

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF ODISHA, KORAPUT

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CUO felicitates six women including two blind women on the occasion of International Women's Day 2023

Nari Shakti Rashtra Shakti Hai : Prof. Chakradhar Tripathi, VC, CUO

The Central University of Odisha Koraput felicitated six working women from several strata of society for their outstanding contribution in their respective fields including two blind women on 10.03.2023 on the occasion of International Women's Day 2023. Prof. Chakradhar Tripathi, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of the University felicitated them in presence of the University community. They were outstanding social activists Ms. Basanti Behera, Village-Parajangi, Dhenkanal & Ms. B Rojalin, Village Balugaon, Khurda from Welfare of Blind Organization, Jajapur for their outstanding contribution for devoting themselves to the welfare and empowerment of blind persons; Dr. Rudrani Mohanty, outstanding women educationist, for her dedication towards the welfare of students and empowerment of women; Ms. Bijayalaxmi Takri, a security guard of Girls Hostel of the University for her outstanding contribution and dedication for safety and security of the Hostel boarders; Ms. B. Swarnamala, Caretaker, Girls Hostel for her devotion towards the welfare of the girls' students and Ms. Laxmi Khilli, Sweeper for her outstanding contribution towards cleanliness of the campus felicitated on this occasion. The Vice-Chancellor also financially supported the 11 blind students of the organization Welfare of Blind as a token of love.

The programme was organized in the University campus at Sunabeda by the Internal Complaints Committee of the CUO on the theme '*DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality*'. Mrs. RekhaLohani, IPS, IG, Modernization, BPR&D, attended virtually as the Chief Speaker and delivered a lecture on the subject. Ms. Rajashri Das, District Child Protection Officer, Koraput and Prof. Sudhendu Mandal, Advisor, Academics & Administration, CUO attended as the Special Guests on this occasion. Prof. Chakradhar Tripathi, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor inaugurated the programme and delivered the inaugural address. Dr. Kakoli Banerjee, Assistant Professor & Presiding Officer, ICC, CUO and the Coordinator of the programme, delivered the welcome address.

Dr. Banerjee described the concept and significance of International Women's Day by tracing its history & development. She also elaborated on *DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality* which is the theme of the IWD 2023.

Prof. Chakradhar Tripathi, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, CUO in his inaugural address elaborated on the Indian concept of womanhood and how women are perceived in our country. Prof. Tripathi emphasized that in India, women had the right to choose their life partner from a very early stage through *Swayamvar*. Women of India are virtuous and they uphold their dignity through sincerely discharging their duty towards their husbands, family, son & daughter and society as well. They imbibe the qualities of *tyag*, *sahas* and *panditya*. Prof. Tripathi mentioned the Indian spiritual heritage of *Tantra Upasana* where women are held as *Shakti* or the genesis of power. He also lamented that negative thoughts and practices of the west have crept into Indian society through popular culture and women-related crime is on the rise and stressed that we should not ape the west. He emphasized that the present and future of India lies in the hands of modern women. He concluded with a slogan, *Nari Shakti Rashtra Shakti Hai*.

Mrs. Rekha Lohani, IPS, IG, Modernization, BPR&D, who was the Chief Speaker, in his virtual address, said that the main purpose of International Women's Day is to take stock of the situation of women in our country as most women today are not getting the adequate opportunity for education and employment due to various social obstacles. She traced her own personal journey and struggle and narrated how she prepared herself to fulfill her dreams. She described the various steps and measures taken by the Police Department to support women in distress. In this context, she mentioned *Mahila & Sishu Desk*, *One Stop Centre*, *Sampark Helpline*, *Kavach Hackathon*, etc. Elaborating on the theme of IWD 2023, she said that women's access to the digital world is limited and women have to adapt, embrace and conquer it for better equity. He lamented that women do not have freedom of financial planning and they should enable & train themselves to be competent. In this context, she mentioned the names of successful women like Mrs. Draupadi Murmu, Dutee Chand and Hima Das.

Ms. Rajashri Das, District Child Protection Officer, Koraput, who was the Special Guest, described how women are undergoing various kinds of exploitation and violence every day and explained the various problems of women in society. She described the legislative provisions in our country for women like Domestic Violence Act, Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act, Immoral Trafficking Act, etc. She also described the various facilities available for women in distress like Ujala Home, Sudha Home, Domestic Information Report, District Legal Service Authority, Cyber Police Station, Helpline numbers, Childline numbers, Integrated Unity of Crime against Women, etc.

Prof. Sudhendu Mandal, Advisor, Academics & Administration, CUO, in his speech as a distinguished guest traced the history of women in science in India. Prof. Mandal described the achievements and contributions of women scientists who worked under difficult situations and challenges. He mentioned Kadambini Ganguly, the first lady doctor of India who also did inter-caste marriage, Asima Chatterjee who researched natural & synthetic chemistry and contributed to the preparation of medicines and Kamala Ranadive who researched on Tissue Culture and contributed to cancer treatment. Prof. Mandal mentioned about Chandramukhi Bose, the first lady graduate of India from the University of Calcutta. He recollected the contribution of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the only lady Prime Minister of India in setting up Universities and Science & Technology. He also recollected the contribution of Maa Sarada, wife of Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, to spiritual life. Prof. Mandal mentioned that women have traditionally contributed to knowledge, education and public administration and it is great pride that Mrs. Draupadi Murmu, an Odia woman is currently dawning the position of the President of India.

Prof. Jang Bahadur Pandey, Visiting Professor of the Dept. of Hindi highlighted different important roles of women in our society. He described women are the symbol of power, prayer, peace and prosperity in his address.

A beautiful cultural programme followed where girl students of the University performed songs and dance. The event concluded with a formal vote of thanks which was proposed by Dr. Rudrani Mohanty, Member, ICC. The programme was widely attended by students, research scholars, faculty members and staff of the University.

Dr. Phagunath Bhoi, Public Relations Officer