. There was no code of conduct binding on the rulers, thus they were turned out either to be despotic or benevolent depending upon their personal disposition. There was no independent judiciary for the common people to seek justice. The ‘durbar’ (council) of the ruler held the entire judiciary, executive and legislative power without having any scope for popular participation. No free press was there to articulate and air
the grievance and voice of the people. Thus, the administrative scenario was that of a typical medieval monarchical order where hardly found any democratic ideas (Mohanty 2005 305).

The reckless administration of the ruler of the princely states had evoked much reaction from the people of the different parts of Orissa. Popular risings took place in the states against the mal-administration of the rulers which was causing hazards to the people. In most of the cases, the ruler suppressed those rising by the ruthless application of the force (Das 1994 192).

The congress party decided to follow a policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of the princely states. But such policy of the congress did not appeal to Nabakrushna Choudhury. The plight of the common mass of these princely states greatly touched his heart and he could not remain silent and jumped into the whirlpools of popular risings which were going on in different princely states. Malati Choudhury, wife of Nabakrushna Choudhury, Gouranga Das and Sarangadhar Das joined him in mobilizing resistance against the ruler of the princely states. At their instance, there was a stiff public resistance against the ruler of Nilgiri. The Orissa government came to the rescue of the people of Nilgiri. A battalion of Orissa military police marched into the state of Nilgiri under the leadership of N. Senapati. Being unable to withstand the situation, the ruler of Nilgiri was forced to hand over the administration to Orissa government. This was really the beginning of the merger of the states of Orissa. Nilgiri was then administered as an occupied territory by the Orissa government till 1st January 1948 when the occupation was legalized as a result of merger.
Dhenkanal was also quite famous for its oppression of the people. In 1938, the entire state of Dhenkanal rose into rebellion against such administration. Nabakrushna Choudhury did not keep quiet. He was joined by Gouranga Das, Ananta Pattnayak, Baidyanath Rath, Sachi Routray, Manmohan Mishra, Surendranath Dwivedy and of course Malati Choudhury. They struggled hard and went from door to door in the villages around Dhenkanal, and explaining about the oppressional tactics of the Raja of Dhenkanal and asking them to protest against the unjustful action of the ruler. Civil resistance movement continued peacefully. Large number of satyagrahis courted arrest.

All Orissa Gadajat Day (All Orissa Princely State Day) was observed on 29th October, 1938. In 1938, some congress leaders led by Nabakrushna Choudhury were arrested in Dhenkanal for their involvement in the ‘Praja Andolan Movement’. The premier Biswanath Dash issued an appeal to the rulers on 12 November, 1938 and urged them to accept the just demands of the people to restore peace and tranquility in the states (Das 1994 195)

After the formation of the congress ministry by Biswanath Das, the peasants put pressure on it for the fulfillment of their genuine demands. On 1st September 1937, All India Peasant’s Day was observed at Cuttack and 10000 peasants met the prime minister and placed their demands. Consequently, Orissa Tenancy Act sought to safeguard the peasants against the zamindar’s oppression and illegal extractions was enacted. Moneylender’s Act lowered the rate of interest charged by the money-lenders, benefitting thousands of people in the state.

In the mean time, at All-India level, the states people’s movement got activated. The All India states people’s conference, while adopting attainment of
fully democratic responsible government as its objective, called upon the National Congress to give up their policy of non-interference towards the princely states. The National Congress Party in its session, held at Haripura on 19-21 February 1938, expressed moral support to the movement and passed a resolution demanding the establishment of a responsible government in princely states and permitted congressmen to render assistance to such movements in their personal capacities. Under these circumstances the movement in the princely states of Orissa gained momentum. The second session of Orissa states people's conference was held at Cuttack on 24th June 1937, under the presidentship of Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

The conference constituted a committee of inquiry to enquire into the misrule of states. In the meantime the state people formed their association called Praja Mandals. The Inquiry Committee, headed by Hare Krishna Mahatab, in its report suggested the conversion of princely states into zamindaries and their merger with the province of Orissa. The Praja Mandal movement got merged in the nationalist movement (http://Orissa.gov.in/e-magazine/Orissa review/20).

In 1947, it was under the premiership of Hare Krishna Mahatab that Nilgiri was taken over. Later, Sardar Vallabhai Patel, the first union minister of Home, visited Orissa and persuaded the rulers of the native states to sign the instrument of accession for the merger of their states with the Indian union. Twenty-five states including Sareikela and Kharsuan, signed the instrument of accession on the 14th December 1947, and merged with Orissa on 1st January 1948. The only native states which stood aloof was Mayurbhanj, which was the biggest native state in terms of area and population. Later, the state of Mayurbhanj was merged with Orissa on
January 1, 1949 The two princely states - Sareikela and Kharsuan were transferred to Bihar in May 1948. The twenty-four states which ultimately merged with Orissa in 1948, were Dhenkanal, Nilgiri, Talcher, Nayagarh, Rairakhol, Athagarh, Pallahara, Gangpur, Hindol, Mamra, Sonepur, Ranpur, Daspalla, Khandapara, Athamallik, Boud, Bonai, Baramba, Narsinghpur, Kalahandi, Tigrira, Keonjhar, Balagir and Mayurbhanj. As a result of the merger of these native states, the territorial map of Orissa was redrawn with 13 districts such as Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Phulbani, Dhenkanal, Balasore, Cuttack, Puri, Ganjam, Koraput, Balangir and Kalahandi in place of old six districts, namely Cuttack, Puri, Balasore, Sambalpur, Ganjam and Koraput. The contribution of Nabakrushna Choudhury was immense in the merger of the princely states and in giving Orissa a new geographic and demographic shape.

NABAKRUSHNA CHOU DHURY AND HIS PRO-PEASANTS STANCE

Orissa became a separate province on the first day of April 1936. In 1937, election to the Orissa legislative assembly was held for the first time. Nabakrushna Choudhury contested against Rai Bahadur Chintamani Acharya in Tirtol-Ersama constituency and became victorious with an overwhelming majority. This was his first entry into active politics.

As an MLA, he was always sensitive to and concerned about, the interests of the poor and downtrodden section of Orissa. All the farmers of Orissa united to fight jointly against the landlords, who were exploiting them. The journal 'Sarathi,' had closed down. And with Nabakrushna Choudhury’s efforts another journal, titled ‘Krusak’ was published containing news and features on the problems of the farmers.
and labourers together with those of the ‘Praja Andalan’ movement in the princely states

In 1946, Nabakrushna Choudhury was elected from the North Kendrapara constituency, and became a cabinet minister in the congress government having portfolios of revenue, supplies and forest departments under his charge. In that time, his spectacular achievement was the enactment of the ‘Anchal Shasan’ Bill, which was meant to empower the people. In that period, the government of Orissa had been pleased to appoint a committee under the resolution No 7533-R, dated the 15th November 1946, to recommend legislative and other measures for reforming the different systems of land revenue and land tenure that were in vogue in different parts of the province with a view-

(1) to make the subject of land revenue or rent, as the case may be, as far as possible, uniform, equitable and elastic in land revenue system, payable by the raiyat to government in raiyatwari areas and rent payable to the landlord in non-raiyatwari areas, as well as, land revenue payable by landlords in different areas very widely

(2) to eliminate, as far as practicable, all intermediary interests that exist at present, between the cultivators and the state

(3) to prevent the fragmentation of agricultural holdings and to foster consolidation of holdings or creation of economic holding

(4) to make adequate provision for common land for pasture and other community purposes and for their proper administration
to improve agricultural production and to raise the standard of living of the cultivating classes.

In case the committee feels to recommend state acquisition of all intermediary interests between the cultivator and the government, they should report on the financial and administrative implications of such acquisition.

The committee shall also recommend interim measures for the improvement of the existing systems, so long as they continue, e.g., the enforcement of a standard of management specially in the matter of adequate maintenance of irrigation and protective works and laying an obligation on landlords to make an annual allocation of funds to be utilized for specific purposes of rural welfare.

The members of the committee were:

1. Sri Dinabandhu Sahu,
2. Sri Lokanath Misra,
3. Raja Bahadur and Sri Ramchandra Mardaraj Deo,
4. Sri Sailendra Narayan Bhanja Deo,
5. Sri Uma Charan Patnaik,
6. Sri Sarangadhar Das,
7. Maulavi Mahammad Latifur Rahman,
8. Sri Kailash Chandra Mohanty,
Shri Nabakrushna Choudhury, who was the revenue minister at that time was appointed as the ex-officio chairman of the committee, and Sri M N Guha, deputy magistrate and deputy collector, became its secretary. Sri Choudhury resigned from the ministry in April 1948, but continued as its chairman under government notification No 5117-R, dated the 23rd April 1948. (Report of the Land Revenue and Land Tenure committee of Orissa)

The primary objective of the committee were to recommend for the

(1) Decentralization of administration and

(2) De-provincialisation of land revenue

For the realization of the first objective, the committee recommended for the constitution of Anchalas (a small area) as administrative unit, each comprising one police station and a tahsil, under the local authority called Anchal Shasan. Anchal Shasan shall consist of one elected body called ‘Anchal Sabha’ comprising elected
representatives from gram panchayats, and also an executive officer called ‘Anchal Sarvadhikari’ The Anchal Sarvadhikari shall have power to administer all estates tenures and lands vested in the Anchal, in a word, the revenue administration of Anchal The Anchal Shasan shall also gradually take over the financial and administrative powers and responsibilities in respect of such areas of public concern as, education, health, agriculture, animal husbandry, cooperative, cottage industry and rural welfare in general

For the realization of the second objective of the de-provincialisation of revenue, the committee recommended the withdrawal of the legal right of the state to collect a certain portion of the produce of every plot of land (Khajana or Desh Bhag) and vesting of the same power in the hands of the community to be administered through Anchal Shasan As regards the assessment and collection of land revenue, it shall be done by gram panchayat through a collective exercise by the cultivators or raiyats of the paticular village In the event of a persistent failure by a raiyat to pay, the gram panchayat shall be competent to take over his land and return it to him only after realization of the arrears

The committee, for a judicious and scientific administration of land revenue has recommended for

(a) Repeal of all existing tenancy laws
(b) Providing for definite rights of raiyats
(c) Fixing maximum and minimum assessment on raiyats
(d) Ban on sub-letting of land except by widows, minors, idiots, lunatics and disabled
(e) Protection of tenants from eviction through Orissa Tenants Protection Act and along with protection of right over tenanted land

(f) Restriction of transfer of land in case a person holds less than a minimum area of land

(g) Restriction on transfer of land by backward tribes

(h) Prevention of fragmentation of land and importance of the consolidation of land holding

(i) Updating of revenue records of rights by Anchal Sarvadhikari and

(j) Payment of ‘Desh Bhag’ in kind to the government as the approved by Anchal

(http://chitabehera.com/miscwork/Orissa%201a)

ROLE OF NABAKRUSHNA CHOUDHURY AS THE PRESIDENT OF LAND REVENUE COMMITTEE OF ORISSA

After the merger of princely states which are also known as ‘Gadjat’ with Orissa, Nabakrushna Choudhury, as revenue minister, worked for a uniform law of revenue in accordance with the existing basic revenue system of Orissa. He aimed to replace different systems prevalent in different erstwhile princely states and to implement a uniform one. In the meantime government of India declared abolition of zamidary system in India. Orissa was the first state to take initiative in that direction. Under his leadership as revenue minister of Orissa (1946-1948), a committee was formed consisting of the representatives selected from all political parties and of different section of the society. Three members were representing the owners of landed
property Abolition of zamindary system and intermediatorship of land, compensation to the intermediaries and the ownership of land, after the abolition of the land lord system and administrative reforms, were the matters on which, the committee was vested with power to study and to submit its recommendations Nabakrushna Choudhury was nominated as the president of that committee It was primarily in consideration of his in-depth study and research in revenue system of state, which had received appreciation from all sections He had earned prominence in bringing changes in revenue system of the state and in giving power and right to citizens That committee was formed in the year 1947, and submitted its report in 1949  

**STEPS TAKEN BY NABAKRUSHNA CHOUDHURY TOWARDS REFORMING THE DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL SUPPLIES IN ORISSA**

Nabakrushna Choudhury introduced reformative measures, as minister of civil supplies to minimize the corruption and for preventing unnecessary administration delay Under his direction “supply committees” were formed in towns and villages comprising of the representatives of the people and essential commodities were distributed and controlled as per their recommendations Such system was very unique and first in our country It was one of his greatest contributions in bringing reformations in administration for the public interest  

**STEPS TAKEN BY NABAKRUSHNA CHOUDHURY TOWARDS THE NATIONALIZATION OF TRANSPORT SYSTEM**

After the merger of princely states, Nabakrushna Choudhury took necessary steps for the nationalization of road transports system or services and also created a new transport company for south Orissa From that day onwards, passenger bus
services have been running under direct control of Orissa Road Transport Corporation (Mohanty 1994 77)

Nabakrishna Choudhury devoted his whole time for the cause of the people and for their upliftment. In 1948, his only son Vinay (Kalu) committed suicide. This was a great shock for Nabakrushna Choudhury. Completely shaken, he resigned from the assembly seat and decided to engage himself in organizational work for the people, remaining far away from the power politics.

Jawaharlal Nehru, the then prime minister of India and also one of the well-wisher of Nabakrushna Choudhury wanted that Nabakrushna Choudhury should come back to politics and become the chief minister of Orissa. He tried his best to persuade him to shoulder the responsibility, but did not succeed. A series of letters exchanged between Nehru and Malati Choudhury, (wife of Nabakrushna Choudhury) suggests that Nabakrushna Choudhury at last was persuaded through Malati Choudhury to become the chief minister of Orissa and eventually he agreed to continue in that capacity (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nabakrushna_choudhury)

THE 1952 ELECTION TO THE ORISSA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AND NABAKRUSHNA CHOU DHURY AS THE CHIEF MINISTER

In 1952, the first general election was held on the principle of universal adult franchise. In the meantime, the feudatory states of Orissa had been merged with the former British administered districts, bringing the population of the state up to fourteen and one half million, approximately double that of the old Orissa province.
The new legislative assembly contained 140 seats, out of which 21 seats were reserved for the members of the scheduled castes and 28 seats for the members of the scheduled tribes. For the elections to the assembly, there were 107 constituencies, 74 being single-member and the rest 33 being double membered.

No party succeeded in gaining an absolute majority in the election. The Indian National Congress remained the single largest party in the assembly, it managed to maintain a formal majority by winning support of independent members and defectors from other parties. Though, severely criticized by the opposition parties for its political opportunism, the congress party maintained itself in power from 1952 to 1956.

Nabakrushna Choudhury, as the leader of the majority party, became the chief minister of Orissa and Shradharkar Supakar of the Ganatantra Parishad was declared as the leader of the opposition. The first assembly had a total of 9 sessions spreading over 356 days. After the completion of a full term of five years, the first assembly was dissolved on 4th March, 1957 (Jena, Baral 1988 102-103).

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMME

The government under the chief ministership of Shri Nabakrushna Choudhury brought in various agrarian reforms, the most important being the abolition of the zamindary system. The farmers became free from the exploitation of the zamindars and got the right of ownership on their land. Nabakrushna Choudhury’s experience as the revenue minister stood him in good stead. His concern for the welfare of the people made Anchal Shasan a reality which was the precursor to the community development programmes launched in Orissa on the Gandhi Jayanti Day of 1952.
had constituted the most comprehensive framework of rural development. It was the first ever nation-wide rural development scheme to bring about all round improvement of the rural society. The basic aims of the community development movement were to increase agricultural output, to tackle the problems of unemployment in rural areas, to improve rural communications, to improve the standard of primary education, the level of public health and nutrition, facilities of recreation in the villages and to promote handicrafts and small-scale industries in rural areas.

Nabakrushna Choudhury was a chief minister with marked difference in stature, perception, value and style of functions. He was one of the greatest chief ministers the state ever has. He was a crusader against corruption, a man with great honesty and integrity and was a great protagonist of transparency in public life. Mere formulation of rules and regulations and the appointment of a large body of officers did not mean much to Nabakrushna Choudhury. He wanted to make the administration pro-people, bringing massive change in the living standard of the people. Instead of conducting administration through official records and files, he used to supervise it on the field. Nabakrushna Choudhury in all sense was an honest democrat and was in support of decentralization of power. During his period, different committees were formed, consisting of members from both ruling and opposition parties who supervised the functions of different departments of government and commented on their functions and also remained vigilant whether their recommendations were properly implemented or not. The ministry under his tenure was sitting for deliberation, frequently throughout the year in comparison with any other ministries. He was in favor of inviting comments from the members.
of the ruling and opposition parties over the functioning of his government. Now-a-days frequent disturbances and disruptions in the House have become routine affairs not only in state assembly but also in the parliament, which were not prevalent during his period. Such unethical situations, now-a-days happening mostly, because, the present governments are avoiding and lying on questions of irregularities rose by the opposition on the floor of the house. But his ministry had nothing either to hide or to avoid. Nabakrushna Choudhury never hesitated to admit and even beg apology, if at any time, it was found that the government employees or the ministers committed any excesses during his administration (Nayak 2001 200)

**STRENGTH, CAPABILITY AND DIGNITY OF THE NATION LIE IN THE HANDS OF GOVERNMENT SERVANTS**

The bill on Anchal Shasan was subjected to sharp criticism in the forum of the Orissa assembly for the special rights and privileges enjoyed by the government employees. In response to these criticisms, Nabakrushna Choudhury highlighted the performance of the government employees who worked in a total adverse environment prior to independence and were trying their level best to deliver clean administration by sacrificing selfishness in the post-independence period. Some unscrupulous people did not hesitate to bribe the employees if anything affects their vested interest. Spectacular progress can be made by the government employees if they can avoid the temptation of wealth and undue profit. We cannot close our eyes to their contribution and sacrifice. For the realisation of the national goals, the active co-operation of the government employees is highly necessary prior to independence, since they were answerable to the foreign rulers and were
acting to serve their interests. To bear a negative attitude towards them, however is not at all surprising.

According to Nabakrushna Choudhury, the government employees constitute a powerful work force. We spent a lot for in their training and in educating them as engineers, doctors and administrators. We cannot blame them for anything wrong happened to us. They cannot be called as servant in derogatory sense. The government employees can bring realization of the goal of development. They are our strength, resource and dignity. It will be self destructive if we continue to criticize employees blindly (Mohanty 1994:39).

NABAKRISHNA CHOUDHURY’S PASSION TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN ORISSA

The interest of Nabakrushna Choudhury for Bhoodan and welfare for the adivasis was intense. He, as a member of the partially excluded area enquiry committee, 1940, (a committee which was exclusively created to deal with the problems of the backward classes welfare) The main function of this department, which was created by the government of Orissa on 4th November 1946, were not only to co-ordinate the activities of the other departments relating to backward class welfare but also to devise plans and necessary measures for bringing the backward classes to the level of the advanced section of the population in the minutes had recorded his note of dissent in the following words:

The dismal stories of Bethi, Mamul, Gudam, Gothi, etc. (all are different forms of unpaid and forced labour) related in the report of the committee, sufficiently demonstrate the unreality and ineffectiveness of the special protection for the
aboriginal and backward tribes. In practice, vast tracts of aboriginals have so far been kept out of the perview of the popular legislatures and remained under the unlimited control of the executive officers responsible only to the British government. The usual plea, put forth in support of this policy of special protection, has been that the interests of the aboriginal tribes are likely to be overlooked by the advanced people of the plains who constitute the majority in the provincial legislature. But how this policy has been worked out in practice? In the course of field visits and investigations, as members of the committee, we found as a matter of fact and history that, backward tribes of the tracts under our enquiry, had been completely left out at the mercy of the non-aboriginal Maharajas, Rajas, Hill Chiefs, Bisoyis, Patros, etc. It appeared to us to be the worst aspect of deprivation and neglect inflicted by the non-aboriginal locals as in the Pre-British days. But they had often been kept in check, in their dealing with the hill-tribes, which were then quite militant, by the fear of a violent rising against them. The British government removed that natural check, by making it abundantly clear to the tribes that the mighty British government stood behind the chieftains and that they would be crushed, in the name of law and order, if they dared to rise against the latter. Naturally, most of these tribes have been thoroughly emasculated in the process. Only, few Christian missionaries, few humanitarian officers and some tribesmen’s were contacted with the people of the plains, who were worked for their betterment of material and moral condition (Orissa Legislative Assembly Proceedings, July 1952, p LXXIX).

Further, it is significant to note that since 1953, not only the chief minister but the entire administrative machinery engaged in Bhoodan movement which was launched by Acharaya Vinoba Bhave, which drew strong public reaction against
this, because, huge amount was spent on it It is said that the fund so utilised on Bhoodan, could be spent on some constructive purposes

**STEPS TAKEN BY SHRI NABAKRUSHNA CHOUDHURY TOWARDS MAKING ODIA AS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE IN STATE ADMINISTRATION**

In 1946, when the Orissa legislative assembly was constituted, the question of ethical language to be used in the assembly was raised Lalmohan Patnaik, as the speaker, desired that English should be used, but Nabakrushna Choudhury demanded that Odia, as the language of the common mass to be used instead of English And his just demand was not only retained, but also sustained even now

Nabakrushna Choudhury could realize for quite some time that, a people-oriented government, had to use Odia as its language for communication and administration Among the various steps taken by him, to make the administration people-oriented, making of Odia, the language of the common people, as the medium of state administration, was one of them As an MLA, Nabakrushna Choudhury used to speak in Odia in the assembly and discuss there in the same language According to him, without making Odia as the official language, the benefit of administrative decentralization will not be fully enjoyed by the public Such a stupendous step, functionalised more than 55 years ahead of this time, was an unimaginable administrative reform During that period, most of the high officials belong to other states It was very difficult on their part to read and write anything in Odia Type writer-machine in Odia was yet to be manufactured for which the practice was to write everything in Odia So, it further added to their misery, which they could not overcome
The non-Odia chief secretary had questioned its legitimacy, citing the example that in other states of India, no regional language was used as official language. It was cited for the impeding inconvenience of correspondence from state government with central government and accountant general's office (Nayak 2001). Moreover, some of the officers were still suffering from the colonial hangover. They raised a question mark on the enthusiastic step of the government to introduce Odia as the official language.

In spite of all those objection/hurdles, Nabakrushna Choudhury was able to pass the related amendment bill in 1952 in this direction. And also, he did not listen to anyone, Odia was the language to be used for administration. An encyclopedia of Odia language was prepared. Many people regarded that it would be impossible to conduct the day-to-day administration in regional language. But they were proved wrong, before the determination of Mr. Choudhury. He registered his comments in Odia in government file on April 23, 1954. But later on, in the same year, “Orissa Official Language Bill” was passed in the state legislative assembly on 14th October 1954. It was felt essential to manufacture Odia type writer to popularize Odia as a medium of state administration. A committee was formed under the presidency of Gajendra Mitra, director of Industry and some other members including Manmohan Choudhury. As per the recommendations of the said committee, Proforma Key Board was prepared and an order was placed to supply Odia type writer before the Remington company, which was the renowned company for this purpose. In the month of October, 1956, Nabakrushna Choudhury resigned from the post of chief minister and left the government. With that, all those initiatives
taken by him in this direction was discontinued. Another half a century was required by the subsequent governments to popularise Odia as the official language.

One of the most important matters was that, Nabakrushna Choudhury placed his first budget in Odia in the legislative assembly on 21st February, 1951. That budget in Odia was not written by ministers but translated by the government employees. Nabakrushna Choudhury’s Odia budget had explained in details, in Odia, the income and expenditure of the government clearly. His seriousness in making Odia as the official language in the administrative history of Orissa is unparalleled (Nayak 2001).

**INITIATIVE FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE STATE**

Prior to Shri Nabakrushna Choudhury’s chief ministership, 25 princely states were merged with Orissa. At that time, there was no industry in the state except a small spinning mill at Choudwar and a glass factory at Barang of the Cuttack district. Orissa was lagging far behind in the field of agriculture, industry, transportation and communication. He could realise the need of rapid industrialisation, agricultural development as well as the infrastructural development, without which, the development of the state would not be possible. During his tenure, Dumduma Hydro Project and Hirakud Multiproject Dam were established. There were resistance and opposition from many quarters. Even some of his own people belonged to that camp. But all were in vain. Nabakrushna Choudhury’s determination saw to it that, the dam was constructed in the schedule time (Nayak 2001 182).

The first cement factory of the state was established at Rajagangapur and the dream of a large-scale steel plant, could be realised with the establishment of the
same at Rourkela Private industrialists were also given government loan When Nabakrushna Choudhury relinquished chief minister’s post, initiations for the establishment of a paper industry at Choudwar, pheromanganese industries at Joda (Keonjhar) and Rayagada (Koraput) had already been taken (Nayak 2001 182)

Till 1950, students were going to other states, for their higher studies in agriculture Nabakrushna Choudhury decided to have an Agriculture University in Orissa which was established in Unit-I, Bhubaneswar in August 1950 After the inauguration of the university, Nabakrushna Choudhury himself accompanied by 32 students and the professor to site for field practical and he himself took active participation in paddy plantation Principal Damodar Mishra, Professor Biswanath Sahoo and G V Chelan were the members of that team In 1955, a college of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry was established at Mangalabag, Cuttack, having student strength of 15, which later on shifted to the campus of Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology Nabakrushna Choudhury was a member of its governing body for many years In 1956, an engineering college was also established at Burla, Sambalpur within a very short span That Burla Engineering College became affiliated to Sambalpur University and subsequently became autonomous later on He also took initiative to establish the Department of Geology of Utkal University with the government and private partnership He also took initiative for establishing a school at Angul, which was meant for Basic Education It was the 1st ever school that was not only famous in Orissa but all over India at that time (Nayak 2001 182)
NABAKRUSHNA CHOUDHURY AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS BASIC EDUCATION

The basic system of education had its origin in Mahatma Gandhi’s view that education meant much more than mere literacy. In ‘Harijan’ of July 1937, Gandhi wrote, “By education I mean as an all-round drawing out of the best child of body, mind and spirit. Literacy in itself is no education. I would, therefore, begin the child’s education by teaching it a useful handicraft and enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training. Thus, every school can be made self-supporting, the condition being that the state, takes over the manufacture of these schools.” (Rath 1977: 103)

Nabakrushna Choudhury, being the true follower of Gandhi, adopted the same path and cherished what Gandhi taught in the matter of Basic Education. The system of “Basic Education” as developed in the 1940’s and as introduced in Orissa since 1947, was practically the identical with the Wardha system of education and the sergeant scheme. It emphasized imparting to boys and girls not only the three R’s (reading, writing and elementary arithmetic) but also sought to develop their aptitude in arts and crafts, using their limbs, as much as their memory, in some form of productive work. As, the Kher committee report of 1938 put it, the Wardha system of education embodied the principle of “education through activity” (Rath 1977: 103)

In 1950-51 there was a controversy in the legislature between the ministry and opposition on the issue of expanding basic education in Orissa. The government
showed more enthusiasm in the programme of extending basic education by increasing the number of basic schools. The number of basic schools in Orissa in 1950-51 was 137 and 9,742 boys and girls were receiving instruction in these schools (Government of Orissa 1950-51). The first five year plan of India published in 1952, recommended that expenditure of resources on primary education should be concentrated as far as possible on the improvement and remodeling of the existing primary schools on the line of basic education. The plan aimed at promoting basic education, at the primary level with a uniform pattern.

Nabakrushna Choudhury, the chief minister of Orissa said on February 21, 1951, in his budget speech, about the spread of basic education that

“Our government have taken up basic education in right earnest and we expect to be able to introduce basic education in all our primary schools in the next four or five years.” The board of basic education has been given authority to control the whole field of primary education, and we have provided some additional funds this year for giving basic education training to the whole inspecting staff in the state” (Government of Orissa 1951).

The Basic Education Act of 1951 was the first step towards the introduction of free, compulsory primary education in the State. The Act defined basic education that basic education means, such a system of education that all-aided educational institutions would be imparted through a productive craft in the local environment in which pupils live, with a view to making it self-supporting and inculcating a true sense of dignity of labour, as shall be recognized by the state government from time to time (Government of Orissa 1951). The Basic Education Act of 1951,
appeared as, the culmination of a five-year programme drawn up by the Orissa Board of Basic Education under the chairmanship of the minister of education. In 1950-51 the total number of pupils in the basic schools of the state, showed an astonishing increase from 1,500 in 1949-50 to about 10,000 in 1950-51. The number of basic institutions had increased steadily every year since 1947. By the end of 1950-51 there were 123 basic schools teaching up to Grade IV, ten up to Grade V, three up to Grade VI, and one full-fledged basic school in Orissa. There was one pre-basic training school and six basic training schools for teachers' training (Rath 1977:107).

The Education report for 1950-51, expressed satisfaction at the increased enrolment in the basic schools and said in spite of manifold difficulties, the new scheme of education has given us during these four years definite results, in the shape of healthy teacher–pupil relationship, workmindedness, fellow-feeling, willingness to take up work and responsibility, rendering of social service, growing tendency of smartness and attempts of intelligent understanding of immediate surroundings on the part of our pupils. The basic educational institutions have continued the attempt to break the barrier that used to exist between the educational institutions and the society. Different kinds of welfare work done by these institutions for societies were such as:

a) arranging medical aid to helpless parents in the village,

b) to undertake social education,

c) to fight untouchability,
d) to clean public roads and unhealthy surroundings,

e) to create sanitary conditions,

f) to make profitable use of refuse in preparing compost manure,

g) to organize religious and national festivals and celebrations,

h) to arrange volunteer corps in places of public gatherings,

i) to arrange entertainment programmes in villages (Govt. of Orissa 1950-51)

However, the government of Orissa declared that it could not modify its educational policy independently of the union government “Whatever educational policy is adopted by the central government where eminent educationists have been involved or have been experimenting on certain basis issues during the last ten years, we have to adopt it”, (said by Lingaraj Panigrahi, the education minister, in June 1957) Thus, the Minister believed that the main purpose of primary education was to make the pupil a good citizen “we have been spending more than a crores of rupees on primary education alone, because, the greatest emphasis has been laid on this primary stage, so that even if we do not produce many educated people, at least we shall have better citizens That is the sole aim and purpose of the basic education, which the government has introduced” (Rath 2001)

Nabakrushna Choudhury became the organizer of basic education for the state of Orissa Basic education means, a lot for him as it was very essential for making people a good citizen and it was also vital for the welfare of the people of the state His thinking and interest in, basic education got a chance to be put into application
THE STEPS TAKEN BY NABAKRUSHNA CHOUDHURY TOWARDS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ‘GRAIN GOLAS’ IN THE PANCHAYAT AREAS

‘Grain Golas’, is a type of cooperative societies, which are a sort of grain bonds (food grain stores) advancing loans in the kind of grains to people, particularly people belonging to scheduled caste and scheduled tribes at time of their need. The scheme of ‘Grain Goals’ originated in Bihar in 1902. They had been functioning satisfactorily in many parts of India, mainly for the benefit of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe people. During the first five year plan, 391 societies were started in the state of Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal (Ratan 303).

The government of Orissa introduced the grain gola (food grain stores) scheme in 1955-56. It was the Nabakrushna Choudhury (chief minister’s) interest to establish “Grain Golas” on the basis of Gram Panchayat Act of 1950-51. According to him, every panchayat in Orissa must have their own grain golas, so that it could help people at the time of scarcity. These grain golas were established in rural areas for giving, at reasonable interest, loan of paddy and ragi to the people (farmers) and also for the people belonging to the backward sections of the society. Due to these grain golas, the farmers were able to get fair price for their product (Mohanty 1994 48).
NABAKRUSHNA CHOUDHURY AND HIS DEVELOPMENTAL PLANNINGS THROUGH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Five Years Plan has been started in India in 1951. Under this plan, village development programmes have been taken up and implemented in the areas of Bhanjanager, Bhadrak, and Junagada blocks of Orissa. Three most efficient officers for the development planning relating to villages were selected by Nabakrushna Choudhury, who had great interest towards this programme. In order to encourage those officers and people engaged in that programme, Nabakrushna Choudhury personally visited those areas and guided them in their work, which inspired the officials as well as the villagers. Under that programme, some government officials were posted in those villages in order to give advice and help at the times of need, they were called as ‘Gram-Sevak’. The name ‘Grama-Sevak’ was given by Nabakrushna Choudhury, though at that time the word ‘SEVAKA’ was taken lowly by the people, as it was regarded as the lowest in the prevailing four-caste system of the society. On this regard, Nabakrushna Choudhury explained to the people that all the government officials and ministers were the servants of the people. According to him, service (seva) occupied the highest place in comparison to any other profession in the society. He always guided those officials, who were engaged in the village community development programmes and advised them to be very familiar with the villagers, so that, they could be able to express their problems and needs freely without any fear and apprehension before them (Nayak 2001).
At that time kendu leaf tree found abundantly in western Orissa, the leaf of which is used to prepare 'bid' a type of cheap, country cigarette trade in Orissa had been almost monopolized by the Gujarati people. These traders used to take leases from the rulers of the kendu leaf producing states of Orissa and whereby, conducted the business in such a way that they could derive maximum profit at the cost of the poor kendu leaf pluckers. Even, the lease granting states often failed to gain a good share of this profit. This system continued more or less even after the merger of the ex-states, the only major difference being the replacement of the erstwhile rulers by the government of Orissa.

Nabakrushna Choudhury during his tenure as the chief minister of Orissa from 1950-56, had a very cordial relationship with one such Gujarati traders of Sambalpur – Mr Babubhai Patel, who was a nationalist. Patel helped him to know the trade secrets of these kendu-leaf traders by which he could very well realize how they were deceiving the poor people and state. Thus, thereafter, he decided to grant the right over kendu leaf business through tenders. This initiative was so successful that in the first year of this new (tender) system, the government got revenue of Rs 90 lakhs, whereas under the lease system, the income was about Rs 30 lakhs (Routray 1986). Thus, without hampering the interest of either the traders or of the poor kendu leaf pluckers, Mr Nabakrushna Choudhury could help in augmenting the state revenue.
Apart from the above developmental activities, Nabakrushna Choudhury also enacted several welfare legislations during his tenure as the chief minister of Orissa from 1952-1956. Such important legislations were:

- Orissa Secondary Education Act of 1953
- Orissa Mining Areas Development Fund Act, 1952
- The Orissa Bhoodan Yagna Act, 1953
- The Orissa Prevention of Gambling Act, 1954
- The Orissa Anchal Sasan Act, 1955
- The Orissa Tenants Relief Act, 1955
- Orissa Shops and Commercial Establishment Act, 1956
- Orissa Prohibition Act of 1956 (Rath, S N 1977 P-42)

The Secondary Education Act of 1953, provides for a Board of Secondary Education “to regulate, control and develop secondary education” in Orissa. The board, headed by the director of public instruction as ex-officio president, was vested with comprehensive powers and various functions. It was made responsible for:

(i) prescribing courses of instruction and text books, (ii) conducting examinations, (iii) making recommendations to government regarding the service and training of teachers, (iv) establishing, regulating or administering new secondary schools or post-basic schools, (v) reorganizing existing institutions, (vi) maintaining co-ordination between primary or basic education and secondary education.
Act enjoined on the board the task of establishing practical coordination between state-owned industrial institutes, vocational institutes, factories or workshops and the secondary school system in the state (Government of Orissa 1958)

With the objective of providing better facilities on health, education, road, electricity and water supply to the mining labourers in Orissa, the Orissa Mining Area Development Fund Act was enacted by the Legislative assembly in 1952. The Act levied a small cess to be collected from the mine-owners, the entire proceeds of which were to constitute a “Development Fund” for the mining areas. The collection of the cess began in 1957, and in the year 1957-58 the income of the state government from mining areas development cess was Rs 37 50 Lakhs. The government planned to spend 95 percent of the total cess collected for opening hospitals and schools, constructions of better roads and provision of sanitary measures and other welfare schemes for the benefit of the people in mining areas (Government of Orissa 1961).

The first significant initiative in land reform in the 1950’s was the ‘Bhoodan’ or land-gift movement, started by Acharya Vinoba Bhave, a noted disciple of Mahatma Gandhi. Vinoba and his followers marched on foot from village, through one state to another, begging voluntary donations of land for distribution among the millions of landless peasants in the country. In order to aid and regularize the land transfers, made through Vinoba and his followers, the government of Orissa enacted the Orissa Bhoodan Yogna Act of 1953 (Rath 1977 87).

The Bhoodan Yogna Movement started by Acharya Vinoba Bhave has already been extended to Orissa and there has been encouraging response from the people.
to the movement. The existing tenancy law in some parts of the state imposed certain restrictions on transfer of land which is likely to hamper donation of land to the yagna. The Bhoodan Yagna Bill is intended to remove these difficulties and to simplify and regulate donation, distribution and management of lands for the purpose of Bhoodan Yagna (The Orissa Gazette Extraordinary 1953 1-8).

The constitution of Anchal Shasan for the purpose of management of the estate was vested in the state. As per the section 15 of the Act, Anchal Shasan shall be a body corporate with perpetual secession and common seal with power to acquire and hold property both movable and immovable, to enter into contract and to see and be sued against, in its corporate name. During the chief ministership of Naba Krishna Choudhury a new innovative attempt was made through the constitution of Anchal Shasan and creation of Anchal fund under the Orissa Estate Abolition Act of 1951. The Anchal Shasan Act of 1955 intended to accord full power to Anchal, a local authority which was at higher level than the gram panchayat, so that representatives of the villagers could have played visible role in the working of the system related to public health, education, agriculture, cottage industries etc.

The Anchal Shasan was designed to be a body corporate having fund raising power, out of land revenue, fees, tolls, leases and taxes. Besides, provision for education fund was made to finance educational programmes of the Shasan. The institutions of Anchal Sabha and Anchal Adhikari were made and it had its own cadre of offices to be paid out of Anchal fund (Government of Orissa 2010).
The Anchal Shasan Act of 1955 was not implemented which prevented Orissa to play a pioneering role in the democratic decentralization process much earlier to the Balwantraí Mehta Committee Report of 1957. The administrative enquiry committee, set up by the government of Orissa in 1956 to report on the feasibility of the Anchal Shasan system, did not favour its introduction, either as an agency for revenue administration or as an instrument of rural development and welfare (Government of Orissa 1958 78-82).

Orissa Tenants’ Relief Act 1955, which was one of the important legislations of that time, said that

“It is expedient for the purpose of improving the economic and social well-being of the actual cultivators of land, to grant them substantial relief in regard to the amount of rent payable by them. The prospect of getting a higher share of the produce would also be an incentive to the tenants to increase crop yields by adopting improved method of agriculture. This relief will however, be temporary till the introduction of comprehensive land reform” (Government of Orissa 1955).

Orissa Tenants’ Relief Act, 1955 came into operation on 21st April 1955, which was of course given a retrospective effect from 1st July 1954. It remained active up to 1965, when the Orissa Land Reform (Amendment) Act came into force. The Act provided for security against eviction, payment of rent to the land owner to be limited to one-fourth of the total produce, a tenant with permanent or heritable right to pay only one-sixth of the value of produce and no collection of any other rent from the tenant by the landlord. Moreover, a small landlord could evict his
tenant provided he would cultivate the land himself The district collector was vested with adjudication of disputes as regards the possession of the land, failure of the tenant to deliver the rent within two months from the due date or his failure to cultivate the land or his use of the land for non-agricultural purpose. It was noticed that in coastal districts, the Act exerted some impact in terms of cases instituted, while in southern and western Orissa, its impact was too marginal (http://chitabhera.com/miscwork/Orissa%201a)

The Orissa Shops and Commercial Establishment Act of 1956 was introduced in September 1956 in the Orissa legislative assembly and finally passed in October 1956 and became a law in December 1956, on receiving the assent of the president (Legislative Assembly proceedings, Vol VIII, Pt II, No 55, PP 43-49). This Act defined a ‘shop’ to mean any premises where services were rendered to customers. The term ‘shops’ included in its meaning offices, store-rooms, godowns and warehouses used for trade purposes. The term commercial establishment included in its meaning an establishment engaged in commerce, trade, banking, insurance or was engaged in some office work. For the benefit of workers and employees, the Act prescribed a nine-hour day, subject to a maximum total of 48 hours per week. The Act also fixed the rate of payment for overtime work at double of the ordinary rate of wages drawn by a worker. Special provisions were also made in this Act of 1956 for extending security to the women employees, provided she had been in continuous employment for six months proceeding the date on which she gave notice of confinement. In respect of child and female labour, the shops and commercial establishments Act extended the principles of the Factory Laws (Rath 1977)
It was now made unlawful for shops and establishments to employ any women employee for night duty, to any woman, or any child below 15 years of age. The chief inspectors were appointed under the Act, in order to keep a cat’s eye upon this. Contravention of the provisions of the Shops Act was an offence punishable with a fine of Rs 250 for the first offence and a fine of Rs 500 for second or subsequent offences. Finally, the Shops Act empowered the state government to make rules for implementing the Act and to provide “in respect of the health, safety and welfare of the employees” (Government of Orissa 1958).

The Orissa Maternity Benefit Act of 1953 was also one of the important legislation of that time, which was passed by the legislative assembly on September 29, 1953. It provided for compulsory rest for a woman worker in the period of her confinement, prior to and after delivery. The maximum duration of the period for which maternity benefit could be claimed was seven weeks, three weeks up to and including the day of confinement, and four weeks following the date of confinement. A woman worker was entitled to maternity benefit at a rate equal to the rate of wage or salary paid to her, subject to a minimum of twelve annas a year. Employers were forbidden not to employ a woman in any factory, during four weeks immediately following the date of her recent confinement. Under this Act, an employer is required to pay a woman employee, on production of proof of confinement, maternity benefit up to and including the day of confinement. The amount due for the subsequent period shall be punctually paid each fortnight in arrear. In case a woman employee entitled to maternity benefit, dies in course of her confinement, her nominee would be paid the amount. Contravention of any of the provisions of the Act was an offence.
punishable with a fine, not less than two hundred and fifty rupees
(Government of Orissa 1958)

From the above discussion, it came to the light that the painstaking role played by Sri Nabakrushna Choudhury during his tenure as the revenue and civil supplies minister and also as the chief minister to implement some of his ideas which were essential for the development of society and for the people. Thus, he worked harder and harder in his official capacity for the cause of social development and continued the same mission also when he was out of power.
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235


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