

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF ODISHA, KORAPUT

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS

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CUO Celebrates Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das' Birth Anniversary

The Central University of Odisha (CUO) commemorated the birth anniversary of Utkalmani Pandit Gopabandhu Das on 09 October 2024, as part of the "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat" initiative, a flagship program of the Ministry of Education, Government of India. On this occasion a webinar was organised where Prof. Basanta Kumar Panda, Director of the Centre for Excellence for Studies in Classical Odia, Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore delivered the Keynote address. Prof. Chakradhar Tripathi, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor of CUO, presided over the session, while Dr. Sourav Gupta, Nodal Officer of the EBSB program, welcomed the participants and elaborated on the initiative's significance. Dr. Rudrani Mohanty, Associate Professor (Retd.), recited verses from Gopabandhu Das' *Dharmapada*.

In his keynote, Prof. Panda highlighted Gopabandhu Das' contributions to education and literature, emphasizing his advocacy for universal education and women's education, and his efforts in promoting education in the mother tongue. He also described how Gopabandhu Das, an ardent follower of Mahatma Gandhi, founded the Satyavadi School, where he implemented his educational ideals. Prof. Panda noted that Gopabandhu's literary talents, evident from a young age, were further honed during his imprisonment for patriotic activities. His notable works, including *Bandira Atmakatha* and *Dharmapada*, contributed significantly to Odia literature, and his lively prose, described as *Pranabanta Gadya*, was highly praised by contemporaries like Pandit Nilakantha. Despite his early death, Prof. Panda lamented, Gopabandhu Das remains one of India's foremost educational philosophers and literary figures, comparable to Tagore and Aurobindo.

In his presidential address, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Chakradhar Tripathi urged the younger generation to uphold the ideals of national leaders like Gopabandhu Das. He emphasized the need to overcome the colonial legacy that promoted Western ideals over India's cultural ethos. Prof. Tripathi called for a deeper understanding of Indian knowledge traditions, including *Adhyatmikata*, *Ekatma Darshan*, and *Advaita Darshan*, and encouraged students and faculty to apply Gopabandhu's service ideals both within the university and in society. He stressed the importance of addressing issues like illiteracy and promoting natural farming as part of the broader vision of making India a global leader by 2047, as envisioned by the Prime Minister.

Prof. Sharat Kumar Palita, Dean of SBCNR, also delivered a tribute to Gopabandhu Das. The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Ganesh Prasad Sahu, Assistant Professor of DOLL. Prof Bharat Kumar Panda, HOD, Dept. of Education; Dr P C Mishra, HOD, Dept. of Business Management; Dr Ramendra Kumar Parhi, DSW; Dr G S Walia, HOD, Dept. of Statistics; Dr Kakoli Banerjee, HOD, Dept. of Forestry, Dr Minati Sahoo, HOD, Dept. of Economics, Dr Phagunath Bhoi, Public Relations Officer were present in the webinar. It was well attended by Faculty, students and staff.

Dr. Phagunath Bhoi, Public Relations Officer