

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF ODISHA, KORAPUT

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Central University of Odisha celebrates 74th Republic Day, Vasant Panchami, *Vriksha Ropana* and *Kanya Pujana*

The 74th Republic Day was celebrated at the Central University of Odisha at its Sunabeda Campus. Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor of the University Prof. Chakradhar Tripathi hoisted the tricolor in the Campus. Speaking on the occasion Prof. Tripathy urged the audience to remember the sacrifice made by the freedom fighters in bringing independence to the nation as well as making the Constitution. He said "India was once rich in knowledge and cultural ethos. But gradually we were misguided by external forces and it's now time to awake and work for the progress of the nation". He denounced the era of competition and rivalry going on the society due to the impact of western world. He urged the students to avoid negative competition among them to make progress. One should compete with himself, not with others, he said. Self competition makes you grow, which ultimately leads to the national development. Inertia is the problem with the society now a days. The youth should overcome the problem with self introspection. He also hoped that the National Education Policy 2020 will be helpful in building the development of the youth which includes physical, mental and spiritual development, he said. The Vice-Chancellor gave away the prizes to the winners of extempore speech competition organized on the occasion of Vigilance Awareness Week 2022.

In the second half, the *Vriksha Ropana* and *Kanya Pujana* functions were conducted in the Campus. The *Vriksha Ropana* ceremony started with grand procession from the academic block of the main campus to Boys Hostel. This rally was led by Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor of the University Prof. Charkradhar Tripathi. More than 500 participant including young students from Saraswati Shishu Mandir, Sunabeda, faculty, staffs and student of the varsity participated in the procession. Prof. Tripathi and Buddhist Monk Rev. Dr. Wadingala Pannaloka from University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, along with eminent dignitaries planted *Bodhi* (peepal tree) and *Bata* (banyan tree) plant in the University campus near boys' hostel with *Vedic* Chanting to instill the spirit of wisdom in the campus. By planting more trees, the University will contribute to global reforestation efforts, restoring lost forests, repairing damaged ecosystems and mitigating climate changes. Tree plantation initiatives in educational institutions inculcate a healthy culture and teach students learn to co-exist with nature and help build a green planet.

The next programme was *Kanya Pujana* where Prof. Tripathi offered prayers to the Siddhidatri, the 9th avatar of Goddess Durga. Under *Kanya Pujana*, nine girls under nine years of age were worshipped with Hawan and Chnating Shloka symbolizing the nine avatar of Maa Durga. The choice of the girls was done in a manner to inculcate the spirit of inclusiveness in the University fraternity and society as a whole. The Vice-Chancellor also worshipped Maa Durga, Laxmi and Maa Saraswati for the happiness, wealth and prosperity of the University and people of the region. A *hawan* or *yajna* was performed under the guidance of Hindu & Buddhist priests. *Kanya Pujana* is a step taken by CUO to establish the importance of women in society. The nine little girls were worshipped by Prof Chakradhar Tripathi, Vice-Chancellor, CUO; Dr A K Das, Registrar, CUO; Rev. Dr. Wadingala Pannaloka from University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka; Prof. Patanjali Mishra from Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi; Prof. N. C. Panda, Professor of Sanskrit, CUO; Mr. Chakraborty, G.M (HAL, Sunabeda), Shri Krishna Singh, eminent social thinker, Dr. Bijaya Nabda Pradhan, Asst. Librarian and Dr. Sourav Gupta, Nodal Officer, Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat.

Eminent dignitaries of international repute participated in the programme which was the maiden programme of its nature in the region. The guests included Rev. Dr. Wadingala Pannaloka from University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, Prof. Patanjali Mishra from Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Prof. Krushna Chandra Biswal, Principal, SLN Medical College & Hospital, Koraput; Mr. Bruno A, Commandant CRPF, Koraput; Dr. Mani Kr Jha from Kedarghat, Varanasi, Mr. Ram Prasad Chakraborty, G.M (HAL, Sunabeda), Shri Krishna Singh, eminent social worker from Semiliguda and Madam Vice-Chancellor Dr. Basant Manjari Kar and eminent dignitaries of Koraput.

Dr. Wadingala Pannaloka from University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka thanked the University for inviting him and also said that he love Indian culture and social value. He also said that cultural and traditional things should be practised with academics. Hon'ble VC CUO thanked the audience and staff for organising such beautiful spending program, he thanked all the dignitaries for the being the part of this programme. He said that "In our country ladies are very honored in the civilized society so this type of *Kanya Pujana* practices and rituals should be practised. He also said that education without cultural values is not complete and a cultural value makes man perfect.

The event was held under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat scheme, a flagship programme of Ministry of Education, Government of India and coordinated by Dr. Phagunath Bhoi, Public Relations Officer, CUO & Dr. Kakoli Banerjee, Convener, Cultural Committee supported by a team of Faculty & Staff. Faculty, staff and students in huge number gathered at the event with enthusiasm.

Dr. Phagunath Bhoi, Public Relations Officer