

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF ODISHA, KORAPUT

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Central University of Odisha Launches Indigenous Crop Germplasm Conservation Plot

In a significant step toward preserving traditional agricultural biodiversity, the Central University of Odisha inaugurated an Indigenous Crop Germplasm plot at its City Campus in Landiguda, Koraput on 13 November 2024. Prof. Chakradhar Tripathi, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, led the inauguration, alongside were Prof. Vibhash Chandra Jha, Advisor-Administration & Academics; Prof. Sharat Kumar Palita, Dean, School of Biodiversity & Conservation of Natural Resources; Prof. Jatin Soni, former Vice-Chancellor, Swarnim Gujarat Sports University; Shri Madhumoy Nath, All India Joint Organising Secretary, Kreedha Bharati and Dr. Debabrata Panda, the Principal Investigator of the Project, who take initiative for this Germplasm conservation plot.

The germplasm plot is dedicated to conserving 104 varieties of indigenous rice, 87 types of finger millet, 30 varieties of local niger, 15 varieties of little millet, five varieties of foxtail millet, 15 types of maize, and eight species of wild yam. These crops, integral to India's agrarian heritage, will be studied for conservation and potential reintroduction to mainstream agriculture.

At the inauguration, Prof. Tripathi highlighted the urgent need to revive traditional crops, which are being overshadowed by modern, non-native varieties. "Our traditional farming practices are intertwined with our cultural heritage. Preserving these crops is essential not only for food security but for promoting health and sustainability," he stated, expressing hope that the university would emerge as a leading institution in this field.

Prof. Palita underscored the importance of bridging scientific research and practical application through a "lab-to-land" approach. Meanwhile, Shri Madhumoy emphasized the role of traditional crops in supporting environmental sustainability. Prof. Jha also emphasised on the use of modern technology in the traditional farming.

The event was coordinated by Dr. Debabrata Panda and Dr. Kakoli Banerjee of BCNR, with attendance from distinguished faculty, scholars, students, and staff, including Dr. Kapila Khemundu, Dr. Nikhil Gouda, Dr. Jayanta Nayak, Dr. Pradosh Kumar Rath, Dr. B.K.Srinivas, Dr. Prasenjeet Sinha, Mr. Sumit Kumar Behera and Dr. Phagunath Bhoi, Public Relations Officer of the University.

This initiative by the Central University of Odisha marks a dedicated effort to safeguard indigenous crop diversity, enriching research and development in traditional agriculture while championing environmental sustainability and cultural preservation.

Dr. Phagunath Bhoi, Public Relations Officer