

# From Orissa to Odisha

**"Of all countries India is the best  
And of all states, Odisha"**

**- Kapila Samhita**

**ODISHA**, the most captivating region of India, is often referred as an attractive treasure house of cultures and customs, religions and traditions, languages and literature, art and architecture, scenic beauties and wildlife. Exquisite temples and historic monuments, abundant greenery, virgin beaches, serpentine rivers, mighty waterfalls, forest-clad blue hills of the Eastern Ghats with rich wild life, makes Odisha an unforgettable destination of India. Visitors to the state feel the bounty and strive always to return for more. The land, while retaining its pristine glory in all its hues, offers the most modern amenities in tune with its great tradition of hospitality.

A visual feast of colours, values and varieties, a cultural journey into one of the oldest civilizations in the world, Odisha promises wonderful experience.

## **PEOPLE OF ODISHA :**

Odisha accounts for 3.47 per cent of the total population of country. The population density of the state is 269 as against the national average of 382 per sq.km. The sex ratio (Females per one thousand Males) of the state encouragingly stands at 978 against the national ratio of 940. However, urban sex ratio in Odisha remains lower at 934 as against the rural ratio of 988. The total decadal growth as per 2011 census is 13.97 per cent while 2001 census reflected it at 16.25 per cent.

**LITERACY :** Literacy in Odisha has increased from 63.08 in 2001 to 73.45 in 2011 census. The female literacy rate stands at 64.36 whereas the male literacy rate is 82.40.

## **LANGUAGE :**

Proven facts of 2500 years testify the glory and opulence of Odia language. It is one of the oldest languages in the country having Sanskrit origin and is spoken by about 84% of the people of the state and its outlying tracts. Odia became the first language from Indo-Aryan linguistic group, the sixth classical language of India. Although Odia is the

official language of the State, English, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali and Telugu are widely understood and spoken as well. Odisha may be described as a polyglot state without any instance of linguistic intolerance.

### **FROM ORISSA TO ODISHA, ORIYA TO ODISIA**

According to the historians the name of Odisha has been derived from the word “Odra” or “Udra”. The then 'Udradesh' which was flourishing in every sphere, through the passing of time, it came under the colonial rule with its name changed to Orissa. It is needless to mention here that the people of Odisha are intimately and emotionally attached to the pattern of writing and utterance of the name of the State. Every name has a meaning and glorious history behind it. Only for the sake of uttering it to their convenience, the British India Government changed the name of the State and its language. At that point of time the Odisha province was scattered. Some illustrious sons of the soil tried to unite the dismembered tracts of the state and to form the State on the basis of language. With the consistent efforts and sacrifices of some towering personalities, at last, on 1<sup>st</sup> April of 1936, the dream of the people of the state became a reality and it was accorded the status of a State. It is the 1<sup>st</sup> State in the country to be formed on the basis of language. But since then the people of this province were unhappy with the pattern of writing and pronunciation of the name of the state and its language.

Time rolled on. Unfortunately this predicament continued despite emotional intimacy of the people to their state and their language. The Naveen Patnaik's Government pragmatically approached the issue and an all-party meeting was convened to discuss regarding the change of the name of the State. It was unanimously decided to change the name of the state from **Orissa to Odisha** and its language from **Oriya to Odia**. After a prolonged deliberation in the Orissa Legislative Assembly, a unanimous resolution to this effect was passed in the year 2008 which later received the nod of both the houses of the Parliament in 2010. On 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2011, Rajya Sabha passed the Bill to change the name of our State from Orissa to Odisha amending the Constitution to rename our language as Odia. On 1<sup>st</sup> of November, 2011, the Government of India came out with the Gazette Notification on the passing of the Orissa (Alteration of name) Bill, 2010 and the Constitution mentioned that the change of names came into effect from the *1<sup>st</sup> of November 2011*. Hon'ble Chief Minister expressed his gratitude to Hon'ble President of India for according assent and congratulated the people of Odisha for such an historic achievement. This is a milestone both in terms of enthusiasm and retaining the historic value of the State. The people of Odisha finally retained their true identity. This passage of time ushering such a change will perennially be inscribed in golden letters in the annals of the History of Odisha.

From Orissa to 'Odisha', and Oriya to 'Odia', it has been a memorable historic journey, taking the people of Odisha back to their basics, something which they all along emotionally and intimately cherished.