

# THE TIMES

The Ravenshaw Times

Vol. 1

No. 1

The Monthly Newsletter of Ravenshaw University

January 2011

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## MESSAGE

**NAVEEN PATNAIK**  
CHIEF MINISTER,  
ORISSA



I'm glad to know that the Ravenshaw University is bringing out its monthly newsletter "The Ravenshaw Times" on 27th December, 2010.

I hope the newsletter will reflect the issues and aspirations of young people, especially the students of Ravenshaw University. It will be a useful medium for the students to express their views on the matters pertaining to them.

I wish the publication all success.

  
**NAVEEN PATNAIK**

## MESSAGE

**MURLIDHAR C BHANDARE**  
GOVERNOR, ORISSA



I am happy to know that the Ravenshaw University is bringing out its monthly newsletter "The Ravenshaw Times" from January 2011.

I hope the newsletter will serve as an efficient tool of communication between the students and the faculty, and help stimulating the academic and intellectual environment of the University.

I wish the publication all success.

  
**MURLIDHAR C BHANDARE**

## Season's Greetings



*Best wishes to all the students, faculty, staff, and readers for a happy and prosperous New Year 2011*

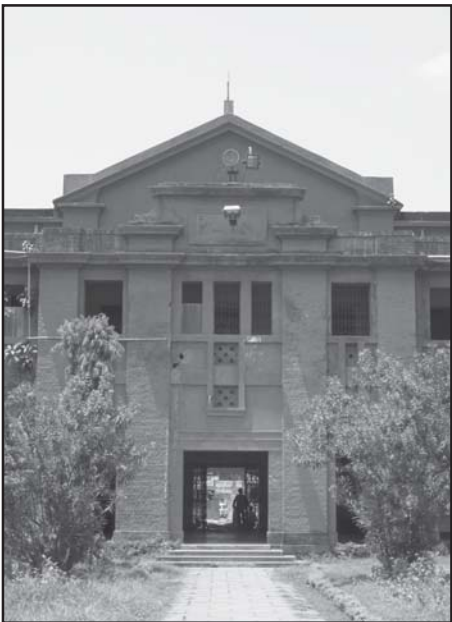
## Reinventing Ravenshaw

Writing about 'the making of Princeton University', John Axtell notes, 'Great universities are made, not born. Invariably their infancies and youth are pinched, puzzling, and unpropitious and their adolescence, even when finally promising is often bumptious and conflicted...'

Being only four years old, the initial years of Ravenshaw as a university has been really perplexing perhaps because of its inventive vision with which it has sought to distance from its 'past'. The complexity of such distancing doesn't however approximate to subversion of

an 'uncomfortable past' given the fact that the history of the institution is steeped with a remembered 'colonial past'. On the contrary, the 'past' is located in the old baggage with its outworn world views and values which the institution still carries in the 'present'. In his insightful discourse on 'the making of Ravenshaw University', the founding Vice-Chancellor of the university, Devdas Chhotray underscores the issue when he points out 'our toughest burden is old

**Chandi Prasad Nanda**



baggage...' The process of disengagement with this baggage has often been complicated, evoking sharp interrogations including challenging the ethics of such an exercise in the public domain.

The university's physical universe has been sought to be created, renovated and rebuilt retaining essentially its intimate bonding with the colonial architectural pattern palpably invoking a nostalgic flavour. More importantly, the conceptual space of the university has also been

remapped with the induction of its new faculty. The core faculty of the university have always been regarded as leaders at the university and in their respective fields, shaping curriculum, academic policies and establishing and managing centers of new thought and research. However, on a day to day basis, the irreducible minimum to which the faculty have been tied up with is teaching and production of new knowledge across an impressive range of subjects, igniting simultaneously change in ideas and perspectives.

Given the multiplicity of priorities before the faculty, the university in its maturity envisions an identity tag for its faculty which may suggest 'we also teach'.

In fact, the screening, selecting and finally **□ P 2**

## Ravenshaw needs a perestroika

**Bikram Keshari Mishra**

Institutionalization of a University system is a long process. The process has just started in the newly formed Ravenshaw University with a right vision and it is through the collective efforts of all stakeholders of Ravenshaw that such a vision could be realized.

It goes to the credit of the Vice Chancellor Sri Devdas Chhotray for mooted the idea of Hall of Fame as a fitting tribute to the great men of eminence who were associated with the heritage institution.

The physical treasure of Ravenshaw is its majestic architecture. For decades it had gone out of public vision because of dirty barriers. The umbilical cord between Cuttack city and Ravenshaw which was lost is now nurtured again as both institutions have their eyeful of the

other. The priority is to renovate and preserve the old buildings against imminent collapse. The resources are limited. Whether we need new buildings or save the heritage structures against collapse? Even then, the University has put up 30,000 sq. ft. of new space in the brand new Administrative Block and Convention centre is coming up. While there is a need to build up a massive infrastructure to cater to the need of a University, it is also important to optimize the huge existing space spreading across 80 lakh square feet. This requires innovation in space usage and management.

Ravenshaw is still hamstrung by faculty shortage, notwithstanding a free, fair and transparent selection method. I was serving as an **□ P 2**

*Ravenshaw University extends a hearty welcome to all the participants and delegates of the 36th All India Sociological Conference of the Indian Sociological Society (ISS).*

## Notice Board

## Our New Faculty

After receiving Government's approval for creating 153 faculty positions comprising 17 posts of Professors, 45 posts of Readers and 91 posts of Lecturers, Ravenshaw University took up this mammoth recruitment enterprise by global advertisement for the faculty positions and received more than 7,000 applications. The following new faculty have now joined the University following a dynamic and robust selection process under the sterling leadership of the Vice-Chancellor.

**Department of Applied Geography****Readers**

Dr. Pritirekha Das Pattanayak

Dr. Ranjana Bajpai

**Lecturers**

Ms. Binodini Majhi

Mr. Sibabrata Das

**Department of Botany****Professor**

Dr. Pradipta Ku. Mohapatra

**Readers**

Dr. Padan Kumar Jena,

Dr. (Ms) Sanhita Padhi,

Dr. Soumendra Kumar Nayak

**Lecturers**

Dr. Durga Prasad Barik

Dr. Nihar Ranjan Singh

**Department of Biotechnology****Lecturer**

Dr. Shakti Kanta Rath

**Department of Chemistry****Readers**

Dr. Ratan Kumar Dey

Dr. Surendra Kumar Nayak

Dr. Narayan Chandra Pal

Sri Ramesh Prasad Rout

Dr. (Mrs) Smruti Prava Das

**Lecturers**

Dr. Alekh Kumar Sutar

Dr. Bairagi Charan Mallick

Dr. Sabita Nayak

Dr. Purnendu Parhi

Dr. Rupashree Shyama Ray

Dr. S. K. Bharadwaj

**Department of Commerce & Business Management****Reader**

Dr. Sanjay Kumar Satapathy

**Lecturers**

Dr. (Ms) Suprava Sahu

Dr. Tushar Kanta Pany

Dr. Kishore Kumar Das

**Department of Economics****Professor**

Dr. (Ms) Mamata Swain

**Readers**

Dr. Dharmabrata Mohapatra

Dr. Sudhakar Patra

**Lecturers**

Dr. (Ms) Lipishree Das

Dr. Manoj Kumar Das

**The Ravenshaw Times**

is the monthly newsletter

of Ravenshaw University.

Your comments and

contributions are always

welcome. Please send

them to the Editor at

ravenshawtimes@gmail.com.

Dr. Chittaranjan Nayak

Dr. Bikash Ranjan Mishra

**Department of English****Professor**

Dr. Diptiranjana Pattanaik

**Readers**

Dr. (Ms) Madhusmita Pati

Dr. (Ms) Susmita Pani

Dr. Mrutyunjay Mohanty

Dr. Subhra Prakash Dash

**Lecturers**

Dr. Sambit Panigrahi

Dr. Khagendra Sethy

**Department of Geology****Professor**

Dr. Nachiketa Das

**Readers**

Dr. Shreerup Goswami

Dr. Somanath Khaosh

**Lecturers**

Dr. Patitapaban Mishra

Dr. Jagadish Ku. Tripathy

**Department of Hindi****Readers**

Dr. Smarapriya Mishra

Dr. Rabindra Nath Mishra

**Department of History****Professor**

Dr. Chandni Prasad Nanda

**Readers**

Dr. Laxmikanta Mishra

Dr. Subrat Kumar Acharya

**Lecturers**

Dr. Umakanta Mishra

Dr. Priyadarshi Kar

**Department of Oriya****Lecturers**

Dr. Bijayalaxmi Dash

Dr. Nilakantha Khanda

Dr. Raja Kumar Nayak

**Department of Physics****Reader**

Dr. (Mrs.) Rita Paikray

Dr. Rabindra Nath Mishra

**Department of Education****Lecturer**

Dr. Sarat Kumar Rout

**Department of Political Science****Professor**

Dr. Niranjana Barik

**Readers**

Dr. (Mrs) Asima Sahoo

Dr. Sachidananda Mishra

**Lecturers**

Dr. Netajee Abhinandan

Dr. Priyabrata Majhi

Mr. Gyanaranjan Swain

**Department of Psychology****Readers**

Dr. Habibullah Ansari

Dr. Shamita Mohapatra

**Department of Sociology****Professor**

Dr. Dipti Ranjan Sahu

**Reader**

Dr. (Mrs.) Anita Dash

**Lecturers**

Dr. Sthitapragayan Ray,

Dr. Bikram Keshari Mishra

**Department of Zoology****Readers**

Dr. Luna Samanta

Dr. Lipika Patnaik

**Lecturers**

Dr. Dipti Raut

Dr. Dhananjay Soren

Dr. Lekhasri Samantsinghar

## From the Vice-Chancellor's Office

Dear Students and Faculty,

It is a matter of delight that Ravenshaw University holds many co-curricular events, and many members of faculty as well as students earn credits based on their merit and performance. All these require to be highlighted in the media as well as in our website. Despite our best efforts we are not able to bring these good stories to surface as we do not receive the correct write up and photographs in our media cell in time. Some of you have received individual distinctions. Some of you know students who have excelled either individually or in groups. Events take place in various Departments to which you are privy as faculty in-charge or head of the Department or as the Dean.

Please make sure and assign responsibilities to individuals in every Department or in every co-curricular forum to send the required material, such as write up and photographs, to the Media Cell and the Editor of our monthly newsletter, The Ravenshaw Times, without any loss of time. The matter will be sent to the press, posted on our website and published in the newsletter.

Best wishes.

--Devdas Chhotray

## Ravenshaw needs a perestroika...(From Page 1)

Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology, Lucknow University, where Sociology in India as a distinct discipline had its genesis. It was an honour to work in the department which boasts of such luminaries as DP Mookherjee and DN Majumdar. However, my decision to join here as a 'lecturer' was primarily motivated by the desire to contribute to the building of Ravenshaw as a vibrant University notwithstanding the absence of basic infrastructure. To my delight, I found convergence of my ideas with the vision of the Vice Chancellor.

Apparently all distinctions between vision and actual materialization have been totally blurred in the comment on comments. The Vice Chancellor has spelt out proposed expansion of study and research in the groups, A, B and C. He has admitted that only a few of these ideas have been accomplished because although the University started four years back, the majority of new faculties have joined in last four to six months.

Ravenshaw is waiting first to settle down. Most of the faculties have joined in the last four to six months. Research leading to publication in peer-reviewed journals has a long gestation period and requires investment of quality time and resources.

Quality time and resource constraints bring into sharp focus the unacceptable teacher-student ratio at present. To make Ravenshaw an institution of excellence, we need a 'perestroika'. This requires collaborative efforts of faculty, administration, government and not the least, the prestigious alumni of Ravenshaw. We are hopeful that a Narayana Moorthy or an Anand Mahindra from among the Ravenshaw alumni will come forward as 'White Knights'.

—The writer is Lecturer in Sociology.

## Reinventing Ravenshaw...(From Page 1)

inducting candidates (across India and overseas) for faculty positions in various disciplines has been both a time-consuming and tedious process and still remains incomplete. But this has critically empowered the university with a quality think-tank which is now restlessly striving to shape the university into a leading academic hub of the country.

The university now boasts of faculty members who have joined the university with their successful research and teaching career in universities abroad. As a Humboldt Fellow, Pradipta Mohapatra, a leading botanist of the country with his focus of research on toxicity of insecticides on algae and cyanobacteria has worked in Rostock and Duesseldorf Universities in Germany. Similarly, the two other botanists, S.K. Naik and N.R. Singh have done their postdoctoral research in the Universities of Kentucky, US, and Stellenbosch in South Africa respectively. Rupashree Shyama Roy, a young scientist with research in molecular modeling and computational chemistry has worked in the Universities of Munich and Leipzig, Germany. Another young scientist, Kumar Siddhartha Kesav Varadwaj with his research interest in nanoscience and technology has been associated with Hokkaido university, Japan and Korea

Advanced Institute of Science and Technology. Yet another young faculty of chemistry, Sabita Nayak has worked on the design and development of cardiovascular drugs as part of her postdoctoral research in the University of Texas. Apart from teaching and research on contemporary economic issues, the department of economics has started addressing the problems of rural Orissa. Economist Dr. Mamata Swain, with a Ph.D. from London, is the lead in this regard.

Nachiketa Das with a dual citizenship status of India and Australia and being a permanent

resident of Japan now heads the department of Geology. With a postdoctoral degree from Harvard, he has been associated with universities of Glasgow, Melbourne and Hiroshima in several academic capacities. Dipti Ranjan Patnaik, who has been both a Fulbright Fellow at Ohio State University, Columbia and an Indo-Canadian Fellow, and has recently received the prestigious Erikson Scholar-in-Residence Position, has already spelt out the roadmap for his department of English. The list goes on. The idea here is not to undermine the achievements of individual faculty members of other different departments by citing a few cases

at hand. What needs to be stressed here is the clinical precision which has gone into the process of selection of the core faculty of the university. As one traverses through the departments cutting across humanities, social sciences and natural sciences, the possibilities of having an engagement with 'ignited minds' who seek to question meta narratives, becomes absolutely inescapable. In fact, this core faculty of the university in many ways than one is going to shape the texture of academic discourse not only for the university but also for the society at large.

--The writer is Professor & HOD, History and Chairman, Council of Deans (CCD).

## Faculty recruitment

Dear Sir,

I have nothing to do with the faculty recruitment for Ravenshaw University, and am neither an applicant for it.

I really appreciate the transparency and accountability displayed by following certain objective procedures in shortlisting candidates for the faculty posts. This is very rare in the country wherein higher education is plagued with corruption and nepotism.

In the name of quality and efficiency SCs/STs are left out, which at times in actuality is not the case but a smokescreen to appoint their own candidates by the powerful.

I myself had not applied for Sociology as there was no vacancy for STs in your Sociology department. After checking out the university website, I saw the information put up in connection with this shortlisting and appreciate the transparency followed here. How I wish if other universities can display such transparency in matters of recruitment.

This is simply a letter of appreciation as I find the procedures adopted unprecedented.

--K. Haokip, Senior Doctoral Candidate,  
Department of Humanities & Social Sciences, IIT Kanpur

## Mailbox



Please send in contributions, ideas for the content, and ways we can improve this publication.

## Quote Unquote

*We pass our BA and MA examinations, we  
cram ourselves with loads of learning,  
but the intellect gains neither  
vigour nor maturity...*

*And so the domestic feud between learning  
and life goes on growing, each bitterly  
and incessantly mocking at each other.*

--Rabindranath Tagore

THE RAVENSHAW TIMES

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## A RETURN TO XANADU

## Blueprint for a Perspective Plan

Most of you have heard of Xanadu, a vision in the opium induced dream of Kubla Khan, the Chinese emperor in the renowned poem of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and some of you may have heard about it as a pleasure dome in Orson Well's unforgettable chartbuster 'Citizen Kane'. The Advanced Oxford Dictionary however defines Xanadu as 'An idyllic, beautiful place', usually imagined.

Several friends of Ravenshaw have been asking me to create a vision document or a perspective plan for the Ravenshaw University. We have created a vision document of sort which is contained in my presentation made to the Friends of Ravenshaw Group at San-Francisco in July 2010.

The Departments and Schools are the building blocks of the University. At the moment, we have 11 schools and 25 departments as well as two Centres, Centre for Ethics and Centre for Understanding Orissa, for which some preliminary works have been done. Therefore, it has been suggested that each Head of the Department and each Dean of the School should prepare a perspective plan for at least 10 years beginning with the year 2011, which will be as Xanadu suggests, the blueprint for an idyllic beautiful place fairly imagined. Therefore, I have titled this letter to you all, somewhat mock heroically, as a return to Xanadu.

I would imagine that the perspective plan must be necessarily prefaced by a detailed history of the Department, such as its year of foundation, scroll of the Heads, dimensions of the growth particularly in the last decade and highlights and distinctions in its life course. It would be worthwhile if during this exercise the present incumbent finds out photographs of earlier Heads and old documents and publications of the Department for their museum value. All these pieced together shall be the ingredients of the Ravenshaw museum.

The contents of the ten year perspective plans are best conceived by the Deans or HODs. They will of course begin with the vision and mission statements. They will describe as cogently as possible, the sense of direction in which the academics of the Departments will proceed, and the pedagogy it shall adopt. The plan will dwell on reorientation of syllabi if necessary and reconfiguration of faculty and students. It should also chart out various student focused endeavours in terms of competitions and concurrent evaluation to push upward their creativity contents. These are the random thoughts of an un-academic person like me. I am sure our Deans and Heads will do a much finer job.

The perspective plan for ten years is expected to be an unbroken continuum. Its each unit can be for a year or of two years taken together, if such time frame is indeed more adoptable for the objective conceived.

I trust that working for return to Xanadu in terms of the Department's transference to an idyllic centre for learning would be an inspiring piece of planning.

--Devdas Chhotray, Vice-Chancellor

## Violation of Linguistic Human Rights of Tribes in Odisha: Need for a New Discourse

Dr. Netajee Abhinandan

The issue of human rights assumes greater significance in the context of tribal population of India. The discourse on human rights has not yet adequately addressed the problems faced by the Scheduled Tribes in the social, economic, cultural and political spheres. The tribal people who live in the poorest states of India like Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Odisha are still at the margins of development and do not have access even to the



basic amenities of life such as food, shelter, sanitation, health and education. They are exploited and remain deprived of the benefits of modernization because of their very marginal participation in the socio-political system of the country. The state does not care to include the tribal people in the process of nation-building and mostly overlooks the cases of violation of their human rights during that very process. The main cause of growing marginalization of the tribal people in India is lack of provision for education in their mother tongues as they fail to learn through the so-called mainstream languages imposed by the state. Thus, the linguistic human rights of most of the primitive tribes of Odisha are continuously violated as the existing educational system does not take into account the importance of mother tongue-based education for these people.

Odisha has one of the largest tribal population in India. According to 2001 census, around 27% of the population of the state belongs to the tribal communities. There are total sixty-two tribal groups speaking more than forty languages. However, scripts have been developed only for Santhal, Sora, Ho and Kui tribal communities. Some of the tribal languages died totally as no effort was made to maintain and develop them. As the government patronized only Odia as the lingua franca of the state neglecting the other languages used by various communities, it led to the decline and eventual death of some tribal languages. Despite the constitutional guarantee and provisions for the protection of the cultural heritage of the tribals, they are forced to learn through Oriya, English and Hindi, which are alien to them. Due to this language deficiency, many beautiful stories representing the culture,

tradition, heritage and history of the tribals are lost forever. As education provided by the state

does not accommodate the unique cultural and linguistic orientations of the tribal communities, they fail to connect to the 'system' and remain neglected. It leads to alarmingly high school dropouts at the primary level in the tribal-dominated areas. At the college and University levels, most of the seats reserved for tribal students are lying vacant. The continuous violation of linguistic human rights of the tribals in states like Odisha has emerged as one of the most serious causes of concern.

The imposition of Oriya as the only standard medium of instruction in schools has led to the alienation of the tribals, as it

generates among the tribal children a sense of inferiority towards themselves, their own parents and family, their language and their culture. Due to lack of special care, the tribal children are forced to abandon their mother tongue and adopt Oriya as the medium of education against their will. It signifies how the linguistic human rights of the tribal people are violated by the state. The tribal people remain underprivileged as

ever because of absence of effective communication. Language remains the biggest impediment for their economic development and political influence. When all over the world, there is growing focus on the preservation as well as promotion of unique cultural heritage of tribal and aboriginal people, it is time to take serious note of various aspects of the violation of the fundamental rights of the tribals in tribal-dominated states like Odisha and endure to incorporate their issues and concerns into the academic discourse on human rights.

--The writer is Lecturer in Political Science.

With the maiden edition of *The Ravenshaw Times*, Ravenshaw University becomes the first University in the State to bring out a newsletter. Published jointly by the Media Cell of the University and Ravenshaw University Press (RUP), *The Ravenshaw Times* is expected to play a seminal role in enhancing the internal communication network in the University. Free flow of information is vital to the development of the University, which despite numerous strides, finds itself handicapped in highlighting various activities and achievements of its students, faculty and departments. The university newsletter is expected to serve as an efficient tool of communication between the students and the faculty, thus stimulating the academic and intellectual environment of the University.

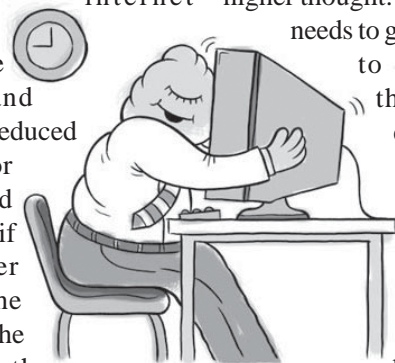
--Viraj Shukla, Executive Editor

## Alienation with words

Today's times are experiencing an alienation with words. Too much of interaction with the visual media, internet chat engines, mobile phones and SMS have reduced our need for reading and writing. But if we consider seriously, the run is after the transient, the fleeting. Literature and the print media have always delighted and soothed our hearts like no other medium. Reading is something that can be pursued even when we are away from

the mechanical and hi-tech life of ours. Writing records the basic human emotions and lays foundation for deeper and higher thought. Today's youth needs to give expression to whatever thoughts and emotions keep boiling in the hot pot of his consciousness. Not only it will add to the bulk of our pre-existing work, but also it will encourage the budding writers to recognize their own talent and nurture it. The future of the nation lies in the hands of these young wordsmiths.

--Viraj Shukla



## Faculty Page

## Depravation after devout celebrations

Dr. Shreerup Goswami

Water is essential for life on earth. Without it, life is impossible. However, water is under severe threat due to man-made pollution. Water has great solvent power. Thus, it is constantly vulnerable to pollution. Today, the requirement of water in all forms of life is a serious problem. Water resources have been reached to a point of crisis due to various deadly anthropogenic activities. One such activity is idol immersion, which causes acute water pollution.

Mahanadi, Brahmani, Baitarini, Budhabalanga, Banshadhara and Nagabali, Rushikulya, Subarnarekha and their tributaries and important lakes are the oldest shallow aquifers of Orissa and have also got historic importance. These have been used by local inhabitants regularly for washing clothes, animals and vehicles. In addition, industrial effluents and municipal sewage are generally added to them. Along with these activities, immersions of millions of idols of Saraswati, Ganesha, Biswakarma, Laxmi, Kali, Durga, Kukurukani, etc also take place throughout the year. As a result, different types of chemicals, paints and organic matters are added to these shallow aquifers.

The immersion of idols is a major source of contamination of water bodies. All Hindus are deeply involved in these festivals since more than last 2,000 years. Most of the States of India celebrate one or two such occasions and immerse thousands of idols in the water bodies every year. But unfortunately, all such occasions are celebrated in Orissa with much pomp and ceremony. As a result, around 80,000 of huge idols are immersed in different water bodies of this poorest state of India and it is the highest in number in the country. The idols are becoming bigger and are now being made from toxic materials. The practice of immersion of idols after the festivals is causing severe water pollution.

Idols made of Plaster of Paris do not get dissolved or disintegrated fast and increase dissolved solids, suspended solids in water, contribute metals and sludge. The idols take several months to dissolve in water and in the process poison the water bodies. Moreover, the chemical dyes and colours being used to paint the idols contain poisonous elements. Tons of synthetic colours which are used in painting these idols, alter the water quality of the respective water bodies. Different colours such as inorganic and organic pigments and carbon black are used for painting these idols. Colour oil paints are also used

for the same purpose. The synthetic inks, colours, paints and dyes are non-degradable substances and most of them are toxic chemicals. Research has revealed different extreme toxic effects of dyes, pigments, colours and paints on people and the environment. Impact of colours and dyes on human health is also alarming. Dyes contain metals such as copper, nickel, chromium, mercury and cadmium. Red, blue, orange and green colour paints contain mercury, zinc oxide, chromium and lead. In addition to these toxic elements which cause many diseases, other potentially obnoxious elements like magnesium, molybdenum, silicon, carbon and arsenic also increase several fold in the water due to idol immersion. Heavy metals like lead and chrome are not easily assimilated in an aquatic environment. Besides, toxic chemicals and heavy metals directly affect the aquatic organism. The toxic chemicals enter into the water bodies and then to living aquatic organisms which exterminate the aquatic ecosystem. Finally, they reach the humans through food chains. These are potential causes of developing cancer. The colour compounds contain these heavy metals, which pollute the surface and ground water. It is imperative to note that the same polluted water gets pumped into homes in India.

In addition, several accessories used for decoration like thermocole, plastic flowers, other plastic and polythene items, cosmetic items, oily substances, ornaments, synthetic cloths supported by small iron rods, incense, camphor and numerous other

materials are dumped carelessly adding more strain to the already polluted water bodies. As a result, it contributes suspended matter, trace metals, metalloids and various organic and inorganic matters. Thus, it also increases floating suspended matter and organic contamination. Careless dumping of idols with bamboo sticks, polythene and plastic items in water bodies blocks the natural flow of water. This results in stagnation and breeding of mosquitoes and other harmful pests and insects. The polluted water causes several water-borne and skin diseases. At the same time, the pollution from idols damages the aquatic ecosystem.

Idol pollution is one of the imperative grounds for which the average life expectancy of Indians is far less than that of Europeans and Americans. Besides, the activities involved in such celebrations cause other societal and environmental problems such as noise pollution, indiscriminate use of energy, health hazard and socio economic impact. During celebrations on such festive occasions, the sound crosses its threshold level and causes noise pollution. The unlimited use of loudspeakers, megaphones, mikes, generators and the gathering of people during puja and the procession made for immersion of idols are the source of noise pollution, which cause different problems to the living world. Sometimes these processions cause traffic rush. Noise pollution mainly causes auditory and non-auditory effect on human health. Simultaneously ruthless use of electricity is generally made

during such celebrations especially for light decoration.

Finally, crores of rupees and million units of electricity are wasted for proximate and background decoration with colourful lighting in a developing nation like India. It is needless to mention that the condition of Orissa in this regard is more miserable. This is just an example of our environmental apathy. Thus, the life of general public is in peril without any cause and they are suffering from many deadly diseases and problems.

The environmental problems relating to surface water systems relevant in water quality, pollution control and environmental concerns have attracted attention in recent years. The conservation of freshwater environment has paramount importance and their monitoring of pollution is highly essential. The contamination by toxic substances has created more serious and complex scenario by which preservation and protection of the water bodies has become an urgent need.

Therefore, immersion of gorgeous colourful idols must be stopped. Legislations must be formulated to prohibit this activity. Periodical monitoring of the water quality is thus required to assess the condition of surface water and immediate steps should be taken to check such anthropogenic activity at and around the water bodies. Pollution Control Boards should test water quality before the immersion, during the immersion and after the immersion to know the effect of pollution and thus can devise a guideline for upcoming occasions. The Government at

least should ensure that idol structures are collected from water bodies within 24 hours of immersion. Litter collection activities through which recyclable material is removed should be encouraged further, especially after these festive occasions to avoid the contamination of water bodies with floating materials like plastics, flowers and wooden structures etc. At the very least, Government should allow immersion of idols in a single pond (in a small captive water body) in each town, and after each festive season, the water must be treated by appropriate method.

We, the public should be made aware of adverse affects of idol immersion in water bodies. Thus, some imperative steps should be adopted at individual level. We should bring home a simple clay idol instead of a colourful idol. These idols should be made using unbaked clay and should be painted with natural materials such as red earth, turmeric or organic paints. Consequently, use of eco-friendly clay idols painted with biodegradable/herbal dyes and paints should be encouraged at all levels. Otherwise, we should use permanent idols made of stone or brass; and perform a symbolic immersion and re-use the idol each year. We must not throw the beautification materials and synthetic flowers in water bodies. Instead, we should take out all these and keep aside so that civic bodies can clean it easily. We should collect flowers, banana leaves, garlands, coconut and nirmalya (prasadam) and should compost them. The use of thermocoles, plastics and polythene in decoration must be avoided. Lastly, we should avoid public water bodies to immerse the idols. Rather after the completion of all rituals, the idols can be immersed without ornaments in a bucket or tub or tank of water and the solution can be safely drained in our premises.

Prohibiting immersion of idols in water bodies should be the common responsibility of citizens, administrators, media and NGOs for harnessing and sustaining our well being as it will abate and control acute water pollution and will provide pure drinking water, safe domestic water, water for livestock, and water for small irrigation. As individuals, groups, and community, let us wake up before it is too late and not only understand the adverse impacts of immersion of idols in the water bodies and the ways and means of introducing a green and safe celebration of the festival season all about but also implement measures to restrain these activities.

--The writer is Reader in Geology.



*Prohibiting immersion of idols in water bodies should be the common responsibility of citizens, administrators, media and NGOs for harnessing and sustaining our well being.*

## Recruiters' row in Ravenshaw

After becoming a 30,000. The campus University, top companies have started coming to Ravenshaw University for holding campus recruitment drives here. Recently, IBM Daksh recruited as many as 46 students of the University after holding campus interview. Similarly, reputed companies like Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Visa Steel, HCL, Tech Mahindra, Sesa Goa and Reliance Group of Industries held a series of campus interviews in the University and selected many final year students for recruitment into various posts in their firms.

Many top corporate houses including public sector undertakings (PSUs) have been coming to our University and offering lucrative jobs to our students. The salary package ranges from Rs. 18,000 to Rs.

The campus recruitment drive has been enormously successful, says Dean, Students' Welfare (DSW) of Ravenshaw University, Partha Sarathi Mishra.



The companies are preferring students from self-financing departments like ITM, IST, ETC, BBA, BCA and MCA as they offer job-oriented professional courses. They also select general students based on their performance in the

interview. Recently, Visa Steel recruited nine students from the chemistry department of the University. Similarly, Sesa Goa recruited 12 students from various departments this year, says Placement Coordinator, Ranjit Kumar Parija. Top companies like IBM and TCS are visiting again in January to hold more campus interviews, he informs further.

Ravenshaw University is doing extremely well in attracting core companies for campus recruitment. We are also trying to attract reputed research organizations and more prestigious companies to our University for offering academic, intellectual and research-oriented jobs to our toppers and meritorious students, says Vice Chancellor of the University, Devdas Chhotray.

## Students launch literacy drive



Under Project Gyanalok, the NSS Bureau of Ravenshaw University led by Programme Coordinator, NSS Dr. Pritirekha Daspattnayak selected two slums Behera Sahi and Dasa Sahi located in close vicinity of the University Campus and held teaching programmes to eradicate illiteracy among the slum children. The primary objective of the project was to bring the children living in the slums to the fold of literacy and

provide remedial measures for the educational attainment in order to arrest the incidence of drop out among the children, with special focus on girls. The children were provided with slates, chalks, copies, pencils and erasers. They were also taught neatness, cleanliness, and moral and ethical values.

Project Gyanalok is a pilot project by NSS wings of different universities of the State to increase literacy rate in remote regions.

## Desert music dips students in cultural oasis



Folks assemble for folk ensemble

The Thar Lok Kala Sansthan of Rajasthan performed folk music and dance in the playground of the University on December 15. The famous Langa-Manganiar folk ensemble of Rajasthan spellbound the audience with their rare repertoire of traditional music and dance. The group kicked off with Kesariya Balam, a highly popular welcome song from Bikaner. They continued their hour-long recital with numbers like Gorbandh (a popular camel decoration song), Algoza (exquisite double flute music), Bhawai dance (a traditional dance performed with utensils on head one upon another), Hichki song (a very popular love song), Nimbooda (another famous traditional love song), Kalbelia dance (a traditional dance of the Nath community of Rajasthan), culminating with the timeless Sufi song from Pakistan, Dama Dam Mast Kalandar. Hundreds of students and staff members of the University were left mesmerized by their immaculate performance.

**INDIAN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY**  
XXXVI ALL INDIA SOCIOLOGICAL CONFERENCE  
Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, Orissa  
December 27-29, 2010

### PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

**Pre-Conference Workshop for Young Sociologists**

Theme: 'Sociology in Action'

**Inaugural Session**

**Symposium I**

Revisiting Development Discourse in Contemporary Times

**M. N. Srinivas Memorial Lecture**

By Suma Chitnis

**Symposium II**

State, Civil Society

and Social Conflicts in India

**Radha Kamal Mukherjee Memorial Lecture**

By T. N. Madan

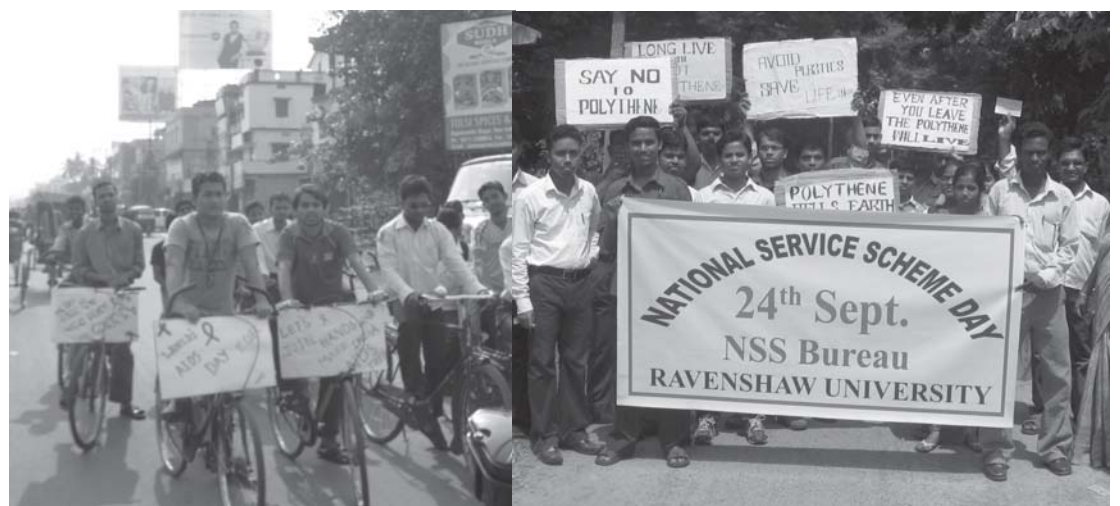
**Symposium III**

Social Tensions

and Politics of Development in Orissa

**Valedictory Session**

## NSS observes 'World AIDS Day', 'Communal Harmony & Flag Day Week'



The NSS Bureau of Ravenshaw University organized a cycle rally from Ravenshaw University campus to Badambadi Bus Stand on the occasion of World AIDS Day on December 1. The rally was held to create awareness on AIDS among the general public. The NSS volunteers also tied red ribbons and distributed cards carrying pictures on AIDS awareness. They also raised slogans for an HIV and AIDS free society. The rally was coordinated by

programme officers of NSS, Dr. Lipishree Das and Mr. Manoj Kumar Das. Earlier, the NSS Bureau of the University had observed 'Communal Harmony and Flag Day Week' from November 19 to 25 under the supervision of NSS Programme Coordinator, Dr. Pritirekha Daspattnayak. Programme officers Dr. Jagdish Kumar Tripathy, Dr. Lipishree Das and Mr. Manoj Kumar Das organized essay, debate and poster painting competitions during the week.

## Honours

## Lifetime Achievement Awards

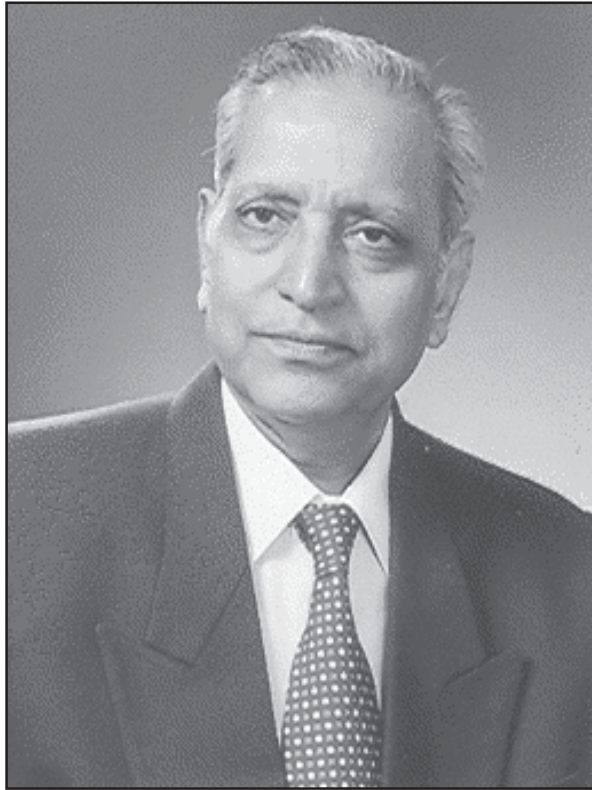
The Indian Sociological Society (ISS) feels honoured in felicitating **Prof. Suma Chitnis**, **Prof. Dattatreya Narayan Dhanagare** and **Prof. Tharailath Koshy Oommen**, and in conferring on them the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' for their invaluable contributions and services to the discipline and profession of sociology in India.

Prof. Suma Chitnis



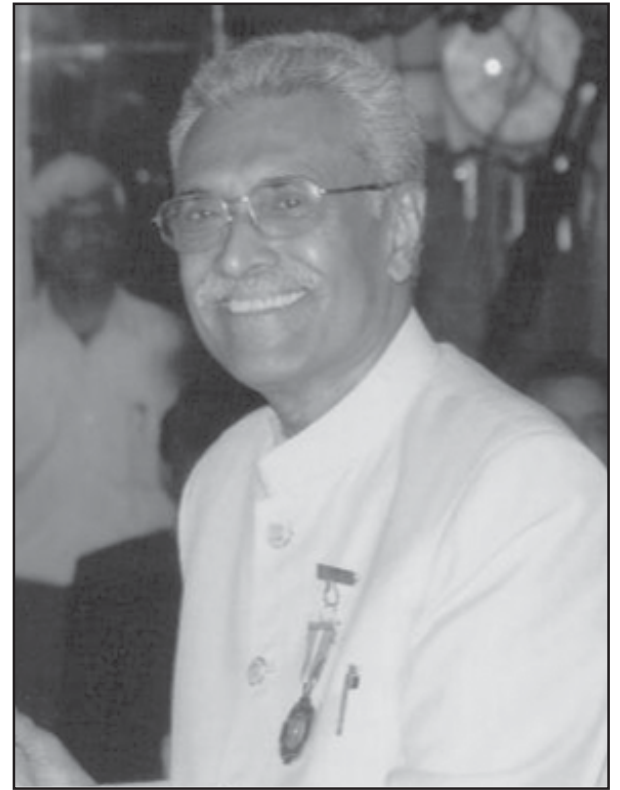
**Professor Suma Chitnis** is an eminent sociologist and academic administrator. She is a pioneer in the fields of the sociology of education and women's studies in India. She is a former Secretary of the Indian Sociological Society. As a sociologist, Professor Suma Chitnis has held responsible positions in many organisations and committees and influenced policy making in educational institutions. In her illustrious career spanning more than half a century, Professor Suma Chitnis has won many professional distinctions. Critically reflecting on the marginalisation of local cultural traditions during the colonial era, she is currently engaged in a sociological understanding of the Bhakti Marga through an analysis of the life and works of a Marathi saint poetess, Bahainabai (a contemporary of Sant Tukaram).

Prof. Dattatreya Narayan Dhanagare



**Professor Dattatreya Narayan Dhanagare** is an eminent sociologist and a reputed authority on the sociology of agrarian movements in India. He is a former President of the Indian Sociological Society (2002-03). Professor Dhanagare is the author of four books and sixty-one scholarly articles in national and international journals. He has successfully guided thirteen PhD scholars at the IIT Kanpur and the University of Pune. His areas of research interest include theories of development, sociology of social movements, agrarian sociology of India, and research methodology. His doctoral thesis, 'Peasant Movements in India' was a pace-setting work in the study of social movements and in comparative social history and sociology. During his long and illustrious career, Professor Dhanagare has won several fellowships, awards and honours.

Prof. Tharailath Koshy Oommen



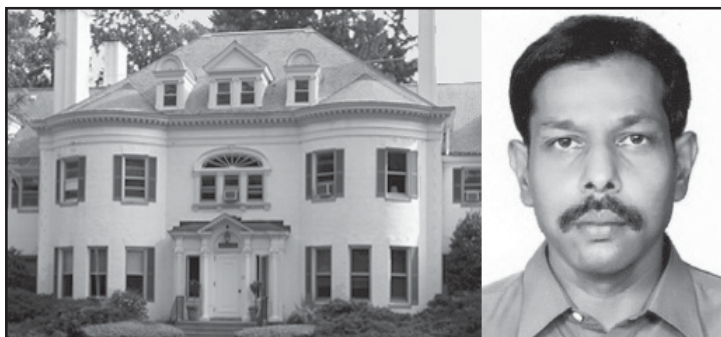
**Professor Tharailath Koshy Oommen** is an eminent sociologist who has put Indian sociology on the world map. He was the Secretary General of the XI World Congress of Sociology of the International Sociological Association (ISA), which met in New Delhi in 1986, and is the only scholar from Asia and Africa to be elected President of the ISA. He is also a former President of the Indian Sociological Society. Professor Oommen is a trail blazer in several research areas in Indian sociology, particularly social movements, modern professions, cultural identity, and human security. He has authored 19 books, edited seven anthologies, and collaborated in writing several reports. He has published 180 research papers in national and international journals and in books edited by eminent scholars. He has also published 160 articles in newspapers and popular journals.

Professor and HOD English and Dean, School of Languages, Ravenshaw University, Dr Dipti Ranjan Pattanaik will be visiting the prestigious Erikson Institute for Education and Research, Chicago, Illinois as Erikson Scholar-in-Residence for Winter-Spring 2011, for a period of three and a half months.

The distinguished Erikson Scholar-in-Residence Position is created to honour renowned humanist psychoanalyst Professor Erikson's transforming vision and contributions to the fields of psychoanalysis, human development, and history.

Prof Pattanaik areas of interest include creative writing, children's literature, translation and translation studies. His numerous publications include four volumes of short stories and six volumes of translations from Odia into English and from English into Odia commissioned by major publishers like Macmillan, Orient Longman and Book NBT. His scholarly publications

## Erikson Scholar



include a book on children's literature theory, 'Subversive Innocence: A Study of American Children's Fiction (2002)' and several essays published in major international journals like Journal of Commonwealth Literature, London, MELUS, USA, TTR, Montreal, Sodertorns University Journal, Stockholm, John Benjamin's Publication, Amsterdam, Indian Literature, New Delhi, The Hindu Literary Review, Chennai, etc. Besides this, he has presented papers at major conferences at Montreal University, MTSU, Nashville, Cambridge University,

University of British Columbia, Vancouver, given keynote at York University, Toronto and chaired sessions at Sodertorns University, Stockholm. He has recently convened an International Conference on Translation and Multilingualism at BHU. He is the recipient of National Katha Award for Creative Writing (1994), Fulbright Fellowship (1995), Adwait Katha Puraskar (1998), Akhil Katha Puraskar (1999), Charles Wallace Fellowship (2000), Akhilmohan Katha Puraskar (2001), Jhankar Puraskar (2004), Shastri Indo-Canadian Fellowship (2008).

## Best Young Scientist

**Reader in Geology, Ravenshaw University, Dr Shreerup Goswami** has been awarded the Best Young Scientist of the Year 2008 Award instituted by the prestigious Odisha Bigyan Academy under the aegis of Government of Odisha. For the first time in the history of this esteemed academy, a scholar of geology has received this much-coveted award. Goswami, a scientist of international repute, recently joined the Ravenshaw University as a Reader in Geology. It's a great, exhilarating feeling and I feel proud and privileged to be a part of the glorious legacy of the Ravenshaw fraternity, says Goswami. Ravenshaw University has brought glory for me in just six months and it became possible due to the heavenly blessings of our revered Vice Chancellor Devdas Chhotray, he acknowledges. Goswami thanks the Vice



Chancellor for conducting the faculty recruitment interview with impeccable fairness and integrity. A dynamic and robust selection process under his sterling leadership opened the gates of this hallowed institution of fame for me, he says.

Goswami has 11 years of experience as a geologist, researcher and geo-analyst including six years of experience in postgraduate teaching in geology and environmental sciences.

## Now, Ravenshaw Radio @ 90.4 MHz



Ravenshaw University becomes the first university in the state to start a community radio station (CRS). The university has begun the trial run of its campus community radio station, Ravenshaw Radio. The radio programmes can be heard on 90.4 MHz within 8 to 10 km radius from the university campus. The station will provide students a platform to express themselves and showcase their talent and creativity. It will also act as a vehicle for the whole community coming under the coverage zone to work in partnership to further community development.

Not only the students of Ravenshaw University, but also students from other colleges as well as members of the local community can participate in the programmes. Ravenshaw Radio is going to broadcast a wide variety of programmes like Career Concern, Community Centre, Ravenshaw Reporter, Youth Parliament, Self Domain, The Culturati, Study Centre, Science and Health, Legends and Personalities, The Literati, Book Rack, Guest Room, Divine Melody, Music Room, and Leisure Lounge. The detail schedule is available on the university website.

## Funds pour in for development of Ravenshaw

The PG Department of English, Ravenshaw University organised an alumni association meet of the department recently under the leadership of the HOD English Prof Dipti Ranjan Pattanaik. The meeting was presided over by Commissioner, State Income Tax Department Pradosh Kumar Mohanty.

Several alumni of the department, now holding respectable positions, both in the academic and bureaucratic spheres, graced the occasion. These dignitaries included eminent poets like Ramakanta Rath, Prof Soubhagya Kumar Mishra, MP Cuttack Bhartruhari Mahtab, eminent linguist Prof BN Pattanaik, renowned scholar Prof Gangadhar Mishra and many other fellow Ravenshaws of the English department. The meet witnessed unprecedented enthusiasm and the interaction among the members was invigorating. A prolonged discussion on its aims and objectives and the means to bring them to fruition was

undertaken. With this in view, the office bearers to various posts were nominated. It was unanimously decided to fix an amount of Rs 500 for annual membership and Rs 3,000 for lifetime membership. The association further resolved to undertake such tasks like establishment of a printing press, publication of a referral journal, extending financial help to meritorious poor students, inviting scholars and writers from different disciplines for dissemination of knowledge and conducting seminars and conferences at regular intervals.

To the delight of the members, Prof Gangadhar Mishra voluntarily came up with a donation of Rs 11,111 to strengthen the alumni fund and also promised a further contribution of Rs 1,00,000. Mahtab promised to provide necessary fund to construct an alumni association building. Pradosh Kumar Mohanty assured the association with income tax rebate on donation.

## Research Grant for project

The South Asian Network for Development and Environmental Economics (SANDEE) has approved a grant of Rs. 8 lakh to Ravenshaw University in support of research project proposal entitled 'Performance of Area Based Crop Yield and Rainfall Insurance Scheme in Orissa'. Professor of Economics, Dr. Mamata Swain had presented this proposal in the Research and Training Workshop on Environmental Economics held at Negombo in Sri Lanka. This study will make a comparative assessment of area-yield and rainfall insurance schemes under implementation in Orissa with respect to their operational efficiency, financial performance, product design

and above all their effectiveness as a risk management strategy in the scenario of increasing agricultural risk due to climate change and globalisation.

It may be noted that Dr. Swain has been awarded the ICSSR - NRCT Research Grant for research on participatory irrigation management in Thailand. During her visit, she interacted with many faculty members of Thai Universities and research organizations and conducted field study. She delivered a lecture on 'Participatory Irrigation Management in India: Problems and Prospects' in Mahidol University on and presented her research findings in a seminar held at Thammasat University.

## Autumn School on Plasma Science



The School of Physical Sciences, Ravenshaw University and Power Beam Society of India (PSI), Mumbai organized the "Autumn School on Physics and Chemistry of Plasmas and Technological Application" in the University from October 27-30, 2010. Dr. Baradakanta Mishra, Director, IMMT, Bhubaneswar

attended the inaugural function as the Chief Guest. Prof. N. Venkataramani, President, PSI attended as the Guest of Honour and Prof. Nachiketa Das, Dean, Administration, Ravenshaw University presided over the meeting. HOD Physics Dr. Rita Paikray and Reader in Chemistry Dr. Smrutiprava Das convened the conference.

## Ravenshaw retains RTI Debate Shield

Ravenshaw University won the Inter-University RTI debate competition for the third consecutive time. Nineteen students from ten universities of the state participated in the 4th Inter-University RTI Debate Competition held on December 3, 2010 in the University.

Swayamshree Mishra of BAFinal Year (Sociology Hons) bagged the first prize this year also retaining the running shield of the debate competition for three times in a row. All students, teachers and participants congratulated



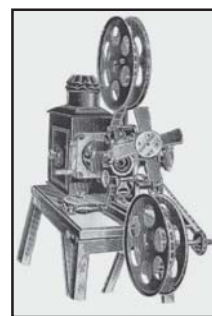
Swayamshree for her stupendous achievement. The topic for the 4th Inter-University RTI Debate Competition was 'Secrecy is Inherently Anti-Democratic'. Chief Information Commissioner, Government of

India, Sri A.N. Tiwari, IAS graced the occasion as one of the judges. While Swayamshree Mishra of the University bagged the first prize retaining the running shield, Jubin Prasad of National Law University, Cuttack and Sthitipragnya Das of Fakir Mohan University, Balasore won the second and third prizes respectively.

The first, second and third prize winners won cash prizes of Rs. 5,000, Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 2,000 respectively.

## Celluloid classics cover co-curriculum

Ravenshaw University has started a unique weekly event named 'Weekend Classic' for education, infotainment and entertainment of the students through film screening of art, documentary and award-winning classic films in the University auditorium. The screening will be done every Saturday afternoon. Parallel cinemas made by celebrated Indian filmmakers like Satyajit Ray,



Ritwik Ghatak, Tapan Sinha and others, as well as foreign films by renowned directors like Akira Kurosawa, Roman Polanski and other greatest filmmakers of all time, will be screened every week. There will also be educational and encyclopedic films of the serious type for enlightenment of the students. Such weekly event is the first of its kind in any educational institution in the State.

# Ravenshaw, the Red Sphinx

## *One Thousand Questions*

Devdas Chhotray



*Helen of Troy had a face that launched a thousand ships in the Aegean Sea. Ravenshaw, which is the Red Sphinx of Orissa's wisdom and modernity, easily raises a thousand questions about its current incarnation. The idea behind making Ravenshaw a University was to make it once again a centre of excellence in academics.*

Ravenshaw University was set up by the Ravenshaw University Act, 2005. The draft statutes of the University have been pending with the Government for approval. Pending that, the University is referring to the Orissa Universities First Statutes (OUFS), 1990 on the basis of which its own statute has been drafted.

The Ravenshaw University inherited 25 Departments in the disciplines of Science, Commerce and Humanities. In order to upgrade Ravenshaw like the single campus JNU, the University created 11 Schools out of the existing Departments. The Schools are headed by Deans. It takes time for a new structure to be grounded. Therefore academic reforms envisaged are vitally dependent on the faculty. The situation in Ravenshaw was queer. The Government created posts for new faculty only in August 2008, although the University was set up in 2006. For administrative reasons, the Government could not withdraw the old faculty till September 2010. Despite this mismatch, the syllabi in almost all Departments have been revised to cope with contemporary demands. While setting up the University, the Government had not provided adequate faculty to meet the UGC teacher-student ratio of 1:15. The current teacher-student ratio is about 1:50. In order to make it 1:30, which are twice the UGC/AICTE norms, the University will require 106 new faculty positions. The demand of the University is pending with Government. Ravenshaw has envisioned incorporating all subjects from microbiology to geophysics in its growth. The University has

accomplished only a few. The new faculty is still half formed. Many positions for recruitment have been hit by court cases and reservations. It is easy to set up a greenfield institution. It is difficult to deal with old baggage in an institution like Ravenshaw, where the expectations are high and resources low.

Ravenshaw had an identity like none other. In last 50 years it has become fairly pedestrian. When it became a University, it was caught like any other educational institution in the strangle hold of a predicament that is now fairly common. Every educational institution now faces the demand to expand by incorporating vocational elements. MBA, before it was hit by the economic meltdown, was regarded as the flagship course. Ravenshaw, therefore, introduced MBA and set up the Ravenshaw Management Centre, to mark its transition to a University. The Government does not give anything more than the salary grant and some money for infrastructure to the new University. The responsibility of earning by introducing new courses is on the University itself. The Government, in fact had advised in a meeting to consider winding up subjects like Philosophy, Hindi etc. and opening of technology and management courses.

Research in Ravenshaw has been almost nonexistent for many decades, for multiple reasons. It is believed that given the research achievements of the new faculty, on the basis of which most have been recruited, particularly in science, Ravenshaw will reacquire its earlier fame in scientific research. The new faculty is still in the formative stage.

The Kanika Library was

indeed the saddest place when the University started. The Library claimed that it had nearly two lakh books in its roll and numerous precious journals but they were thoroughly disorganised. By a hand count, it was found that only 1.12 lakh are available on the shelves. Of the entire lot, only 60,000 have been digitally entered. Precious journals were kept in gunny bags and piled up in some corner. 'The Ravenshavian' issues of an entire decade, which were almost falling off like debris, have now been scanned and made available in our website. The antique books of invaluable worth were rotting in a mezzanine floor to which there was no easy access. The only transaction with the students was for some textbooks. Due to lack of grant, and more than that, of involved interest, there was no accretion. The University has started renovation of the Kanika Library and the Centenary Library, which houses the textbooks on a massive scale. The renovation comprises conservation of the heritage structure, redesigning of utility areas and digitalisation with e-library. Already some beginning of the e-library has been made by storing about 80,000 PDF books and one lakh music files in the library server. In brief, the old Kanika Library is emerging now as the new Ravenshaw Knowledge Centre (RKC) with other such auxiliary activities that a knowledge centre entails.

As for hostel accommodation, Ravenshaw has a low satisfaction of 23%. All its dilapidated hostels with leaking roofs, and their infrastructure falling apart have been renovated, if not fully. Only the West and East Hostels have been specially renovated. The University has spent nearly

Rs 8 crore of its precious money on the repair and renovation of hostels. Besides, a projection has been worked out to raise the level of satisfaction by another 25%, through construction of six new girls' hostels and three new boys' hostels at a tentative cost of Rs 27 crore.

There is a difference between beautification and restoration. Beautification is optional but restoration is always expensive, if it is done with quality. A historic institution like Ravenshaw, whose infrastructure has greatly decayed, due to years of negligence, requires extensive restoration. The restoration of Ravenshaw College Hall, which once housed the Odisha State Assembly, was expensive. The restoration of Kanika Library is going to be expensive. Such expenditure is unavoidable if they are restored with quality. Many visitors, including the Chief Minister, who have seen the restoration of the Heritage Hall have admired it.

Desecration of statues had started long before the University was founded. Front area of the college was congested with growth of wild bushes, half masonry walls, dividers, broken tennis courts with potholes, and littered garbage. All the three statues were installed on pedestals in that nearly abandoned front area, with plasters peeling off them, and all discoloured. They were left open to the vagaries of both nature and men. The University decided to renovate the front area with a huge green lawn and wrought iron gates and boundaries, making the view of the majestic college building visible to the road. While clearing all impediments to the view, the statues too were removed. While removing them the University

had discussed with their donors, and assured them that they will be reinstalled either in the front porch or in the Kanika Library building after they are renovated. The renovation work is in process.

The backbone of a University is its faculty. The old faculty was highly underexposed. The new faculties, chosen on the basis of an open competition and global advertisement, have brought tidings from other shores. I am sure they would gradually settle down and also incorporate the best practices they have experienced. When I was a student at Ravenshaw four decades before, we had tutorials. There is none now. The high teacher-student ratio makes it impossible for any exclusive supervision. Besides, the culture had so deteriorated that even after it became a University, most of its faculty, particularly those who stayed at Bhubaneswar would leave the campus before early afternoon. I hope the new faculty does not fall into the same rot.

Ravenshaw University shall continue to be a blend of the old and new. For over a century it had been the home of classical studies. In its new version, it will now cope not only with new theories but more so with applications. Ours is a knowledge economy. But the creation of economic wealth must not be at the expense of cultural wealth and insight.

The Ravenshaw University has been in existence for some years. It should have incorporated a few best practices of the best universities of the world. I would like to believe that the University is about intellect. The intellect of a University is the sum total of intellect of its faculty and students. I trust the new faculty. I trust the students of Ravenshaw. □