

THE SIXTH
CONVOCATION
28th February, 2018

Address of the Vice-Chancellor
Prof. Kamal Kant Misra



UTKAL UNIVERSITY OF CULTURE
BHUBANESWAR



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VICE-CHANCELLOR**

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The Hon'ble Chancellor of Utkal University of Culture, His Excellency Dr. S.C.Jamir.

Today's Distinguished Guest, respected Padmashri Pandit Bhajan Sopori Ji.

Distinguished Members of the Board of Management and the Academic Council of Utkal University of Culture.

Revered recipients of Honoris Causa, who are the great connoisseurs of art and culture.

Esteemed Commissioner-cum-Secretary to the Govt., Department of Culture, Shri Manoranjan Panigrahy.

Esteemed Director, Culture, Govt. of Odisha, Shri Bijaya Kumar Nayak.

The Chairman, PG Council, Utkal University of Culture, Prof. Jagannath Kuanr.

Registrar, Utkal University of Culture, Dr. Suman Das.

Members of the faculty, officers of the University, staff, dear students, distinguished invitees, representatives from the print and electronic media.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good Morning to you all and welcome to the premises of the Utkal University of Culture and to the 6th Convocation of the University.

It is a matter of great honour on my part to extend a warm welcome to our Hon'ble Chancellor, His Excellency Dr. Jamir, to our midst this morning. I place on record my deep sense of gratitude to His Excellency for having accepted our invitation to preside over this 6th Convocation of the University. The length and variety of his experience in public life spanning over five decades has made him a true leader of modern India. His profound love for education all through his life, which he made clear in a recently concluded Vice-Chancellors' Conference, has inspired us all in achieving the goals of nurturing,

promoting and propagating art education and research at this University. I welcome you, Sir, to our midst this morning.

It is also my great pleasure to welcome Padmashri Pandit Bhajan Sopori this morning to the city of temples, Bhubaneswar, and to the Utkal University of Culture, arguably the only culture University in the whole of India. A Living Legend and a Musical Genius, Pandit Bhajan Sopori is more than an individual – a performer and composer *par excellence*, musicologist, teacher, writer, poet, and an extraordinary human being – he is a complete institution in himself. Regarded as the cultural bridge of the State of Jammu & Kashmir and the rest of the country, Pandit Bhajan Sopori is hailed as the “Saint of the Santoor” and the “King of Strings”. A highly learned person, Pandit Sopori has done his Masters in both the Sitar and the Santoor besides having a Masters in English Literature. He has also studied Western Classical Music at Washington University, USA. Pandit Sopori is the only classical musician to have composed music for more than 5000 songs in various languages of the country including Persian, Arabic, etc. He combines in himself a profound knowledge of music and musicology and has carried out immense research on Naad (sound) and ‘sound therapy’. For his enormous contributions, he has received numerous awards including the coveted Padmashri, Sangeet Natak Academy Award, J & K State Award, Baba Allaudin Khan Award, Sangeet Bhusan Award, Sangeet Bhusan Award, etc. It is a great honour for us that Pandit Sopori is our Distinguished Guest today, who would be delivering the Convocation Address. We also feel venerated in conferring the degree of Honoris Causa on Pandit Bhajan Sopori today.

I welcome all the Members of the Board of Management and the Academic Council of the University for their Gracious Presence here. I take this opportunity of welcoming all the recipients of Honoris Causa as a token of our deep sense of appreciation and gratitude for their enormous contribution to art, music and culture. I am grateful to each one of them individually, as they have made the Utkal University of

Culture proud for accepting our offer and coming over here to grace the occasion.

We are deeply indebted to our Hon'ble Minister of Tourism and Culture, Govt. of Odisha, Shri Ashok Chandra Panda, whose personal interest and timely help enabled us to shift this University from the old campus at Unit-2 to this sprawling permanent campus. I owe all the development of the University to him, as he is with us at every step of our forward movement. In spite of his best interest the Hon'ble Minister could not attend the function due to certain unavoidable reasons. Nevertheless I place on record our deep sense of gratitude for all his support. It is also my pleasure to welcome Shri Manoranjan Panigrahy, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Department of Culture, Govt. of Odisha, who extended his unstinted support to us throughout our journey. I am gratified for his vision and leadership in gradually leading this University towards cultural excellence. I also welcome Shri Bijaya Kumar Nayak, Director, Culture, Govt. of Odisha, to this Convocation, whose contribution to this University is enormous. I welcome all the recipients of various degrees, students, their parents, invitees and representatives from the media to this Convocation.

It is indeed a matter of pride for all of us that the State of Odisha has this unique University for the protection, promotion and propagation of art and culture of the State, which has a rich cultural legacy. The University was established in 1999 and has completed 18 years of its existence. The University imparts higher education in various fields of art and culture through its 5 faculties and 23 Post-Graduate Departments. Being an affiliating University, 37 Colleges are affiliated to this University spread over the length and breadth of Odisha that offer both Under-Graduate and Post-Graduate programs. The University offers Masters and higher degrees in the fields of culture studies, linguistics, archaeology and heritage management, visual and performing arts; and certificates in Jain Religion and Philosophy and Tamil Language.

In order to transform this University into a centre of excellence, we had proposed to start teaching and research on tribal art and culture, and museology. A Research Chair in the name of Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja is also proposed to be instituted to carry out research on the contributions of Bhanja to Odia language and literature. But at the moment, these programs could not take off due to severe space crunch. Unfortunately, the Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation, which is entrusted with the responsibility of undertaking various construction projects for the University, is yet to complete and hand over 5 academic blocks. We are constrained to run classes in the administrative building and in hostel rooms as a temporary measure. Once the space problem is solved, we would start our new teaching programs. To strengthen our teaching programs, we are at the final stage of recruiting 16 new teachers for various Departments. But our extension activities are in full swing. We are collaborating with the Odisha Society of America (USA), Korean Artists for India (South Korea), Universities of Campinas and Alagoas (Brazil), etc. for various activities of mutual academic and professional interest.

Our academic activities include regular seminars, workshops, lecture-cum-demonstrations, etc. with distinguished artists and academics visiting the University from time to time. We strictly adhere to the Non-Negotiable Academic Calendar for the conduct of classes and examinations. Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) has already been implemented in the University. Our NSS unit is active and vibrant, and has undertaken various activities, including Blood Donation Camps, on the University premises.

After moving to this campus, we tried to add as much of infrastructure as possible for the convenience of the University community that includes shuttle transport services, campus-wide wi-fi facility, reasonably furnished hostels, office automation, library

collection, etc. I shall fail in my duties if I do not acknowledge the help and support of the Department of Culture, Government of Odisha in all our efforts. I hope to receive all necessary encouragement from the Government and the culture loving people of Odisha in establishing this University as a model institution of higher learning in art education and research in the days to come.

In this 6th Convocation, we are honoring 5 distinguished scholars and performers by conferring on them the honorary degree D.Litt (Honoris causa) for their contribution to the fields of art, culture and literature. I congratulate them on this auspicious occasion and welcome them to the fraternity of Utkal University of Culture. Today we are giving away 984 degrees to our under graduates, post graduates and doctorates, who have been declared qualified in various examinations of the University held between April 2017 and January 2018. We are also honoring our students of different Departments who have secured highest marks in aggregate, but not less than 60%, with Gold Medals for their hard work and perseverance. I take this opportunity of congratulating all of them. They are the future of art and culture in India and are now ready to face the realities of life. I wish them a very bright and prosperous future.

Thank you.

Bande Utkal Janani!

Jai Hind!

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