



Sambalpur University has received a grant of 5.0 Crores from the World Bank for the first time to establish two “Centres of Excellence” namely “Natural Products and Therapeutics” and “Regional Development and Tribal Studies”. For the purpose, The Registrar, Sambalpur University and State Project Director, Department of Higher Education, Govt. of Odisha signed an MOU on 26<sup>th</sup> July, 2018. Professor Deepak Kumar Behera, Vice-chancellor, Sambalpur University played the key role in bringing these centres to the University.

### **Centre of Excellence in Natural Products and Therapeutics**

The centre has been instituted to develop potential natural products through extensive preclinical trials for therapeutic applications. This centre will receive a grant of 4.0 crores over a period of 5 years. The centre will explore the indigenous medicinal plants based on the traditional knowledge from the Gandhamardan hills, the biodiversity hotspot of Western Odisha, for the development of potential natural products. The centre will function in joint collaboration with the Department of Biotechnology and Bioinformatics and School of Chemistry, Sambalpur University. Prof. P.K. Naik, Dept. of Biotechnology & Bioinformatics is heading the centre along with nine other faculty members from both the departments. Dr. P.C. Panda, Principal Scientist, Regional Plant Resource Centre, Bhubaneswar, has been nominated as the mentor to supervise the progress of the research work of the Centre of Excellence. Specifically, the centre focuses on the development of therapeutic products for treatment of malaria, filaria,

tuberculosis, cancer and neurodegenerative diseases.



**Regional Development & Tribal Studies**

The centre has been developed to address the issues on livelihood and migration patterns. Further it will focus on documentation of indigenous knowledge system and cultural history (art, folklore, music and dance) for preservation and transmission of the intangible cultural heritage with a special emphasis on particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs) and to promote regional and tribal development by providing valuable inputs for policy intervention. This centre will receive a grant of 1 crore over a period of 5 years and will function in joint collaboration among Department of Anthropology, Economics, Sociology, Law and History, Sambalpur University. Prof. Arun Kumar Acharya, Department of Anthropology, heading the Centre along with 11 other faculties from these departments. Prof. K.K. Mishra, Vice Chancellor of University of Culture, Prof. S.N. Ratha and Prof. Deepak Ku. Behera, Vice Chancellor of Sambalpur University are nominated as the mentor to supervise the progress of the research work of COE. The centre will focus on the inclusive and holistic sustainable regional and tribal development for the Western Odisha.