

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF ODISHA, KORAPUT

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS

Press Release, Date: 03.10.2020

CUO Celebrates Gandhi Jayanti

As part of the CUO Celebrations of 150 years of Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, floral tributes were paid with prayers and an International Webinar was organized on the auspicious occasion of Gandhi Jayanti on 2 October. 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat' is the new mantra of economic and social revival of the country, especially in view of the growing menace of the COVID pandemic. Towards achieving the objectives of 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat' even while continuing to consolidate international trade, diplomacy and bilateral agreements, the Ministry of Education and the University Grants Commission have been encouraging the Central Universities to forge linkages with institutions of higher learning worldwide. It is in this context that the CUO has arranged a Webinar with Lord Bhikhu Parekh, Member of Parliament, House of Lords representing the Labour Party, UK and Padma Vibhushan Awardee. Lord Parekh emphasised on spirituality and way of life and said that "in the Mahatma's thinking spirituality underlies and illuminates his political views. Likewise, in his life too, his spirituality leads to his political values. Both aspects are critical: one won't do."

He went on to say that Mahatma was influenced by Thoreau on civil disobedience; that whatever the government does, we are responsible for it. Gandhiji developed his critique of the state: that it is not an abstract entity; it is made of people. India is its people. The interest of a state means the interest of its people. Whatever the state does is done on behalf of and in the interest of its people.

His message to the youth was "Never go away from the eternal values: truth, non-violence, and the notion that property does not belong to me, I am merely a trustee of it. These are very important values and they will remain eternal. Gandhi forged the instrument of Satyagraha out of them. When differences crop up when one needs to fight against injustice, how should one give the fight? The fight has to be just one. Rational discussion is not sufficient; violence is not acceptable. Then what shall one do? Gandhi's answer was Satyagraha".

Prof. Parekh, who taught at the London School of Economics and headed the Academy of 'Learned Societies in Social Sciences' as a Fellow, called for translating Gandhiji's dream of 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat' into reality. He was conferred with Padma Bhushan by the Govt. of India for his international contributions to the growth of Public Policy as an instrument of change. He said Gandhiji laid the foundation of 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant India) in Sevagram and it was now the duty of every citizen to turn his dream into reality nationwide. Gandhiji, an icon of the world was more relevant than ever today, was his firm belief. Mahatma Gandhi envisioned an 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat' where every village is self-reliant, he said.

He reiterated that Mahatma Gandhiji used to say his life is his message and he never tried to influence with his life but his life became an inspiration for others and he believed in "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (the world is one family) and showed a dynamic path to the nation through Satya (truth), Ahimsa (non-violence), Satyagraha. The Vice Chancellor of CUO, Prof. I. Ramabrahmam thanked him profusely and requested Lord Parekh to create a Chair in 'Political Science and Public Policy'. He gave away prizes to the students who had participated in the Essay Writing and Film Exhibition related competitions relating to Gandhiji's life and living.

Dr. Phagunath Bhoi, Public Relation Officer