

## **Vice Chancellor's Report on Occasion of 46th Convocation of Utkal University, February 21, 2015**

**His Excellency Dr. S.C. Jamir**, Hon'ble Governor of Odisha and  
Chancellor, Utkal University

Honorable Chief Justice of Odisha High Court, Mr. Justice Amitava  
Roy, Chief Guest of the 46<sup>th</sup> Convocation of Utkal University

Distinguished Recipients of the Degree of Honoris Causa

Distinguished invitees and Dignitaries

Registrar Dr. Sushanta Das

Director of Higher Education Prof. Nihar Ranjan Patnaik

Members of Syndicate, Senate and the Academic Council,

Recipients of Degrees, Diplomas and Medals

Members of Faculty, University Officials and Dear Students

Members of the Print and Electronic Media

On behalf of the entire University Fraternity of the Utkal University and on my own behalf, I have the Honour of Welcoming Honourable Chief Justice of Odisha High Court Shri Amitava Roy as the Chief Guest of today's function and His Excellency S.J. Dr. S.C. Jamir, Hon'ble Governor of Odisha and Chancellor, Utkal University to the 46<sup>th</sup> Convocation . Mr. Justice Honorable HL Dattu, Honorable Chief Justice of India, who was supposed to attend this convocation as Chief Guest is unfortunately indisposed and could not come. He has been kind enough to send his address and requested Honorable Chief Justice of Odisha, Mr. Justice Amitava Roy to deliver the Convocation address. The honorable Chief Justice of Odisha has very kindly agreed to be the Chief Guest and Present the Convocation address to this august gathering. I am extremely grateful to him for this gesture. In present day India, Judiciary is undoubtedly the best role model that our youth can emulate. Therefore, We are fortunate to listen to the thoughts of the highest in Judiciary. On behalf of Utkal University we thank the honorable Chief Justices

for their kindness and pray to God to strengthen their hands for doing what is right and honorable for our nation.

His Excellency Dr. SC Jamir, honourable Chancellor of Utkal University is a rare statesman and visionary. It has been his inspiration, guidance, support and benevolent facilitation that has put the Utkal University on a growth curve moving slowly but steadily towards its earlier position of eminence in the arena of Higher Education. I wholeheartedly welcome his Excellency to the 46th convocation and express my heartfelt thanks to him

I also take this opportunity to welcome our extremely distinguished recipients of the degrees of *Honoris Causa*. Coincidentally, they all were students of Utkal University during their formative years and today, by the sheer quality of their existence, have attained great eminence in their spheres by contributing positively to the betterment of humanity at large. In honoring them, we will honor the concept of our University. I also welcome all recipients of degree, diploma and medals. My personal welcome to all invitees, students, members of print and electronic media and members of the Utkal University Family.

This Premier University of Odisha, founded on 27<sup>th</sup> November, 1943 under an act of Odisha Legislative Assembly embodies the aspiration of the people of Odisha. The history of Utkal University starting from old Ravenshaw college to the Vanivihar campus is the history of Higher Education in Odisha for its poor but extremely talented young students. As we initiate the 46th convocation, we remember with gratitude the vision of our founding fathers like Maharaja Krushna Chandra Gajapati, the first prime minister of the state, Shri Biswanath Das, the second prime minister, Pandit Nilakantha Das the speaker of legislative assembly and Pandit Godavarish Mishra, the minister of Education and many others. This is the vision that has produced so many luminaries over last 7 decades that have done the University proud. Today, we are firmly resolved to carry forward this tradition of excellence.

In this context, it is a pleasure and honor for me to present before you a brief report on the University for the last academic year.

1. Utkal University, during the last few years, have been beset with problems of dilapidated infrastructure in student's hostels, academic blocks, administrative blocks, Library, guest house and other student facilities. There has been acute shortage of teaching and non teaching staff where the university has been operating at about 40% of its sanctioned strength. Student and staff facilities like health care, canteen, campus security etc. have been poor. However, the last year has seen remarkable improvement in this scenario. After a very long time, the campus saw smooth and peaceful conduct of student' union election with record voting by students.

### **Infrastructure improvement :**

2. The University received a grant from Government of Odisha for effecting large scale repairs to the twelve student hostels. The work has been initiated through the works department, Government of Odisha and the repair, though slow, is making steady progress.
3. In order to secure the campus from encroachment and undesired elements, work has been initiated for complete repair and strengthening of the boundary wall surrounding the campus.
4. The University guest house has been renovated and opened for guests of the University.
5. Urgent repair of academic blocks like physics, psychology, political science and the administrative block against rainwater seepage was carried out.
6. Emergency repairs were carried out for the vanivihar high school.
7. Massive Cleaning of Bushes and shrubs (Swachhata Abhiyan) were carried out in collaboration with NSS cadets, Sampark, an NGO, CRPF Jawans and members of Vanivihar community.
8. The university has received funding from the state government towards construction of two new girls hostel to accommodate about 500 girls together and one boys hostel to accommodate about 300 boys. Work has been initiated.
9. The university has received financial sanctions from the state government for a new sociological study block, a language block and to build a digital annex to the Parija Library. The construction is to start shortly. A UGC sanctioned convention hall will also be initiated.

10. The major attempt during next 12 months will be focused on completing the already initiated work. It is also proposed to complete the academic staff college and take up repairs of academic blocks, administrative blocks and staff quarters.

### **Academic and Research Achievements :**

1. For the first time amongst state universities in Odisha, the Utkal University has introduced the first phase of the choice based credit system at the post graduate level. Steps are being urgently initiated for introduction of Choice based credit system at undergraduate level in all affiliated colleges. Structure and content of new revised curriculum in line with CBCS has been designed and is being planned to be introduced during this year.
2. The first phase of faculty recruitment has been initiated and about twenty one new faculties have joined in various departments. I am hopeful of completing the faculty recruitment during the coming year.
3. Student's seminar forms an important part of the intellectual development and continuous assessment of students. All the Post graduate departments conducted student's seminar as a matter of curriculum. A number of national seminars and meetings have been organised. A few are mentioned below as examples.
  - a. Industrialization and Economics Reforms in India
  - b. Exploration in lower Mahanadi Valley
  - c. Indian Anthropology Congress (February 2015)
  - d. Skeletal Remains from Bamg near Harirajpur
  - e. Refresher course in New Media
  - f. Seminar on Publishing and Editing
  - g. Seminar on Geosciences for mineral development and environmental challenges
  - h. Seminar on Human Right Issues
  - i. Refresher's course on law and Governanace
  - j. Sanskrit Poet Conference
  - k. Seminar on Development and Social Exclusion,
  - l. Refresher course on Gender and Development
  - m. Seminar and Gender Sensitization
  - n. Seminar on Agribusiness held during November 2014

- o. All India Commerce Conference in collaboration with KIIT
4. In addition, our faculty have participated and presented papers at a number of international and national forums, reviewed projects, assisted UGC in accreditation process and executed assignments/projects with 14th finance commission, TERI, ASI and other national funding agencies.
  5. A number of national and international dignitaries visited the university and delivered seminars. The Geology Department organized the first INSPIRE internship science camp for 150 students of Odisha.
  6. The Psychology Department conducted a training programme for the police personnel of Bhubaneswar. The Department also has completed a project funded by OXFAM titled Life and Learning of Children in Tribal School Hostels in Orissa.
  7. The Academic Staff College has conducted 12 refresher courses, 4 short term courses, 2 Orientation Program and one Summer course as well as one winter course during the year.
  8. The Centre for Ambedkar Studies has completed ICSSR sponsored research project on educational status of the Schedule Castes of Orissa attainments and challenges.
  9. A large number of papers have been published in national and international journals during this period. Departments which are part of SAP and DRS have entered the next phase of the program and are executing their programs. Apart from these, the Physics Department joined the prestigious National Collaboration INO (India Based Neutrino Observatory). The Botany, Zoology and Biotechnology Departments made significant research contributions in the field of bio remediation of heavy metal impurity, anticancer research, plant based photochemistry etc.
  10. This year College Development Council has been constituted with 30 members for improvement of all affiliated colleges under this university. The University has also created AISHE Cell to manage and maintain all the information of all affiliated colleges and P.G. Departments of this university and transfer the same as per requirements of UGC, MHRD, etc.
  11. Principals' conference of all autonomous college was held on 19.10.2014 regarding quality of education system, utilization of grant development of

common curriculum and uniform examination pattern.

12. Internal Quality Assessment Cell (IQAC) has been Constituted to continuously monitor and assess the quality benchmarks in various aspects of the teaching learning framework of the university. The Letter of Intent (LOI) for NAAC accreditation has been submitted.

### **Learning Tools and Student Facilities:**

1. A New Digital Library Annex to the Parija Library is being built. Plans and drawings are now available. It will be PH enabled.
2. The Pranakrushna Parija library will be digitized. This will include digitization of manuscripts.
3. A central Instrumentation Centre has been proposed and sanctioned by the State Government. It will consist of a civil structure and number of state of art equipment that will help in advanced scientific research.
4. It is planned to set up a High Performance Computing Facility for high end research, WI FI communication and surveillance system in the campus
5. It is planned to Upgrade University health centre and introduction of student mediclaim at affordable cost
6. It is planned to Upgrade central canteen/cafeteria in the campus
7. It is planned to Upgrade sports and fitness facilities in the campus
8. We have had good placement record for students in courses like MBA in Agri Management (95%), Masters in Finance and control (70%), Integrated Masters program in Computer Applications (50%).
9. We have submitted various projects to funding agencies and government related to incubation centre and entrepreneurship training, waste management, rural vocational training centre etc. They will enrich the research environment in the university.

### **Revitalizing Administration**

Building a responsive administration is the first step towards building an excellent university. Efforts have been initiated towards Computerizing administration and accounts, improving campus securities, approaching the government towards releasing non teaching posts and putting in place a strong and sustainable alumni

program. These are essential steps towards preparing for NAAC accreditation process

In summary, I would expect the University, over a period of next 3-5 years, with its affiliated colleges and departments, to go up in all indices of measurement of University Development scale and acquire a distinct character. This includes establishing quantitative benchmarks for teaching quality and laboratories in PG departments and constituent Colleges, upgradation and installation of state of art learning tools for all class of students, engaging the students in constructive activities by providing basic amenities and make a campus that all of us can be proud of.

Friends, the scenario in higher education is ever dynamic and with advent of e-learning its character is changing worldwide. To stand up and be counted as the premier state university of Odisha, we also must be responsive, inclusive and change in tune with the society at large. The key to development is a peaceful campus with all our energies focused on students. I hope that with synergy amongst all stake holders, this will be achieved.

I again take this opportunity to thank our Chancellor, His Excellency, the Governor of Odisha, Our Chief Guest today, Honourable Chief Justice and all of you for being here.

**Jai Hind, Bande Utkal Janani**