An ecstatic journey from city to hills
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Shoolini University NEWSLETTER

My transformation shaped at Shoolini
– Page 3

ADMISSIONS HELPLINE

SENIOR ACADEMIC COUNSELLORS
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8352951037
Kulwant Kumar
7807899750
Ratika Kaundal
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SHIMLA
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6239614060

HAMIRPUR
Mukesh Kaushal
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JAMMU
Vishakha Pandita
9906699495
Office No. 77, 1st floor, Near SP Smart School, Above SAP Academy, Kacchi Chawni, Jammu

GHUMARWIN
Mukesh Kaushal
8219898155
Chauhan Complex, Opp. Central Bank of India, Old Bus Stand, Ghumarwin

BILASPUR
Kajal Pathania
78078-99731
Shop No. 16, The Vyas Co.op Society Complex, Opposite Bus Stand, Bilaspur

BATHED IN GREEN : Shoolini University campus, which remains lush green throughout the year, attains a mesmerising vibrant green hue during the monsoon. Here's a panoramic view of the campus waiting for new students as well as those already enrolled after the summer vacation. PHOTO : PREM BHATTI

State toppers attend INSPIRE camp

ANSHUL CHAUHAN

THE 37TH INSPIRE Science Camp, conducted at Shoolini University and sponsored by the Government of India's Department of Science and Technology (DST), ignited a passion for science in over 150 toppers from various schools across the state. The camp was aimed to inspire and nurture scientific curiosity among students in grades 11 and 12.

INSPIRE is a flagship scheme of the DST designed to attract young talent towards science, targeting students among the top one percent in their Class X Board Examinations and encouraging them to pursue science in Class XI and beyond.

During the camp, a physics quiz and lectures on computational approaches in biological sciences were presented by former PU Vice Chancellor Prof. R.C. Sobti. Senior academician Prof. Savita Bhatnagar led a workshop on "Magic Squares." Dr. Parveen Kumar led practical classes in chemical sciences, as well as a cultural night at the Open Air Theatre (OAT) with student giving performances of traditional folk dances and other cultural programmes.

A critical thinking exercise was conducted by Dr. Ashoo Khosla and included talks from Dr. Mahavir Singh on "Magnetic Nanoparticles for Technological Applications" and Prof. K.K. Bhasin on advanced chemistry topics. An educational trip to Jatoli Temple, a competitive chemistry quiz, artificial intelligence seminars, and a documentary provided a balance of intellectual and enjoyable activities.

On the last day, participants provided feedback, participated in an oral quiz on Shoolini University's achievements led by Dr. Ritesh Banerjee, and connected with DST INSPIRE mentors. Dr. Anand Narain Singh's presentation on "Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Services" was the academic highlight.

The camp concluded with the valedictory ceremony, which included Prof. Prem Kumar Khosla's concluding talk. Merit students were awarded scholarships and diplomas for participation and achievements.

Prof. Sunil Puri, Dean of the Faculty of Sciences, encouraged students to strive for excellence, stating, "You are the future of the nation. Ask questions and gain as much knowledge as possible." Prof. Amrik Singh Ahluwalia, Pro Vice Chancellor of Eternal University, Baru Sahib, emphasised the importance of this opportunity, adding, "This is a rare opportunity not available to everyone. You excelled at school and now have the opportunity to advance in innovation."

International conference mulls impact of Applied AI

APPLIED ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
International Conference
2024

SAHIL THAKUR

A THREE-DAY International Conference on 'Applied Artificial Intelligence' (AAI) brought together a diverse array of distinguished speakers and experts from around the world.

The delegates shared invaluable insights into the transformative power of AI across various fields, promoting an environment of innovation and collaboration. The event was organised by the Yogananda School of AI, Computers and Data Science.

The inaugural session was presided over by Prof Virender Rihani, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Advisor at Shoolini University, along with Founder Chancellor Prof PK Khosla, Pro Chancellor Vishal Anand and Vice Chancellor Prof Atul Khosla.

The conference featured five captivating keynote sessions covering topics such as Cyber Safety and Security, Urban AI and Sustainable Cities, AI's Power for Autism Spectrum Disorder, AI-Driven Discoveries, and AI's Application in Healthcare, particularly Mental Health.

The first day began with a keynote by Prof Manju Khari from Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, on 'Sensitisation Towards Cyber Safety and Security.' She emphasised the importance of cybersecurity in the context of social media and AI, offering valuable tips on protecting against cybercrime.

Next, Prof Balamurugan Balusamy, Associate Dean at the Shiv Nadar Institute of Eminence, discussed 'Urban AI and Informatics for Sustainable Cities, Villages, and Society.' He examined the challenges and opportunities in AI-driven urban transformation, using examples from cities like Dubai and Singapore, and highlighted AI's role in healthcare and smart city features.

The second day commenced with a keynote by Prof Rahul Katarya from the Delhi Technological University on 'Unlocking the Power of AI For Autism Spectrum Disorder.' He discussed the significance of AI in healthcare, especially in the early detection and management of autism spectrum disorder.

The day continued with two technical sessions and a keynote by Prof Rajesh Kumar, who shared his team's achievements in utilising AI for various applications and discoveries. Another technical session concluded the day's events.

The final day featured a keynote by Niladri Chatterjee from IIT Delhi on 'AI in Healthcare: Case Study on Mental Health.' He discussed the role of deep learning in addressing mental health issues like sleep apnea and depression, emphasising the importance of distinguishing between depression, suicide, and happiness.

During the closing ceremony, Chancellor Prof PK Khosla congratulated the participants and highlighted the significance of AI in the modern era. Prof Ravinder Hegadi, the General Chair, delivered the closing remarks and helped distribute certificates.

CSE student bags Rs 42 lakh package

SAMMARJEET SINGH, a B Tech CSE student from Gwalior, has secured a ₹42-lakh per annum package at Algo8, an AI company with offices in Canada and India.

Sammarjeet said he was drawn to Shoolini University for its strong emphasis on research and innovation. The university's advanced labs, world-class faculty, and industrial partnerships with AWS, IBM and Ikigai provided an ideal environment for his growth. Chancellor Prof PK Khosla and Vice Chancellor Prof Atul Khosla have congratulated Sammarjeet.

Academic session for new students delayed

PAWAN KALYAN

AS PER THE NEW SCHEDULE, REGISTRATION AND INDUCTION FOR NEW STUDENTS WILL NOW BEGIN ON AUGUST 20. CLASSES WOULD BE CONDUCTED FROM AUGUST 23.

THE ACADEMIC calendar for the newly admitted students has been rescheduled due to significant delays in the results and counselling processes for national entrance exams, including NEET and CUET.

The University Grants Commission had urged universities to postpone the registration and start of the classes due to these factor. As per the new schedule, registration and induction for new students will now begin on August 20. Classes would be conducted from August 23.

The postponement had caused concern among students who had already made travel arrangements based on the original academic calendar. In response, the university has offered a supportive solution. It has declared that those who have already booked tickets to the campus will be welcomed and arrangements for them to stay in the hostels would be made with no additional charges for the same.

The new academic session for the existing students would begin as per the schedule on August 3 and classes from August 5.

Innovative dual-algorithm approach by Shoolini researchers uses machine learning to enhance accuracy and accessibility in rural and developing communities

Making roads safer and preventing vehicle thefts

IDEAS FROM SHOOLINI

AHANA NATH

WITH THE sharp increase in the number of motor vehicles on roads, cases of car thefts and road accidents caused due to drunken driving have been mounting over the years causing numerous casualties.

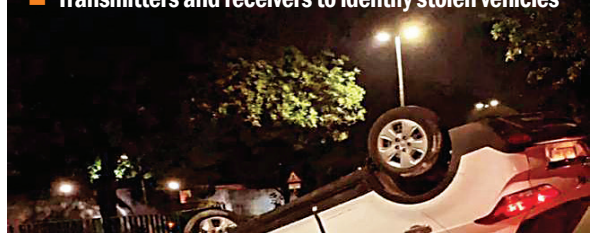
According to official statistics, almost 16,300 road accidents take place every year due to alcohol consumption and one vehicle is stolen every 14 minutes in India.

Shoolini researchers have been conducting research on how to prevent thefts of vehicles and how to prevent drunk driving and have recently been granted patents by the government's patent agency.

Shoolini University researcher, Prof. Brij Bhushan Sharma, who is also an electronic engineer, worked on two significant innovations to enhance vehicle safety and combat road accidents. His two patents are based on advanced vehicle anti-theft identification system and breath analysers to prevent drunk driving. Two MTech students Harshit Bhatt from Shimla and Wassi Rasooli from Afghanistan worked with him on the anti-theft system whereas drunk and drive project is one of his solo invention.

The anti drunk and drive system is developed using the Arduino Uno R3 microcontroller which aims to reduce accidents and save lives by alerting others to the presence of an intoxicated driver. The core of the system is the MQ-3 gas sensor module, known for its high sensitivity to alcohol. When the sensor detects alcohol levels exceeding a certain threshold (1000ppm), it sends a signal to the Arduino microcontroller. The Arduino then processes this signal and activates LED lights on the vehicle, signaling other drivers and pedestrians that the driver is under the influence of liquor. This feature ensures timely detection and provides a clear visual indicator to others, potentially preventing accidents.

- 16,300 road accidents every year due to drunken driving
- A vehicle theft is reported in India every 14 minutes
- Sensors to beep aloud after detecting drunk drivers
- Transmitters and receivers to identify stolen vehicles



Solan Police in a collaboration with Shoolini University, recently conducted a special drive against drunk driving. The initiative which was held near Solan Bypass utilised breath analysers designed by Prof. Brij Bhushan Sharma to identify and deter intoxicated drivers. Within just two hours, 15 drivers were apprehended for driving under the influence. Offenders were fined and made aware on the dangers of drunk driving.

One of the key advantages of this system is its affordability and accessibility. The cost effective components like the Arduino Uno R3 and MQ-3 sensor, the system is both affordable and easy to implement. This makes it a practical solution that can be widely adopted without the need for extensive vehicle modifications or high costs. The introduction of this system could have far-reaching implications for road safety worldwide. If widely adopted, it could lead to a significant reduction in drunk driving incidents and related accidents.

Prof Sharma's other finding - the anti-theft system - addresses the growing concern of vehicle theft. With traditional security measures often falling short against sophisticated theft techniques, this software system offers advanced, reliable, and budget-friendly technology to keep vehicles secure. Many vehicle owners neglect essential precautions by making their cars easy targets for criminals. This new system is designed to bridge the gap by providing easy-to-install, affordable, and compact security solutions. It operates using a transmitter and receiver setup. The transmitter which is installed in the vehicle stores unique information such as the engine number, chassis number and number plate. The data is transmitted to the receiver which can be placed at strategic locations such as traffic lights or police checkpoints.

The research on both the anti-theft system and breath analysers represents an innovative approach towards tackling vehicle related crimes and promoting safer driving practices.

Vice chancellor Prof Atul Khosla said the research on anti drunk driving and anti theft technology "showcases our commitment to enhancing public safety through innovative technology".

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‘Empower students to take ownership of their learning’

SAKSHI KUMARI

MR RITESH Kapoor is Director Principal, A.S.N. Higher Secondary School, Channi Himmat, Jammu and also Chief Editor, The Excel Express Newspaper, Jammu besides being the President of the Newspaper Editors Association India. We spoke to him on the education system. Here are excerpts from the interview:

Please tell us about your academic journey and about your school?
Well, my journey is quite interesting as I was a Medical Stream student having an additional Mathematics subject in my 12th Class. So I did Aircraft Maintenance Engineering in 2001. I have worked with Indian Airlines as a Ground Engineer for one year but due to family business came back to my city Jammu and then joined one of our school branch as an Administrator which my father started in 1969. Later on I did Masters in Physics and also did Diploma in Journalism. In 2008 started a Daily English Newspaper with the title “The Excel Express” and also started a Coffee Shop with Library in 2022. So my destiny played a major role in my switching over various fields.

Our school was established in the year 1969 which is permanently recognised by Jammu and Kashmir government and is affiliated to the JK Board of School Education. The school was upgraded in 2003 to higher secondary level and is offering all the streams (Science, Commerce and Humanities) for the students.

What strategies do you use to ensure a supportive learning environment for both students and staff?
To create a supportive learning environment, it's important to encourage a growth mindset, promote inclusivity and diversity, foster open communication, provide mental health resources, encourage collaboration, recognise achievements, and offer professional development opportunities. These strategies help everyone feel valued, supported, and empowered to succeed.

According to you, what is one thing that students should definitely focus on in schools, but they don’t really notice its importance?
One thing that students should definitely focus on in schools, but often don't realise its importance, is developing essential life skills, such as Time management and organisation; Communication and teamwork; Critical thinking and problem-solving; Emotional intelligence and empathy; Adaptability and resilience and Self-awareness and reflection.

Some ways to focus on these skills includes participating in extracurricular activities, voluntary and community service, collaborative projects and group work, mindfulness and self-reflection practices, seeking feedback and mentorship and embracing challenges and stepping out of comfort zones.

PRINCIPALSPEAKS

Mr RITESH KAPOOR, Director Principal, A.S.N. Higher Secondary School, Channi Himmat, Jammu

What according to you is the biggest challenge to a fully educated India?
According to me, some of the biggest challenges to a fully educated India include ensuring equal access to quality education, especially in rural and underserved areas, and making it affordable for students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Improving the quality of education through better infrastructure, teacher training, and curriculum development is crucial. Addressing gender, caste, and socio-economic disparities, reducing high drop-out rates among marginalised groups, and tackling shortages of qualified teachers are essential steps. Additionally, challenging traditional mindset barriers that deprioritise education and ensuring adequate infrastructure, such as schools and facilities, are vital for progress.

Are you satisfied with the current education system in India?
Honestly, there are still many problems that India faces being a country with great education system such as high drop-out rates, inadequate teacher training and shortages, outdated curricula and teaching methods, and an emphasis on rote learning over critical thinking and skill development. To achieve a more comprehensive and inclusive education system, India needs to address these challenges by improving access to quality education for all, enhancing teacher training and capacity building, introducing modern and relevant curricula, and encouraging critical thinking, creativity, and skill development. By acknowledging and addressing these areas, India can work towards a more effective and inclusive education system that prepares students for success in the 21st century.

Do you think the government should exercise control over public schools?
The government should play a role in ensuring public schools provide quality education, but excessive control can stifle innovation and autonomy. A balance between oversight and autonomy is essential. Government involvement can set standards and accountability measures to provide funding and resources. However, excessive control can lead to over-regulation, stifling creativity and innovation and limited flexibility to address local needs and contexts.

Would you like to make any other point regarding school education in India?
To improve school education in India, it is essential to address several key areas. There are limited resources for special needs education, highlighting the need for more support and infrastructure for inclusive education. The focus on high-stakes testing can cause stress and narrow the scope of learning to mere test preparation. Enhancing teacher training and providing ongoing support and resources are vital for effective education. Additionally, empowering students to take ownership of their learning and participate in educational decisions can significantly enhance their engagement and agency. Addressing these areas can help create a more comprehensive and inclusive education system in India, preparing students for success in the 21st century.

Insightful discussions at CEDSA conclave

ADARSH GHASTA

SHOOLINI UNIVERSITY hosted a two-day conclave by Centre for Excellence in Direct Selling in Academics (CEDSA), featuring a series of insightful discussions and significant recognitions.

The event saw participation from prominent direct selling professionals across the country, who contributed as panelists.

The conclave commenced with an address by Chancellor Prof. P.K. Khosla. He emphasised on the essence of direct selling by highlighting its unique characteristic of empowering the consumers with a business opportunity.

Prof. Ashish Khosla, Director innovationa and Marketing delivered an engaging speech, sharing his life story and stressing the importance of a learning mindset. He spoke passionately about the establishment of Shoolini University and its commitment to quality over quantity in education.

Prof. Kamal Kant Vashisth, Director of CEDSA at Shoolini University, emphasised the importance of education in gaining societal acceptance for direct selling.

The first panel discussion, "Key Stakeholders of Direct Selling Industry in India and Their Roles," featured Mr. Kapil Sharma, Mohd. Zakir Hussain, Mr KM Rafique, Mr Kishore Varma and Mr Rahul Sharma. The panelists discussed the government's regulations and the roles of various stakeholders in the industry.

In the second panel discussion, Mr Kailash Bhattad, Sh. Shiv Arora, Prof. KN Vasupaliah, Dr. Vinod Nimboodri, and Ms. Yamini Sharma shared their insights on enhancing the profession's perception and dignity.

The 3rd panel discussion, "Contemporary Challenges, Proposed Solutions, and the Way Forward," included Dr. Surender Vats, Mr Pranjal R Daniel, Mr Narsi Grewal, Mr Rajiv Gupta, Mr Ved Prakash Ojha and Mr Sunil Sharma.

The second day of the event commenced with a Panel Discussion on “Financial Inclusion and Economic Impact of the Direct Selling Industry in India”.

The panel included some notable figures like, Mr. Rahul Sudan, Editor-in-Chief of Direct Selling Today; Mr. Hem Pandey, Former Secretary, Minister of Consumer Affairs, GOI; Dr. Gopalam Sultania, academician, author, and Direct Seller; Mr. Mahavir Kainthura, author and top title achiever at VLCC Well science; Mr. Harshvardhan Jain, top social media influencer and life coach and Dr. Manish Marwaha, Chief Managing Director of Amulya Herbs Pvt. Ltd.

The leaders at the conclave were presented with the annual CEDSA Golden Rudraksha Awards andrecognition for achievement in the direct selling business.

The prestigious awards were presented to Mohd. Zakir Hussain, Mr. Harshvardhan Jain, and Prof. KN Vasupalaiah. The award honors those leaders who have excelled beyond themselves and have dedicated themselves in service to the industry.

AI-driven HR explored at conclave

SNL TEAM

A TWO-DAY HR conclave titled "Harnessing the Power of Artificial Intelligence for HR Excellence" was organised at Shoolini University.

The event focused on the transformative impact of AI on the HR landscape, particularly in recruitment, talent management, employee engagement, and organisational efficiency. The conclave featured thought-provoking keynotes from industry leaders and AI experts, setting the stage for two engaging panel discussions.

In his inaugural address, Shoolini University Chancellor Prof. PK Khosla underscored the crucial role of AI in modern society and highlighted its potential to enhance resource utilisation for societal betterment.

The first panel discussion, moderated by Prof Munish Sehrawat, President and Dean of the Faculty of Management Sciences at Shoolini University, included speakers Ashisha Bhatia from Tata and Vasudha Mahajan from Aerial Telecom Solutions. The discussion emphasised that AI is designed to support, not replace, human efforts, focusing on the future of work and the collaboration between AI and humans.

BOOK RELEASED ON SMART HR AND AI

A BOOK “Smart HR with AI: Leveraging AI for Workforce Excellence,” featuring transformative insights from HR leaders, was launched at the HR conclave.

Edited by Mr. Ashish Khosla, Co-Founder and President of Innovation and Marketing at Shoolini University, and Dr. Pooja Verma, Associate Professor of Management at Shoolini University, the book has been designed by Ms. Aditi Sharma, Graphic Designer at ZSapiens Softech Pvt. Ltd.

The book brought together contributions from human resource professionals and faculty members from Shoolini University and SILB.

The second panel discussion, moderated by Prof. Pradeep Sharma, centered on empowering and retaining the workforce. Panelists included Harshit Malaviya, Head HR at Satin Creditcare Network Limited; Jitender Panihar, CHRO at Fitelo; Nikhil Mallah, CHRO at Sahayog Multistate Cooperative Ltd.; and Rikhi Regmi, Head HR at Bharti Airtel Foundation. They discussed the importance of emotional connection and creating a desirable work environment for employees.

Attendees also participated in experiential workshops, gaining hands-on experience with AI tools in HR processes, from automated recruiting to performance analytics.

These sessions offered practical insights into AI integration in HR. Networking opportunities were abundant, allowing participants to connect with peers, industry experts, and thought leaders.

Mr. Ashish Khosla, Co-Founder and President of Innovation and Marketing at Shoolini University, emphasised India's potential as a leading workforce provider, predicting significant demographic advantages for the country in the coming decades.

‘Skill sets, education and right attitude must for magic to happen’

BY INVITATION

SATYAJIT SINGH SETHI*

EMBARKING ON a corporate journey involves a strategic alignment between one's aspirations, skillset, and educational background. This alignment is crucial as it forms the foundation upon which a successful career is built. However, it is not merely the skills and education that determine success, but the attitude and mindset with which an individual approaches their career.

While skills can be taught, it is the right attitude and a growth mindset that set individuals apart. A growth mindset, as coined by psychologist Carol Dweck, is the belief that abilities and intelligence can be developed through dedication and hard work. This mindset fosters a love for learning and resilience essential for great accomplishment.

In the corporate world, this translates to a willingness to take on new challenges, a commitment to continuous improvement, and an ability to adapt to changing circumstances. Individuals with a growth mindset view setbacks as opportunities to learn rather than insurmountable obstacles. They are more likely to seek feedback, embrace change, and persist in the face of difficulties.

In any career, things will go wrong. How one handles these situations can make or break relationships. The strongest relationships often emerge from crises that are well-handled. When challenges arise, those who approach the situation with a problem-solving attitude and a calm demeanour can turn potential disasters into opportunities for building trust and demonstrating leadership.

Effective communication, empathy, and accountability are crucial in these moments. By acknowledging mistakes, taking responsibility, and working collaboratively to find solutions, individuals can strengthen their professional relationships and build a reputation for reliability and integrity.

The world is more dynamic than ever, driven by rapid technological advancements and shifting market demands. In this environment, flexibility and the willingness to upskill on the job are essential. Staying relevant

requires a commitment to lifelong learning and a proactive approach to career development.

Employers value employees who are not only skilled in their current roles but also demonstrate the potential to grow and adapt as the organization evolves. This means staying abreast of industry trends, seeking out professional development opportunities, and being open to new ways of working.

To align aspirations with one's skillset and educational background, it is important to take a strategic approach to career planning. This involves:

Self-Assessment: Understand your strengths, weaknesses, interests, and values. Reflect on your long-term career goals and how they align with your current skills and education.

Skill Development: Identify the skills needed to achieve your aspirations and seek out opportunities to develop them. This may involve formal education, on-the-job training, or self-directed learning.

Networking: Build a network of mentors, peers, and industry professionals who can provide guidance, support, and opportunities for growth.

Flexibility: Be open to adjusting your career path as you gain new experiences and insights. Flexibility allows you to take advantage of unexpected opportunities and navigate changes in the job market.

Resilience: Cultivate resilience to handle setbacks and challenges with grace and determination. Resilience is key to maintaining momentum and achieving long-term success.

Finally, the corporate journey is a dynamic and evolving path that requires the alignment of aspirations, skillset, and education. However, it is the right attitude and growth mindset that truly set individuals apart. By embracing challenges, building strong relationships, and remaining flexible and committed to continuous learning, professionals can navigate their careers successfully and achieve their aspirations in a rapidly changing world.

(The writer is a Professor Of Practice with the Faculty Of Management Sciences)

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School of Media and Communications (SMC) at Shoolini University offers you the most immersive, hands-on experience in the latest media trends, technologies, and platforms to supercharge your career aspirations. You will engage in **real-world projects**, and get **top internships and placements** through our industry collaborations with Hindustan Times, The Indian Express, Radio Mirchi, Tol, CNN-IBN, News 18 and other media entities.

Real-World Media Experiences

Dive into the World of Journalism with The Shoolini Newsletter
Student reporters publish fortnightly Shoolini Newsletter, showcasing campus news. Students engage in various tasks like **story editing, page designing, photography, and printing** at the Indian Express press. Real-life reporting experience empowers students to act as professional journalists.

Take the Spotlight with Shoolini TV
Students are **trained as TV anchors and reporters** for weekly Shoolini Samvad (Hindi) and Shoolini TV (English). They gain hands-on experience in podcasting, video editing, graphic designing, and animation. Access to stote-of-the-art studio facilities enables students to produce complete news bulletins.

Captivate the Airwaves with Radio Shoolini
'Radio Shoolini' provides a platform for students to demonstrate their skills as **Radio Jockeys**. Students interview faculty members and campus guests, showcasing their communication abilities. General entertainment format allows students to engage in lively conversations and engage with listeners.

Mentored by Media Trailblazers

Nishtha Shukla Anand — ex-Reuters; Founder TechThirsty.com & Pen Pundit Media; Trustee & Director Shoolini University
Gurpreet Tathgur — AVP Non-Fiction Viacom 18
Tanvi Gandhi — Independent Producer ex-YRF; Phantom Films; Founder House of TeeGee Productions

Namit Sharma — Creator | Producer CEO Dreamers & Doers Co.
Kunal Nandwani — Co-founder & CEO uTrade; Founder Chandigarh Angels Network
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Vipin Pubby — Veteran Journalist; Former Editor The Indian Express; Director School of Media and Communications

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'Practical training for future media professionals our USP'

FACE TO FACE

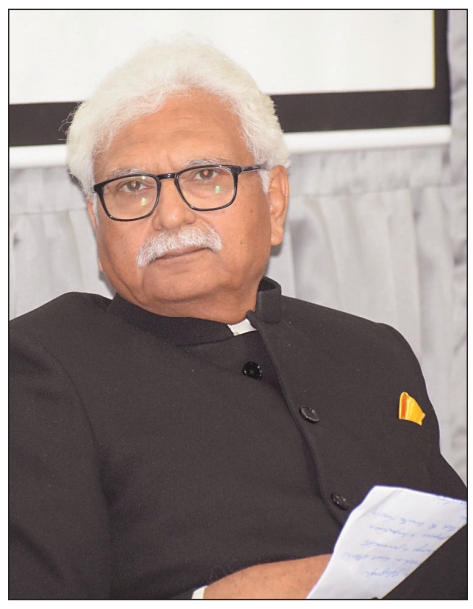
PAWAN KASHYAP

PROF VIPIN PUBBY is a veteran journalist with an experience spanning about 45 years in print and electronic media. After remaining Resident Editor of The Indian Express for close to 18 years, he joined Shoolini University as Director, School of Media and Communications. Here are excerpts from an interview :

What prompted you to switch over to academics after such a long stint in journalism?
Let me clarify that I remain a journalist and continue to write for various newspapers and magazines besides appearing in TV and digital media shows. Coming to the point about my association with academics, I think it was a natural progression. For years I had been recruiting young journalists and one of the biggest hurdles was availability of talent at the junior level. Students appearing for tests and interviews from various media institutions appeared to have had little knowledge of practical journalism although they had academic knowledge. Therefore one of the major reasons for my deciding to train future journalists and mass media professionals was to meet the demand of the industry.

When did Shoolini University introduce journalism and media courses and which courses are available?
Under graduate programme is journalism and mass media were introduced six to seven years ago. It's a three year course which encompasses various fields of media including print, electronics and digital medium. This year we have also introduced specialisation in PR, Events Management and Advertising. The two year Post Graduate course was launched 3/4 years ago. We also enrol students for pursuing their PhD.

What's the USP of the School of Media and Communications. How is it different from other media schools?
Our School of Media and Communications stands out as a unique institution where a lot of emphasis is laid on the practical aspects of mass media. Experienced professionals from various fields of mass media teach students and provide the benefit of their experience in their specialised fields. Besides myself with an experience or about 45 years, we have a communications expert from the field of Public Relations and Corporate Communications with almost similar kind of experience. Similarly we have a former RJ with a leading radio station heading the Radio Shoolini and a professional with over 15 years of experience in leading TV channels who provide practical tips to students. At the same time we don't neglect academics too and have faculty members with vast experience in teaching various aspects of media. I think we provide a perfect blend of practical knowledge and sound academic knowledge to the students.



PROF VIPIN PUBBY,
Director, School of Media and Communications,
Shoolini University

How do you teach practical journalism to students as you are not based out of a major city?
We provide hands on training to students in various fields. For instance, we bring out Shoolini Newsletter which replicates a normal broadsheet complete with eight columns displays, editing, designing and production in newsprint which is circulated in several parts of the state besides the campus itself. We also have a Hindi version of the Newsletter which is called Shoolini Patrika. Then we have weekly YouTube bulletins called Shoolini TV Bulletin in English and Shoolini Samwad in Hindi. The Bulletin is being brought out, without a single break, for the last 216 weeks while the Samwad comes out on Tuesdays and over 180 editions have been released without a break. As regards radio programmes are concerned, we produce programmes on a daily basis.

From which regions do you get students for School of Media and Communications?
Practically from all regions of the country. From the North East and West Bengal to Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka to Maharashtra. We also get a lot of students from Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana and JK. This year we are also having a foreign student joining the new batch.

What about internships or jobs prospects of students of media and mass communications?
We actively help and support students for internships/jobs in various media outlets. These include The Indian Express, Hindustan Times, Times of India, Dainik Bhaskar, Punjab Kesri, Amar Ujala, Navodya Times, ABP News channel, India TV, Aaj Tak, CNN News18, News TV, PTC etc besides a host of leading digital media channels. Some of our alumni are doing very well with the advantage of learning the ropes of the profession in the University itself.

What are the biggest challenges and trends in the future of journalism and mass media?
In the fast paced world of today, and which could be even faster in years to come, there would be a growing demand for quick and accurate news dissemination. With the advent of social media and the zillions of "news channels" or unverified social media posts, credible news sources would be more and more in demand. This is where trained media professionals would be much in demand who would bring speed and accurate to news dissemination. Also in the future, there is bound to be more scope in the digital media with specialisation as the buzz word. Similarly, media professionals in the fields like Public Relations, Corporate Communications, Events Management would be much in demand besides those specialising in video editing, special efforts and film making. The key to the success for future media professionals would be a well rounded personality with the right attitude and skills.

How do you teach students about avoiding fake news?
One of the biggest dangers posed by social media is the prevalence of fake news. Some people put up news without fact checking leading to false rumours. It can lead to serious consequences. Deep fake is another danger with new technology coming in. Therefore we teach students to check, cross check and re-check any news that they come across but never put up unverified news.

My transformation shaped at Shoolini

alumni recalls

SAKET SAURABH

IF YOU'D TOLD me back then, sitting in my car parked on a dusty road in my hometown, attending online classes during the initial lockdown phase, that I'd be standing here – a confident individual, a batch topper with a gold medal around my neck – I wouldn't have believed you. Yearning for the vibrant campus life, the bustling classrooms, and the happiness I craved after taking a break of 5 years for my studies, I promised myself I'd make the most of things when normalcy returned.

Little did I know, Shoolini University had much bigger plans for me. The online classes, though a temporary setback, laid the groundwork for my academic success. The dedicated faculty, with their clear explanations and interactive sessions, ensured a smooth learning experience. But Shoolini is more than just academics. It's about transformation.

Looking back, I see a shy, diffident boy who walked through those gates on his first day. Public speaking? Unthinkable. Taking the lead in group projects? Absolutely terrifying. Yet, Shoolini provided the perfect environment for me to blossom. Volunteering with organisations like YWC, IAMD, and Healing Himalayas became a turning point. These experiences, filled with teamwork, empathy, and compassion, chipped away at my inhibitions.

My journey at Shoolini wasn't confined to campus events. Working as an intern in the DSW office, where I eventually became the longest-serving intern, honed my organisational skills. Juggling academics and internship responsibilities initially seemed daunting, but the support and guidance from my mentors helped me develop time-management skills and a strong work ethic.

And finally, that bittersweet last day on campus. Standing amidst the familiar yet soon-to-be-distant buildings, a wave of

emotions washed over me. It was a culmination of late-night event management sessions, laughter-filled canteens, and friendships forged in the crucible of shared experiences. Shoolini wasn't just a place; it became a second home.

To my fellow alumni, I say this: Cherish the memories you've made. Let the lessons learned within these walls guide you on your path ahead. Shoolini equips you; it's up to you to utilise those tools and carve your own success story.

For the current students, this is my message: Grasp every opportunity that comes your way. Step outside your comfort zone, participate in events, volunteer for causes you care about. Shoolini provides a platform for personal and professional growth – utilise it to its fullest potential. Don't be afraid to fall; learn from your mistakes, pick yourself up,and keep moving forward. Remember, the most transformative experiences often lie outside your syllabus.

Leaving Shoolini, I carry not just a degree and a medal, but a newfound confidence, a spirit of volunteerism, and a network of lifelong friends.

This transformation wouldn't have been possible without the unwavering support and guidance of my incredible mentors. To Poonam Nanda Ma'am, Vipin Pubby Sir, Avnee Khosla Ma'am, Nishtha Shukla Ma'am and Shard Sir, your dedication to teaching and your invaluable advice played a pivotal role in my academic success.

An ecstatic journey from city to hills

FIRST PERSON

AHANA NATH

IT HAS always been a dream for a person like me, growing up in an overly crowded city, to live in the hills where I could enjoy the peace and serenity of the evergreen nature. "The City of Joy" or Kolkata, where I spent 21 years of my life in the midst of a chaotic and dusty megalopolitan, coming to Shoolini University was a therapeutic experience.

In the enchanting landscape of Shoolini University, nestled in the picaresque Kasauli Hills, life serves as a masterpiece painted with simplicity and brilliance. Here, every moment is like a fine brushstroke on the canvas of one's academic exploration and personal growth.

Shoolini is a living artwork,

where students are both the artists and the art, shaping their own narratives through beautiful agendas.

The campus buzzes with different people and activities as diverse as the colours of the Himalayan sunset. From impromptu jam sessions under the trees at the Pine Court to highly spirited debates in cozy nooks.

Our academic pedagogies are really unique and beautifully designed in a way where a student can easily make time for their co-curriculum activities as well. This has been an added benefit for me as I am trained vocalist and writer. Our classrooms aren't just spaces for lectures but incubators of new ideas. Our professors are more than just educators, they are mentors who guide students through the vast ocean of knowledge, turning each class into a vibrant mural art of learning.

My favourite corner in this entire university is Shoolini's library. Who wouldn't want to keep nature - which is incorporated in the library - as the witness while going on a learning expedition. This jamboree about Shoolini is definitely about celebrating one's accomplishments and having a journey of a lifetime. Shoolini's Yogananda Library isn't just a mere collection of books as it gives me a feeling of a treasure trove where simplicity and depth coexist inviting students to walk on their extraordinary intellectual journeys.

As the day transforms into night, the campus comes alive with the extraordinary. Evenings are certainly jazzy as a spectacle of shared experiences. Festivals and events are not routine occurrences. I have discovered myself on a whole different perspective after I came here as people of Shoolini has served me love, compassion and appreciation. It would have meant nothing while winning three consecutive trophies in singing : Tansen ki Khoj, Manchtantra and Moksh if these people wouldn't be there.

In this grand symphony of Shoolini, for me life is a musical journey where the simplicity of learning and the depth of human connections create a resonant melody that echoes through the hills. So I would heartily welcome all new students to Shoolini where we are simply the melody notes in the beautiful composition of our individual fortes.

**(The writer is a 3rd Semester student of MA in Journalism. The First Person account has been excerpted from her blog : https://theartistejournal.blogspot.com/2023/11/city-to-hills-life-in-shoolini.html*

SPEAK OUT

Students demand transparency in examination system

SAHIL THAKUR

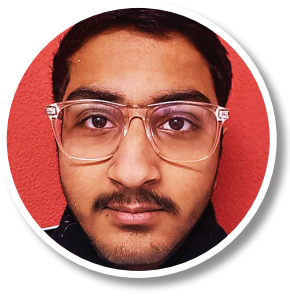
The recent spate of leakage of question papers of competitive examinations has sent shockwaves across the nation, leaving thousands of students in a state of distress. We asked a cross section of students on their views on the controversy. Here's what they said :

Question paper leakages undermine the credibility as well as the fairness of examination. I think the ways in which these acts can be avoided include introduction of encrypted question papers, real-time monitoring and exemplary punitive measures for offenders. By restructuring the examination format itself we could recover trust and assure all applicants that there is a fair and secure process for conduct of examinations.
Osheen Koul, BTechBiotech)

The NEET UG 2024 controversy has sparked off concerns over alleged paper leaks and has put questions on the integrity of the examination system. Some unscrupulous people have made it a business by leaking a papers of various competitive examinations. What about those students who are really putting in hardwork with all dedication and consistency and are yet not able to clear such examinations.
Saloni (Btech Food Tech)

After the spate of reports about question paper leakages, trusting the National Testing Authority has become highly questionable. Strict measures will have to be taken to prevent such question paper leakages. To prevent incidents like this, NEET should be conducted in an online format similar to JEE-Mains. The integrity of the exams must be preserved, considering the large number of students taking the competitive examinations every year.
Vaishali Thakur (BTech Biotech Research)

The paper leaks in the NEET UG examinations and some other competitive entrance examinations have sparked outrage and concern among students, parents, and educators alike. The leaks not only compromise the fairness and integrity of the examination but also create a sense of disillusionment among the aspiring healthcare professionals. Effective solutions must be devised to prevent such leaks.
Yuvraj Chandel (Btech CSE Data Science)



Allegations of cheating, including leaked question papers and impersonation, have marred the reputation of competitive entrance exams. Such incidents directly impacts the futures of countless aspiring students who had been slogging to prepare for the examinations. Stricter measures must be taken to prevent malpractice and ensure a level playing field. There is also the need for reforms in the educational and examination systems.
Lavya Manchanda (Btech Biotech research)

The NEET-UG 2024 examination faces scrutiny over alleged paper leaks, other irregularities and an unprecedented rise in perfect scores. The controversy has shaken students' faith in the examination's integrity, with calls for a thorough, unbiased inquiry. As the saga unfolds, the future of thousands of medical aspirants hangs in the balance, emphasising the need for justice and transparency. Same is true of applicants for other such exams.
Ashutosh Rana (Btech CSE Cybersecurity)

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