

Towards the  
'mountain of oppor-  
tunities'  
– Page 3



# Shoolini

## University NEWSLETTER



'Every student deserves  
the Shoolini experience'  
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## A hat-trick of THE top rank for Shoolini

SAHIL THAKUR

SHOOLINI HAS achieved the distinction of attaining the top rank among all private universities in the country in the prestigious Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings for the third time in a row.

With this, the university has cemented its position as a leader in innovation and research – by being the top ranked private university in both the gold-standard Global University ranking systems - QS World University Rankings and the THE World University Rankings for 2025.

The innovation and research focused 15-year-old University has been placed in the 401-500 band of world rankings. Only the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, has been ranked above it in the 251-300 band.

While 107 Indian universities featured in this year's rankings (up from 91 last year), Shoolini stood out by being ranked second among all Indian Universities and maintaining its position among the top for research quality and international outlook. The other Indian institutions ranked in the top -500 band are Anna University, Mahatma Gandhi University and Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences. Only the Saveetha Institute is bracketed in the same band with Shoolini University as the top private university in the country. Other prominent institutions in the ranking include IIT Indore 501-600; and BITS Pilani, IIT Patna, Thapar University in the 601-800 category.

Shoolini University's excellence has been further high-

WITH THIS, THE UNIVERSITY HAS CEMENTED ITS POSITION AS A LEADER IN INNOVATION AND RESEARCH – BY BEING THE TOP RANKED PRIVATE UNIVERSITY IN BOTH THE GOLD-STANDARD GLOBAL UNIVERSITY RANKING SYSTEMS - QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS AND THE THE WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS FOR 2025.



World  
University  
Rankings 2025

lighted by its global performance in "International Outlook" with number two position in the country (Ranked 416 globally).

Hailing the remarkable achievement by the university, its founder and chancellor Prof PK Khosla said, "the rankings are a testimony of the high quality research that is encouraged and undertaken at the University. This global rank among the top 500 of the country also qualifies the University to be a Category 1 university. Further, we are now ranked 175 globally in research quality which is a very inspiring achievement."

Pro Chancellor Mr Vishal Anand described the university's achievement as "an amazing achievement. All staff and researchers have contributed for achieving the coveted position. It also underscores Shoolini's unique entrepreneurial environment where we're fostering a culture where students innovate fearlessly and transform ideas into real-world solutions."

Hailing the high rankings achieved by the university, Vice Chancellor Prof Atul Khosla

said, "Our ranking reflects Shoolini's dedication to a globally integrated education. Through international collaborations with the World's best Universities we are advancing research, preparing our students for impactful global careers, and enhancing our community's diversity and reach. I am confident our faculty and researchers will continue with the exceptional hardwork and dedication they have put in over the past years"

"Shoolini University is a unique place of higher learning where innovation and thinking differently forms the crux of everything we do. The top scores on research quality and international outlook reflect the deep expertise we have been building in innovation and research in the fields of water, energy including solar power, Himalayan ecosystems, cancer, nanoparticles and AI," said Ashish Khosla President, Innovation.

The twin recognition has come as crowning glory to the University which also tops the SCIMAGO rankings in the categories of Chemistry, Physics, and Astronomy.

## United colours of Manchtantra



Campus remained abuzz with the annual inter-department cultural competition, 'Manchtantra', which was spread over three days with the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Legal Studies lifting the coveted trophy. More photographs on the back page. PHOTO : PREM BHATTI

## Dual degree course gets going with UoM

VANSHIKA

INDIA'S LEADING research-oriented Shoolini University has partnered with one of the top-ranked global universities, the University of Melbourne, to enrol students into a dual degree program that will lead to a University of Melbourne BSc Advanced (Honours) degree thus making it the first institution in the world to do so.

The four-year programme follows a 2+2-year model, where students undertake two years of a general science curriculum at Shoolini University, before transferring to University of Melbourne to undertake a further two years of speciality study.

The programme promises exceptional training across a broad and deep science curriculum, combined with international experience and network-



ing opportunities in Australia. The first batch of students for the dual degree programme have commenced their studies.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global, Culture and Engagement), Professor Michael

Wesley and Dean of Science, Professor Moira O'Bryan, who led a nine-member delegation from the University of Melbourne, met and interacted with the first batch of students. The delegation aimed to explore

opportunities for deeper academic partnerships and engage with students and faculty.

The first batch of students received an inspiring address by Professor O'Bryan, who emphasised the significance of this

cohort and the innovative curriculum they will undertake.

Professor O'Bryan thanked Shoolini University Vice-Chancellor, Professor Atul Khosla, whose vision and drive have been instrumental in realising the dual degree programme.

Mr. Vishal Anand, Founder and Pro Chancellor, Shoolini University, said that the visit by the University of Melbourne delegation is a "testament to our shared vision of nurturing talent and innovation through international collaboration".

On the occasion Vice Chancellor Prof Atul Khosla said the visit "marks a significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to create a global learning environment at Shoolini University. Our collaboration with UoM aims to provide our students with world-class education and research opportunities".

## 20 Shoolini researchers in world's top 2 pc list

PAWAN KALYAN

IN A SIGNIFICANT achievement, 20 researchers from Shoolini University have been recognised among the world's top 2 per cent scientists in a prestigious list compiled by Stanford University, based on Scopus data from Elsevier.

The Stanford University list, widely regarded as a benchmark for scientific impact, features two distinct categories: one based on career-long data and another focusing on performance in the year 2023.

Congratulating the researchers, founder and Chancellor Prof PK Khosla said "the recognition highlights the university's growing influence in global research and its commitment to scientific excellence".

The researchers recognised for their outstanding performance in 2023 include: Sadanand Pandey, Pardeep Singh, Gaurav Sharma, Pankaj Raizada, Amit Kumar, Shyam Singh Chandel, Santanu Mukherjee, Dhriti Kapoor, Anil Kumar, Vasudha Hasija, Amit Kumar, Anita Sudhaik, Pooja Dhiman, Rohit Sharma, Gururaj Kudur Jayaprakash, Rohit Jasrotia, Dinesh Kumar, Rajesh Kumar, Deepak Kumar, and Poonam Negi.

Eight of these scientists also featured in the career-long impact list: Sadanand Pandey, Santanu Mukherjee, Gaurav Sharma, Shyam Singh Chandel, Pardeep Singh, Amit Kumar, Pankaj Raizada, and Anil Kumar.

Meanwhile, Shoolini University has scored far better in the Stanford University's

list than those universities which were ranked higher under the National Institutional Rankings Framework (NIRF) of the Union Education ministry.

The University was ranked 70 in NIRF and has 20 researchers in the top two per cent of the world's top two per cent scientists list.

The university's researchers have been consistently improving representation in the top two per cent list. From mere 5 per cent in 2020, the university now has 20 researchers in the list.

The Stanford University list employs a comprehensive methodology to evaluate scientific impact. It considers various metrics including citations, h-index, and a composite indicator known as the c-score.

## MoU signed with Franklin Univ, Columbus

SHOOLINI UNIVERSITY has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Franklin University, Columbus, to establish a 2+2 programme.

The MoU was formalised during the visit of Dr. Godfrey Mendes, Senior Vice President for Global Programmes and Strategic Initiatives, and Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs at Franklin University. The collaboration is expected to greatly enhance educational opportunities and open new pathways for students at both universities.

The focus of discussions was the establishment of a 2+2 programme aimed at promoting global academic collaboration. The programme will enable students to complete

THE PROGRAMME WILL ENABLE STUDENTS TO COMPLETE THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF THEIR DEGREE AT SHOOLINI UNIVERSITY, FOLLOWED BY TWO YEARS AT FRANKLIN UNIVERSITY.

the first two years of their degree at Shoolini University, followed by two years at Franklin University, leading to a joint degree. This initiative is designed to provide students with a unique opportunity to experience both educational environments and gain a global perspective.

## Pact with UK's Queen Mary Univ on dual degree

A leading UK university, Queen Mary University of London and Shoolini University, have signed a partnership agreement to enable students from India to earn a dual master's degree with both an Indian and UK qualification.

The agreement will allow students in India to complete their first year of postgraduate study at Shoolini University and their second year at Queen Mary. Among others, the agreement focuses on business and management-related degrees, including the MSc Accounting and Finance, MSc Digital Marketing, and MSc International Business.

Prof Atul Khosla, Vice Chancellor, Shoolini University, said the agreement would open up several avenues for students. "After getting educated at the leading private university of the country, the students opting for



the dual degree would get exposure to the best education practices offered in the UK".

Professor Helen Bailey, Vice Principal International at Queen Mary, emphasised the value of this programme said the "collaborative agreement creates a distinctive platform for students to immerse themselves in a truly international learning environment and demonstrates how Queen Mary is continuously opening the doors to opportunity".

Queen Mary University's School of Business and Management is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), considered the gold standard on Business school accreditations.

With its quick blood-clotting action and wound healing properties, the spray is expected to revolutionise first aid and emergency medical care

## A revolutionary herbal spray to combat excessive loss of blood



AHANA NATH

SHOOLINI UNIVERSITY'S

researchers have developed an innovative herbal spray designed to prevent excessive blood loss sustained from injuries.

The invention led by Dr. Deepak Kumar, Professor, School of Pharmaceutical Sciences from Shoolini University in collaboration with Dr. Rajeswar Kamal Kant Arya, of Kumaun University is focused on utilising the natural healing and blood coagulating properties of the Eupatorium adenophorum plant.

The spray offers an incomparable approach to wound care

forming a protective film when applied directly to the injury. Unlike synthetic products currently available in the market that rely on chemicals such as lidocaine and benzethonium chloride, this spray uses natural ingredients which makes it a safer alternative.

Lidocaine and benzethonium chloride often present in conventional sprays, have been known to cause skin irritation and long term side effects such as dermatitis. On the other hand this spray avoids these risks mobilising the natural properties of Eupatorium

LIDOCAINE AND BENZETHONIUM CHLORIDE OFTEN PRESENT IN CONVENTIONAL SPRAYS, HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO CAUSE SKIN IRRITATION AND LONG TERM SIDE EFFECTS SUCH AS DERMATITIS. ON THE OTHER HAND THIS SPRAY AVOIDS THESE RISKS MOBILISING THE NATURAL PROPERTIES OF EUPATORIUM ADENOPHORUM FOR BLOOD COAGULATION AND WOUND HEALING.

adenophorum for blood coagulation and wound healing.

The research team worked extensively on the formulation by using ethyl cellulose as a film-

forming agent and polyethylene glycol (PEG 400) as a plasticizer both known for their safety and effectiveness. This careful selection of ingredients ensured

that the spray forms a thin, transparent and smooth layer over the wound, which can instantly stop the blood flow while protecting the injury from infections.

They followed a detailed extraction process, where leaves of Eupatorium adenophorum were collected from Bhimtal in Uttarakhand. The leaves were then extracted using ethanol, which helped isolate the active compounds responsible for blood coagulation and wound healing. The spray formulation was processed through numerous trials to check the optimal

polymer, plasticiser and solvent quantities.

The most important factor that sets this spray apart is its eco-friendly, non-toxic nature. It is unlike synthetic sprays that use propellants which can be flammable or harmful to the environment.

Furthermore, the spray is cost-effective, making it accessible for large-scale production and use in a variety of settings like hospitals and clinics to first-aid kits and outdoor survival tools.

The impact of this invention extends beyond its immediate

utility. With its quick blood-clotting action and wound healing properties, the spray is expected to revolutionise first aid and emergency medical care, particularly in regions where healthcare facilities are limited or distant. Its portability and ease of use make it a practical solution for preventing blood loss in accidents, outdoor activities, and even military operations.

This invention represents a significant achievement for Shoolini University's commitment to advanced research in healthcare.

# 'We integrate modern education with spiritual values'

SAHIL THAKUR

IN AN inspiring conversation, Dr. Sneh Sharma, Principal of PNNM Geeta Adarsh Vidyalaya, shares insights from her illustrious academic journey and experiences in shaping young minds. Excerpts from the interview:

**Please tell us about your academic journey and that of your school.**

My academic journey has been a fulfilling blend of rigorous study and continuous growth. I completed my schooling at Senior Secondary Girls' School, Solan, followed by a Bachelor's degree in Geography (Honours) from PG Degree College, Solan. I then pursued postgraduate studies in Geography from Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla. Additionally, I have completed professional degrees in M.Ed, M.Phil, and a Ph.D. in Education from reputed institutions across India. Since 1999, I have had the privilege of serving at PNNM Geeta Adarsh Vidyalaya, a renowned CBSE-affiliated, co-educational, English-medium school in Solan. I began my journey as a TGT Social Science teacher, later becoming a PGT, Vice Principal, and currently serving as

Principal. What stands out about our school is its unique integration of modern education with the spiritual values of the Shreemad Bhagawad Gita, which is an essential part of our curriculum and school ethos.

**What strategies do you use to ensure a supportive learning environment for both students and staff?**

As educators, it is our responsibility to create a foundation that nurtures both academic excellence and strong moral values in our students. At my school, we ensure regular counselling sessions, especially for students of Grade 6 and teenage groups. These sessions are designed to guide students on building resilience, coping with academic pressure, managing peer dynamics, and valuing their parents and elders. Our faculty is committed to supporting students in becoming well rounded individuals. Regular counselling is a vital part of our school's ecosystem, where students receive guidance not only in academics but also in personal growth. These efforts ensure that they become well adjusted, responsible citizens, prepared for both their careers and life challenges.

**How do you ensure the mental well-**

## PRINCIPALSPEAKS



Dr SNEH SHARMA,  
Principal of PNNM Geeta Adarsh  
Vidyalaya

**being of students at your school?**

Mental well being is an essential focus at our school, and we address it through a holistic approach. In addition to adhering to the CBSE curriculum, we regularly practice recitations from the Shreemad Bhagawad Gita during morn-

ing assemblies. The students are assigned a roster for chanting specific shlokas and understanding their meanings, promoting mindfulness and emotional resilience. We also organise inter school competitions, such as declamation contests and shloka recitations, to further inculcate the teachings of the Bhagawad Gita. These activities aim to spread the message of spiritual values and mental well being across the district of Solan. The essence of the Bhagawad Gita - humility, patience, and respect for all is a guiding force in nurturing our students' mental health.

**How satisfied are you with the present education system?**

I am quite satisfied with the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, as it emphasises the holistic development of students. The 360-degree evaluation model ensures that the physical, mental, and intellectual aspects of students are considered, shifting the focus from pure academics to all-around growth. NEP 2020 is a well thought out policy that places significant importance on the role of stakeholders teachers, parents, and the community in shaping the future of education. If implemented effectively, it can truly transform the educational land-

scape by fostering creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving skills in students.

**How important do you think sports are along with the academic journey?**

It is often said, "A healthy mind lives in a healthy body," and I firmly believe that sports play a crucial role in a student's life. Physical activities not only help students stay fit but also teach them to manage stress effectively. Through sports, students can channel their energy positively, helping them stay away from negative influences such as drug abuse or excessive reliance on technology. In today's world, mobile phone usage is a growing concern, leading to anxiety and depression in some cases.

**How privileged do you think today's generation is in terms of education and learning?**

Today's generation is extremely privileged, especially with the advancements in technology and artificial intelligence. In my time, understanding complex subjects like remote sensing in geography required intensive effort, but now, with tools like virtual reality, concepts that once seemed difficult can be easily grasped. Students today also have a

wider range of professional courses to choose from, allowing them to pursue their passions, whether academic or non-academic. Various skill development programmes introduced by the Government of India further support students, regardless of their socio-economic background, making education more accessible and diverse than ever before.

**What message would you like to give to the students?**

Believe in yourself and in your core values. Always respect your parents and humanity at large. Avoid becoming over ambitious, and refrain from extremes in life. The world is full of distractions and illusions; therefore, use your intellect wisely, at the right time and in the right direction, with a positive mindset. Opportunities are endless if one door doesn't open for you, build a door. Most importantly, never compromise on your values. If ever you feel pressured to abandon your principles, take time to reflect and, if necessary, change your path to stay true to your beliefs. This path, though challenging, will ultimately lead you to self-realisation and God realisation, which I believe should be the ultimate aim of life.

## Faculty of Liberal Arts lifts Manchantra Trophy

BY KASHISH KOTIAN AND VANSHIKA

THE 14th edition of Manchantra 2k24, an inter-departmental competition concluded at Shoolini University with the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Spiritual Sciences emerging as the over-all winners.

The Manchantra celebrated the diverse talents of students and faculty across various schools, including Agriculture, Engineering, Liberal Arts, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Biotechnology, and Management. The three-day event was inaugurated by Chancellor Prof. P. K. Khosla, setting the stage for a series of captivating performances.

The Faculty of Liberal Arts, which emerged as the overall winner, excelled in multiple categories such as Group Medley, Duet Dance, Anchoring, and Folk Dance. It also secured the runners-up position in the Fashion Show, Flashmob, and Duet Song competitions.

The Faculty of Basic Sciences and Agriculture was named the



overall runners-up, delivering strong performances across various segments, including wins in Duet Song and Flashmob. The Faculty of Management Sciences impressed with their victory in Bollywood Dance, while the School of Biotechnology clinched the top prize in Stand-up Comedy and placed second in Duet Dance.

The participants were evaluated by a panel of judges comprising Mrs. Taruna Mehta, Kumar Thakur, Mr. Sanju

Rajput, and Shelja Nahwat. The competition showcased a variety of performances, including music, dance, stand-up comedy, and fashion shows, engaging both students and faculty in an exhilarating display of talent.

The competitions started with performances by the School of Agricultural Sciences, followed by the School of Engineering on the first day. The judges were particularly captivated by the Duet Dances, Group Songs, Comedy acts,

Folk Dances, and the Fashion Show. Engineering students demonstrated their skills with Semi-Classical Duet Dance, Stand-up Comedy, and Group Song performances, adding to the event's excitement.

Faculty participation added a unique dimension to the event. Liberal Arts faculty members Indu Negi, Monika Thakur, and Vineet Sharma received accolades for their exceptional performances.

The School of Pharmaceutical

Sciences also made notable contributions, with faculty members Sonia Rani, Nishtha Dogra, Shubhangi Sood, Arun Prashar, and Kamlesh participating across various categories.

Mrs Poonam Nanda Director Sustainability and community Engagement said, Manchantra 2k24 encapsulated the energy and creativity of Shoolini University's students and faculty, with each department contributing to an unforgettable experience.

## Academic excellence celebrated on Foundation Day

APURVA MISAL

SHOOLINI UNIVERSITY commemorated its 15th Foundation Day with great enthusiasm, marking another key milestone since the university's inception in 2009. The event, which was attended by academics, students, and senior administrators, celebrated the institution's academic accomplishments and dynamic campus culture.

The celebrations began with the Raag Rang members performing a Saraswati Vandana, which invoked blessings for

knowledge and wisdom. A ceremonial havan was held to seek divine blessings, a yearly custom that represents unity and success.

Founder and Chancellor Prof. PK Khosla addressed the audience, and shared the goal for the university's foundation. He pointed out that Shoolini University is now acknowledged as India's leading private university.

Mr. Vishal Anand, Pro-Chancellor, discussed the challenges and learning experiences faced while establishing the university. He also shared



insights from his conversations with the late Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, a former Indian President and renowned scientist who highlighted the significance of research-driven education combined with prac-

tical applications.

Mrs. Poonam Nanda, Director of Sustainability and Community Engagement, announced the new Buddy Referral Programme and encouraged students to partici-

pate. She was accompanied by Kapil Gupta, Naman Sharma, and Apoorva in promoting the project.

Mr Ashish Khosla, Director of Innovations and Learning, emphasised the importance of extracurricular activities in cultivating creativity and innovation.

A lucky draw with attractive prizes was also held as part of the programme. Rishab Sharma, Dharam Raj, Ayush Kumar, and Basant Singh received OnePlus phones, respectively. Khushboo Sharma took home the main prize, an iPhone.

## Media students win laurels with national film award

SNL TEAM

STUDENTS OF the final year of Bachelors of Journalism and Mass Media have brought laurels for the University by winning a national award on short films relating to disaster management.

The award winning film by the students, named Sahej, was adjudged the third best national award winning film by university students by the National Institute of Disaster Management under the union ministry of Home Affairs.

The award was presented by the union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat at a glittering ceremony held at Dr



Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi on the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The film, under the direction of Assistant Professor Paarth Sharma, focussed on the natural disaster relating to landslides and floods in Himachal Pradesh. It highlighted the need to con-

serve ecology and steps needed to be taken to avoid such natural disasters.

The short film included an interview with Himachal Pradesh chief minister Mr Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu and had visuals of the massive landslides which occurred in the state last year.

## Palki aces 'Tansen ki khoj' competition

VANSHIKA

Palki from the Faculty of Basic Science emerged as the winner and Harsh Vardhan from the Faculty of Liberal Arts secured the second position at the "Tansen ki Khoj" competition held on the campus.

The evening commenced with patriotic fervour, beginning with the national anthem followed by soulful poetry readings.

The stage was then set ablaze with a series of captivating performances, including solo and group singing, energetic group dances, jazz melodies, and even a lively Bhojpuri group dance. The event also featured rap performance and a fashion show by the NSS group.

Another highlight of the evening was the "Mr and Ms Cultural" competition. The contestants walked the ramp with their elegance and confidence, showcasing their personality and style.

After a rigorous judging pro-



**Dr Radha shines in Tashkent**

SNL TEAM



DR. RADHA, Assistant Professor in the Department of Botany at Shoolini University, made a great contribution at the World Cotton Research Conference-8, WCRC-8 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The event, inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Uzbekistan, was attended by global experts in cotton research.

In addition to her research presentation, Dr. Radha participated in a craft-making competition using cotton, securing first place and won another first prize in a traditional dress competition showcasing Himachali culture. She earned \$300 in total for her achievements.

Dr. Radha highlighted how both academic and creative pursuits to bring recognition to the university while nurturing international collaboration.

BY INVITATION

# Strength is the courage to confront and express emotions

ANMOL MALHOTRA\*

IN A WORLD where the expectations placed upon men are often as heavy as the burdens they carry, one conversation has long been muted: that of mental health. For centuries, society has painted the picture of a man as strong, silent types-toy figures who shoulder their problems without complaint. But beneath this veneer of toughness lies a more complex reality-in which the struggles with mental health are as, if not more, widespread among men than among women.

Most boys learn from an early age to suppress their feelings: "Man up" or "boys don't cry" set in their brains develop a specific story that showing vulnerability is weakness. This version of cultural expectation actually does not only discourage men from seeking help but rather conditions them to internalise it all, leading to a dangerous silence.

This stigma is peculiarly potent for men. While women, through time, have become more forthcoming with their mental health, the male folk normally remains in the background. This is not because they struggle less but because of their fear of being perceived as lesser men. The outcome is a mental health crisis that is invisible yet real.

The statistics on men's mental health are discouraging. According to the World Health Organisation, men are less likely than women to seek help for mental health issues, yet they are more likely to die by suicide. In many countries, men take their own lives three to four times as often as women. These numbers constitute a call to action for the price paid in lives for men's enduring silence.

There is also depression among men, anxiety, and substance abuse, although these are underreported. Many men turn to alcohol or drugs as a coping mechanism further worsening their mental health. The silence around the subject of men's mental health

**MOST BOYS LEARN FROM AN EARLY AGE TO SUPPRESS THEIR FEELINGS: "MAN UP" OR "BOYS DON'T CRY" SET IN THEIR BRAINS DEVELOP A SPECIFIC STORY THAT SHOWING VULNERABILITY IS WEAKNESS. THIS VERSION OF CULTURAL EXPECTATION ACTUALLY DOES NOT ONLY DISCOURAGE MEN FROM SEEKING HELP BUT RATHER CONDITIONS THEM TO INTERNALISE IT ALL, LEADING TO A DANGEROUS SILENCE.**

prevents men from seeking help and perpetuates a cycle of suffering that could be deadly.

So, what should be done to change this storyline? Normalising the dialogue of men's mental health would be the first step. In as much as we have tried to take away the stigma from general struggles with mental health, we need to convey the message that feelings, seeking help, and vulnerability are not taboo for men.

It's all about education, enabling a soci-

ety where schools, workplaces, and communities don't judge anyone for talking about their mental health. Men should be allowed to express their feelings and, if need be, seek help without being judged. There is a dire need for targeting men in mental health awareness campaigns to address the unique issues they go through and providing relevant resources.

The other vital factor is support networks, including friends, family, and loved ones. They will play the most important role in

encouraging men to talk about their personal issues. Sometimes, it takes only one person to provide the help a victim needs by listening to them and providing comfort without judgment. The care has to be unconditional and in a comfortable and secure manner.

While therapies are one of the most valuable tools in fighting mental health, many men avoid them due to the fear of being seen as weak. The professional therapist provide a comfortable space to discuss emotions and learn about underlying issues that need attention. Therapy helps in developing healthy ways of coping with stress. Most especially, support groups designated for men play a great role. This provides an environment whereby there is some sense of men being part of a brotherhood and thus can share their experiences with others who understand what they are going through.

It is about redefining what it truly means to be a man. Strength is not about having

no emotion, but the courage to confront and express them. Vulnerability is not a weakness but the strength that cultivates connection and healing.

It is beyond time that we, as a society, progress well beyond culturally based expressions of masculinity that seem to hang in the balance between stoicism and well-being. Only then can we nurture a cultural climate wherein men will feel empowered enough to take responsibility for their own mental health through seeking help when needed and living fuller, healthier lives.

Men's mental health remains a silent struggle it truly does not have to be. It involves breaking the silence, breaking stigmas, creating a space where men are safe to express themselves emotionally. We should break this crisis and take the first step. The need is to redefine what it is to be a man-strong enough to be vulnerable, wise enough to seek help, brave enough to live authentically.

# Shaping the future of Liberal Arts education

RIYA THAKUR

## FACE TO FACE

AS LIBERAL arts education is becoming more popular, we spoke with Dr Purnima Bali, Associate professor and Head of the Chitrakoot School of Liberal Arts at Shoolini University, about her vision for the school and the role of Liberal Arts in today's society. In a wide-ranging conversation, Dr Purnima Bali shared her thoughts on everything from cultural preservation to career prospects for graduates.

### Can you share your journey in academia and what led you to join Shoolini University?

I initially pursued a degree in commerce with the intention of becoming a teacher. However, I later realised that commerce was not the right fit for me. Inspired by my father, Mr G S Bali who had been a topper at Himachal Pradesh University, I switched to literature. I went on to complete my masters and PhD in literature. In 2017, I joined Shoolini University as an Assistant Professor in English literature. Over time, I

progressed to the role of Associate Professor, and in 2021, I was appointed the Head of the School. It has been a fulfilling journey, starting from being a student to becoming a teacher and then taking on a leadership position. Leading a diverse team in the field of liberal arts has been a great experience for me.

### What inspired you to specialise in English literature?

When I was young, I was passionate about English literature. My house was filled with books because my father was a literature enthusiast. I used to read all kinds of stories and novels. One day, my father asked whether I was drawn to literature. I answered in the affirmative and he supported my decision to pursue it as my field of study. I was fortunate to have the best teacher at Himachal Pradesh University as my supervisor, Prof Neelima Kanwar, who strengthened my research acumen and Prof Tej N Dhar whom I consider my mentor at Shoolini. These three people in my life are my



DR PURNIMA BALI, Associate professor and Head of the Chitrakoot School of Liberal Arts, Shoolini University

inspirations for specialising in English Literature.

What is your vision for the Chitrakoot

### School of Liberal Arts at Shoolini University?

Every department and school has the goal of becoming a global institution in the future, say by 2030 or 2050. So do we but Liberal arts education is not solely about being on top all the time; our focus and vision is to cultivate students who can contribute to society. Our subjects emphasise that literature reflects life, how we behave, and how we communicate. Our motive is to shape Chitrakoot School of Liberal Arts into an institution that others can look up to.

### How do you see the role of the Liberal Arts evolving in the next few years?

Up to now, we have been in a cocoon, conducting our own research and running our own sessions. However, we have recently launched a new Centre titled CELL, which stands for Centre of Excellence for Language Learning. Our goal now is to expand our reach to other departments and disciplines. I would like to see greater involvement of liberal arts in various fields. I envision the universi-

ty's identity to be that of a liberal arts institution.

### What do you believe are the essential skills that students should gain from studying English?

As a student, it's important to gain knowledge in Literature, Political Science, History, Economic, and Foreign Languages. No matter what field you're interested in, it's crucial to have a broad understanding of the subject. In our school, we offer various streams such as English literature, history, and political science to provide a comprehensive view of society. Additionally, we also offer foreign language courses to encourage students to have a global perspective and explore opportunities worldwide.

### What areas of research are currently being pursued by faculty members in the school?

We are conducting diverse research in the school, with our primary goal being to preserve the culture of India. Examples of our work include humanism, cultural studies, feminism, disability studies, film

studies, post colonialism, international relations and world literature. One example can be like translating songs of Kohloor region in Bilaspur. There is a song for every occasion, from birth to death. When a baby is born, village women gather to sing, and the same happens during marriages. We believe it's important to preserve our cultural heritage through research and are working on translating these songs into English so that they can be shared with the world.

### What are the career prospects of graduates and post graduates in English and liberal arts

When we talk about undergraduate (UG) students, it's important to note that many of them pursue higher studies instead of immediately choosing a career. After completing their UG, some literature students become copywriters or content writers. Following their UG, students may pursue a B.Ed or begin their master's degree, then go on to take the National Eligibility Test (NET) and eventually complete a PhD. Preparing for administrative services is also among their career choices.

## FIRST PERSON

# Towards 'mountain of opportunities'

KASHISH KOTIAN\*

AS I LEFT the bustling streets of Bombay, with its familiar view of the beaches and the warmth of the coastal breeze, I couldn't help but feel apprehensive about my new destination. Shoolini University, nestled in the majestic Himalayas, was far away from the only home I had ever known.

The thought of trading the city's fast-paced rhythm for the tranquil mountains, where the air was crisp and the landscape was dramatically different, intimidated me. Would I adjust to the slower pace of life? That was the big question as I delved on the silence of the hills replacing the sounds of the waves crashing on the shore. But the initial culture shock gave way to fascination as I stepped onto the campus of Shoolini University, surrounded by towering pine trees and the majestic mountains. The university's serene atmosphere and breathtaking views enveloped me, and I felt an unexpected sense of calm.

Barely a month into my first semester and my doubts have

already dissipated. Shoolini presented me not only with the beauty of the mountains but also with a "mountain of opportunities", providing hands-on experience that exceeded my expectations. I was thrilled to cover the university marathon, which made to the front page of the newsletter and marked my debut as a writer and as a budding journalist.

Next, I got to attend and cover the briefs of the launch event of the Centre for Coaching Leadership. This initiative aimed at nurturing future leaders, and I was inspired by the panel discussions, and the esteemed guests. I was also honoured to represent our Journalism Department during the NAAC inspection. This experience allowed me to showcase our department's capabilities and gain valuable insights into Shoolini's commitment to quality education. I was also trusted with creating content for Pink October, a breast cancer awareness initiative, where I got to volunteer and contribute to the vital cause. It was an honour to be part of something that touched so many lives.



One unorthodox yet profound exercise in class particularly stood out – writing my own obituary. This thought-provoking activity forced me to confront my mortality, re-evaluate priorities, and align my goals with my values. As I penned my legacy, I realised what truly mattered: making a lasting impact through my words, inspiring others, and living a life of purpose. This introspective journey was the final push in shedding my apprehensions replacing uncertainty with confidence.

I explored the quaint town of Solan, with its winding roads, old shops, and warm locals. I discovered trekking trails, a waterfall nearby that gives me a little sense and comfort of back home, and scenic viewpoints. The faculty's unwavering support guided me through the transition, making the adjustment smoother than I could have imagined.

Beyond the classroom, I found solace in the university's vibrant community and clubs. Fellow students from diverse backgrounds shared stories of their own journeys, making me realise I'm not alone and change is an important aspect of growing up and is a part of life. The sooner we embrace the better it is. The mountains are beginning to feel like home, and I have grown to appreciate the misty mornings and the star-studded nights. The mountains, though daunting, became a sanctuary, reminding me that growth often lies just beyond our comfort zones.

*\*(The writer is a Semester 1 student of Bachelors of Journalism and Mass Communications)*

## LITTLE INDIA | MAHARASHTRA

# Love for research brought him from Mumbai

APURVA MISAL

"I AM excited for the years ahead and thankful for the values Shoolini University has added to my life," says Lopesh Mishra, a second-year student at the School of Physics, who hails from Mumbai.

In 2023, after attempting the Central University Entrance Test for multiple renowned universities, he chose Shoolini University for its exceptional rankings and reputation.

Two years later, his passion for research has grown significantly and he credits Shoolini's tranquil atmosphere for helping him to get adapted to the life in Himachal Pradesh.

A former state-level under-14 football player, Lopesh joined the university's football team and has participated in several tournaments to keep his skills sharp. Besides academics, Shoolini has taught



**IN 2023, AFTER ATTEMPTING THE CENTRAL UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE TEST FOR MULTIPLE RENOWNED UNIVERSITIES, LOPESH CHOSE SHOOLINI UNIVERSITY FOR ITS EXCEPTIONAL RANKINGS AND REPUTATION.**

him valuable life lessons, including hiking, independent living and observing human behaviour.

Lopesh's family background is in science, with his father being a research scientist and his great-grandfather having served as Chancellor of Banaras Hindu University. The background has propelled him to pursue a similar path. He appreciates the university's supportive faculty and practical, hands-on learning, which have shaped his mind.

He said he did face difficulties in initial days having to adjust from the hectic pace of life in Mumbai to the rather serene environment but added that the experience has made him more independent and has helped evolve his personality.

He is eager to contribute for Shoolini community and achieve his dream of becoming a research scientist in the near future.

## ACROSS BORDERS

# FROM NEPAL TO PURSUE DREAMS

JIYA LOHIA

WHILE LIVING in his hometown of Lalitpur in Nepal, Prithak Thapa decided to pursue his dreams at Shoolini University. He is a B.Tech student studying in Shoolini university under Government of India's Study in India (SII) scholarship.

Prithak chose Shoolini for its academic excellence, beautiful landscape and friendly atmosphere. Appreciating the approachable faculty, he said "the professors are very willing to help." His passion for technology, particularly Cyber Security and hacking, drives his studies.



Being an avid sportsman, he plays for the university football team, which helps him balance academics and extracurricular activities. Prithak also enjoys cycling with friends on Sundays. Although he initially struggled with Hindi, his improved language skills have eased social interactions making him to embrace Indian cuisine, especially alo parantha.

Shoolini's Pine Court has been his favourite spot in the entire university and he likes to study in the new AI building and library. Evening walks around the university provide a peaceful retreat. Despite facing challenges in making friends initially, he has built meaningful connections in this welcoming community.

## ALUMNI RECALLS

# 'Every student deserves the Shoolini experience'

ANGU SANCHU\*

BEFORE I came to Himachal, life felt rather unpredictable, as if I was constantly moving through it without a clear direction. It was this uncertainty that led me to Himachal, to a place I hadn't planned for but now can't imagine my life without.

People have often asked why I chose Himachal when I had other options in major cities to pursue my career. My family had similar concerns. But looking back, I couldn't be more sure of my decision. While many believe you should prioritise big-name institutions, I think the best choice is the one

that feels right for you. For me, Shoolini was exactly that: the perfect place to grow, learn, and find my calm.

The sense of belonging began with the wonderful group of girls I met in my department. We all came from different places, each carrying our own perspectives, and somehow, life brought us together. That diversity in our class felt like life's own design, weaving in different experiences to teach us not just academics but about life itself. I learned things that went far beyond textbooks—practical life skills, resilience, understanding. And I will always look up to my professors for being

more than just teachers; they were mentors in every sense, guiding us through much more than just coursework.

One of the biggest gifts Himachal gave me was time—time to think, to reflect, to grow. There was no rush, no pressure. In that stillness, I found the space to figure out my path, to make sense of who I was becoming. Himachal's pace taught me to slow down, to let thoughts unravel in their own time. It was this calm that allowed me to explore my career options, to approach life with a clarity I hadn't known before.

Looking back, the memories are wrapped in peace. There's



a calm that comes over me whenever I think of my days on campus. And I believe every student deserves that kind of

experience—a place where they can grow, not just academically but as individuals. Shoolini gave me more than an education; it

gave me a community, a sense of purpose, and the confidence to walk my own path. The marks never mattered as much as the lessons I took with me—the hope to do well, the kindness I experienced, and the understanding I gained from those around me.

I came to Shoolini with doubts, unsure if I'd made the right choice, especially with journalism being so new to me. But the journey proved transformative, not just personally but in how I came to view journalism. It instilled in me a deep sense of responsibility towards the news and reshaped my understanding of its role in soci-

ety. News became an integral part of our lives, and one of my fondest memories from that time was discussing current events before class with our professor, Vipin Pubby. It always sparked a sense of excitement and curiosity among us. The diverse perspectives of my classmates added depth and meaning to those discussions. Together, they helped me find balance, and now, when I look back, I smile, knowing that I made the best decision of my life.

*\*(The writer is an alumni of the School of Media and Communications, Shoolini University)*



NIRAJ SHARMA

# Students divided over the question of caste census

The idea of a caste census in India has sparked a debate. Those in favour see it as a way to address caste-based inequalities, while critics fear it could deepen divisions. We asked a cross-section of students whether they favour caste census and why.



I support the caste census because it would help understand how different communities are doing, especially those who face challenges like Dalits and OBCs. The government can make better plans to help these groups. Some people worry it might cause divisions, but knowing the problem is the first step to fixing it. It's important to tackle inequality in jobs, education, and healthcare.

Samarath Singh, BBA Data Analytics



I don't support the caste census because it could strengthen caste divisions. India has been trying to reduce caste differences, and focusing on them might reverse that progress. Instead of caste, we should look at economic issues affecting everyone. Highlighting caste might lead to more conflict and discrimination.

Amar, BBA Business Analytical



A caste census is important to make sure government plans are fair. India is very diverse, and many social programmes are meant for specific communities. With exact numbers, the government can plan better for education, jobs, and welfare. This isn't about fixing people, but about fixing real problems that won't go away if we ignore caste data.

Bilal, Digital marketing



I'm against the caste census because political parties might use it for their benefit. Instead of helping people, it could be used to create divisions for votes. India is already divided by caste, and collecting this data might increase tension. The government should focus on helping the poor, no matter their caste.

Saksham, Btech biotech



A caste census can help make sure underprivileged groups get fair treatment. Many communities are overlooked because we don't know their exact size or needs. With proper data, reservations and welfare programs can be adjusted to help them better. It's a way to reduce inequality and give more opportunities to marginalized groups.

Shruti, BBA General



We shouldn't focus on caste in today's India. Instead, we should focus on an economic census to understand poverty and wealth gaps. A caste census might make people more divided. The government should create policies to help all economically disadvantaged people, no matter their caste. I believe focusing on caste could harm unity.

Vaishali Thakur, Btech biotechnology research



I think a caste census is important because it will show how different caste groups are living. This can help the government see where the biggest gaps are and fix them. Some castes still don't have access to good education or jobs, and this data can help create better policies. It's not about dividing people, but about understanding who needs more support.

Aarushi, BTEch Bioinformatics



I don't favour the caste census because it might lead to more tension between different caste groups. We are trying to move past caste differences, but focusing on them could take us backward. Instead, the government should work on helping people based on their economic situation, not caste. Caste-related data could cause unnecessary arguments and divisions.

Oshoen Koul, BTEchBiotechnology

# Glimpses from Manchantra



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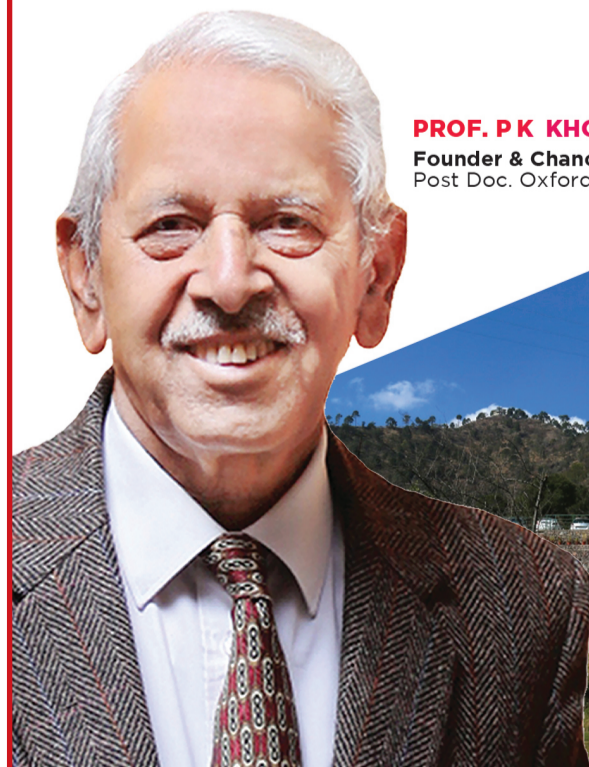
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