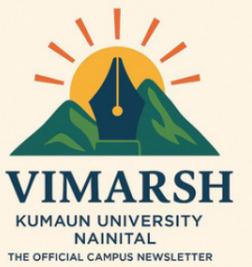


# VIMARSH

Capturing the essence of The Kumaun University

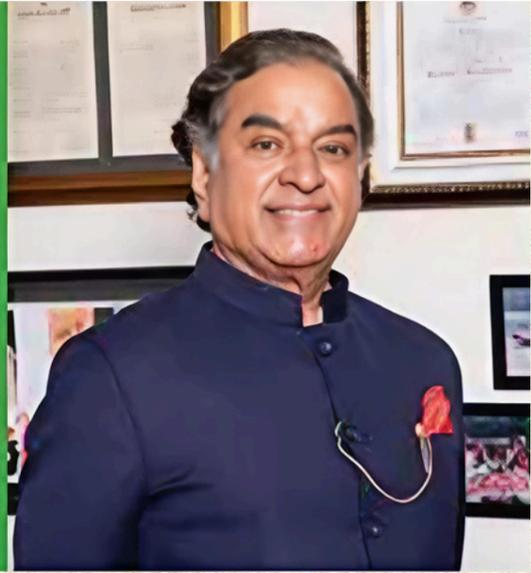
The Official Newsletter of Kumaun University



Aug- Sept 2025

## WHAT'S INSIDE?

### The interview corner



A glimpse into the extraordinary journey of Col. (Dr.) Girija Shanker Mungali — from the tranquil

hills of Nainital to the Indian Army's frontlines, and from conquering mountain peaks to contributing to football governance across Asia. Discover the inspiring path of a Kumaun University alumnus, decorated Army officer, AFC Task Force member, adventurer, and visionary educationist who founded Sanskriti School in Pune. A story of discipline, resilience, and purposeful leadership.

### Kumaun University Achieves 27th National Rank

**Kumaun University Rises in Rankings**  
Kumaun University has progressed from 30th in 2023 to 27th in India Today's Best Colleges of India 2025. Vice Chancellor Prof. Diwan Rawat credited the achievement to the collective dedication of faculty and students and expressed confidence that the university will continue reaching new milestones.

### Strengthening Research Quality at Kumaun University

Kumaun University has launched a new initiative to track research progress among contractual faculty, who make up a major part of its teaching community. Vice Chancellor Prof. Diwan Rawat stressed the importance of quality research and urged faculty to publish in reputed Scopus and ABDC-indexed journals while avoiding predatory outlets. The initiative aims to promote meaningful academic contributions and reinforce the university's commitment to research integrity and academic excellence.

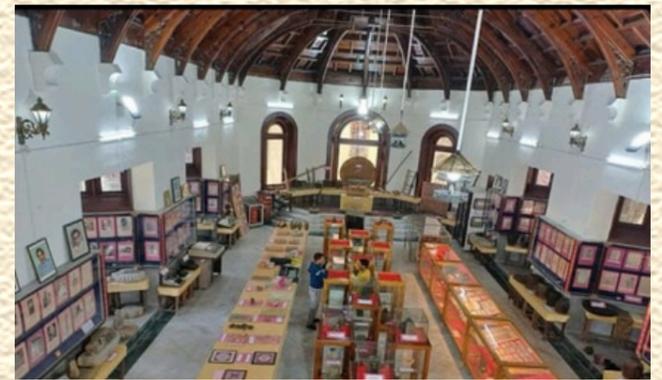
### Kumaun University Conducts Third SSB Training Session



### Rare Beetle Species Discovered in Kumaun Region



### Himalayan Museum Renovated at Kumaun University



### First Batch of Vice Chancellor's Lab/Office Internship Program Successfully Concludes at Kumaun University



# MESSAGE *from* THE EDITOR



**Prof. Reetesh Sah**  
**Editor, Vimarsh**  
**Kumaun University, Nainital**

As the vibrant hues of autumn embrace the Kumaon hills, we are delighted to present the third issue of Vimarsh, the bi-monthly newsletter of Sankranti the student club of DSB Campus, Kumaun University, Nainital. This issue reflects our collective spirit of cultural continuity, academic excellence, and youthful aspiration.

The recent celebration of the Nanda Devi Festival in Nainital once again reminded us of the deep connection our region shares with nature and spirituality. The sacred peaks Nanda Devi, Nanda Ghungti, Nanda Kote, Nanda Pal and Nanda Khat are not just geographical landmarks but symbols of reverence, resilience, and purity. In these times of growing environmental degradation, this ancient tradition calls upon us to reflect on the harmony our ancestors maintained with their surroundings. Their way of life teaches us that protecting nature is not merely a duty, but an expression of gratitude to the divine forces that nurture us.

Equally inspiring was the successful conduct of the Students' Union Elections at Kumaun University. This exercise was not merely an event but a meaningful step in fostering democratic understanding among our youth. By engaging responsibly in this process, our students demonstrated awareness of the values that form the foundation of a strong democracy. We hope such participation will help them evolve into thoughtful, ethical, and visionary leaders of tomorrow.

As we look forward, let us continue to find strength in our traditions and inspiration in our surroundings. Let every classroom discussion, cultural celebration, and campus initiative contribute to shaping minds that are informed, compassionate, and creative.

May Vimarsh continue to be a mirror of our ideas, achievements, and aspirations, a platform where the voice of our youth resonates with wisdom and hope.

# FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

It is with great pride and heartfelt excitement that we present the third edition of Vimarsh—an edition that holds remarkable significance as Kumaun University completes 50 illustrious years of learning, leadership, and legacy. This milestone is not just a number; it is a celebration of five decades of academic excellence, cultural vibrancy, and the countless individuals who have shaped the University's journey.

In honour of this golden jubilee, we have curated content that reflects the soul of Kumaun University—its traditions, achievements, and the diverse voices that make our campus a thriving intellectual community. Among the highlights of this edition is the vibrant coverage of the Nanda–Sunanda Festival at Nainital, a cherished cultural heritage that blends devotion, history, and community spirit. Through our feature, we bring you the colours, emotions, and stories that make this festival an integral part of Kumaoni identity.

This issue also captures the dynamism of the recently held student elections, showcasing the enthusiasm, leadership, and democratic participation of our young minds. Their voices reflect the aspirations of a new generation ready to take on challenges and carve meaningful paths.

Adding depth and inspiration to this edition are two special interviews. We are honoured to feature Col. Girija Shankar Mungali, a distinguished alumnus of Kumaun University whose illustrious career and life lessons offer motivation to every student. Equally enriching is our interaction with Prof. Neeta Bora, one of the most respected and beloved figures of KU, whose perspectives on education, university culture, and personal experiences resonate deeply with the KU community.

Alongside these, you will find a diverse collection of articles, creative works, campus updates, and reflections—all crafted with sincerity and dedication by our contributors and editorial team.

As you explore the pages of this edition, we hope it fills you with pride, inspiration, and a renewed connection to this institution we all cherish.

We truly hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed bringing it to life.

Warm regards,  
The Editorial Team  
(Nandini, Astha and Padma)  
Vimarsh

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# NEWS CORNER

## Kumaun University Conducts Third SSB Training Session

Kumaun University successfully conducted its third 8-day SSB training program under the guidance of Brig Shankar Prasad and Col D.K. Rawal. The initiative aimed to enhance students' leadership and communication skills. Students from affiliated colleges also participated in the training.



The program, free of cost, provided a valuable opportunity for aspiring candidates to develop personality traits and confidence essential for SSB selection and overall professional growth.

## Kumaun University Achieves 27th National Rank

Kumaun University has shown steady progress, moving from 30th position in 2023 to 27th in India Today's Best Colleges of India 2025 rankings. Vice Chancellor Prof. Diwan Rawat attributed this success to the collective commitment of faculty and students towards quality education and institutional excellence. He expressed confidence that with continued effort and innovation, the university will achieve even greater milestones in the coming years.

Rank	College Name	Score
21	Bhogpur	165.3
22	Goa University	129.7
23	Tamil Nadu Agricultural University	147.4
24	Central Sanskrit University	141.4
25	Mizoram University	147.5
26	Central University of Punjab	142.1
27	Kumaun University	133.7
28	Vidyalaxmi University	

## Kumaun University Launches Initiative for Quality Research Publications

Kumaun University has introduced a new initiative to monitor research progress among contractual faculty, who form a significant part of the teaching workforce. Vice Chancellor Prof. Diwan Rawat emphasized the need for every teacher to contribute through quality research publications. The initiative aims to encourage publications in reputed Scopus and ABDC-indexed journals while discouraging submissions to predatory journals. Faculty were advised to focus on meaningful academic contributions to enhance the university's research profile and academic reputation. This initiative reflects Kumaun University's commitment to maintaining high standards of academic excellence and research integrity.

## First Batch of Vice Chancellor's Lab/Office Internship Program Successfully Concludes at Kumaun University

Kumaun University has successfully completed the first batch of its Vice Chancellor Lab/Office Internship Program, designed to give students exposure to research environments and university administration. Over 35 students were selected through an open process and received hands-on experience across various academic and administrative functions.

## Kumaun University Revises 50-Year-Old Academic Rule

Kumaun University's Academic Council has revised a five-decade-old regulation concerning degree issuance. The change now enables students studying abroad, such as those admitted to UK universities, to receive their degrees in accordance with updated KU rules. This progressive step ensures greater flexibility and alignment with international academic standards, benefiting students pursuing global opportunities.

## Rare Beetle Species Discovered in Kumaun Region

A rare beetle species has been reported for the first time since 1910 in the Kumaun region. The discovery, led by Dr. Manoj Kumar Arya from the Department of Zoology, Kumaun University, marks a significant achievement in regional biodiversity research. Dr. Arya identified several new insect species as part of the university's internal research funding scheme, highlighting Kumaun University's growing contribution to environmental and zoological studies.

## प्रतिष्ठित संस्थानों में चयनित विद्यार्थियों को अब बिना दीक्षांत समारोह या कार्यकारी परिषद की स्वीकृति के दी जाएगी मूल डिग्री

**कुमाऊँ विश्वविद्यालय नैनीताल ने लिया ऐतिहासिक फैसला**

आज समाचार सेवा नैनीताल। कुमाऊँ विश्वविद्यालय प्रशासन ने विद्यार्थियों के हित में एक ऐतिहासिक और दूरदर्शी निर्णय लेते हुए यह व्यवस्था लागू की है कि अब देश या विदेश के प्रतिष्ठित संस्थानों में नौकरी या उच्च शिक्षा हेतु चयनित होने वाले छात्र-छात्राओं को



उत्तराखंड में 115 वर्षों के बाद मिली दुर्लभ प्रजाति की बीटल

स्वास्थ्य खबरें

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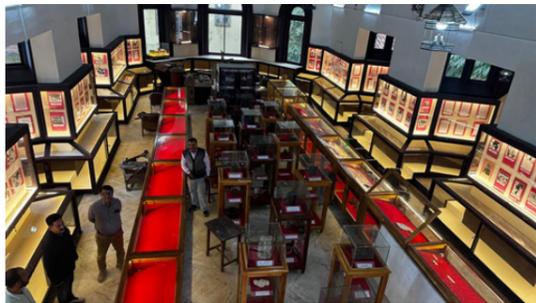
हरदामी नैनीताल

# NEWS CORNER

## Himalayan Museum Renovated at Kumaun University

The historic Himalayan Museum at Kumaun University has been renovated under the guidance of Vice Chancellor Prof. Diwan Rawat. The restoration work has revitalized the museum's unique architectural heritage while improving display spaces for educational and cultural exhibits.

Prof. Rawat shared that although some finishing work remains, the renovated museum now offers an enriched learning experience for students, researchers, and visitors. The project reflects the university's dedication to preserving regional heritage and promoting cultural understanding alongside academic development. The Himalayan Museum continues to serve as an important center of knowledge and history for the Kumaun region.



## Uttarakhand Directorate Excels at AINSC 2025 – Wins Boat Pulling & Seamanship: Trophies at INS Shivaji

The All India Nau Sainik Camp is a prestigious national camp comprising various competitions among the naval wings of NCC all over India. The competitions include Boatpulling, Drill, Service Subject Exam, Health and Hygiene Exam, Seamanship, Shipmodelling and Semaphore. Held at INS Shivaji, Lonavala, the Naval Base of Indian Navy also known as the NBCD School, Uttarakhand Directorate comprising of the cadets of 5 UK Naval NCC, shone bright with 13th position overall clinching the Boat Pulling Trophy and Seamanship Trophy. The dedication and hard work of the cadets over the past 5 months paid off as they brought home 2 trophies along with a total of 12 medals.



## Kumaun University Launches Initiative for Quality Research Publications

Kumaun University has introduced a new initiative to monitor research progress among contractual faculty, who form a significant part of the teaching workforce. Vice Chancellor Prof. Diwan Rawat emphasized the need for every teacher to contribute through quality research publications. The initiative aims to encourage publications in reputed Scopus and ABDC-indexed journals while discouraging submissions to predatory journals. Faculty were advised to focus on meaningful academic contributions to enhance the university's research profile and academic reputation. This initiative reflects Kumaun University's commitment to maintaining high standards of academic excellence and research integrity.

## Kumaun University Student Elections Held on September 27:

Kumaun University successfully conducted its student elections on September 27, with enthusiastic participation from students across various departments and campuses. At the DSB Campus, Karan Sati was elected as the President, securing a strong mandate.

Ashish Kabadwal won the election for University Representative and also secured victory in the Mahasang election, marking a notable highlight of this year's results. Elections for several other posts were also completed smoothly, reflecting an active and vibrant student democratic process.

The university administration reported that the elections were conducted in an orderly manner and thanked all stakeholders for their cooperation.

## EFFORTS TO CURB PREDATORY PUBLICATIONS AT KUMAUN UNIVERSITY

Expressing concern over the rise of predatory publishing, Kumaun University Vice Chancellor Prof. Diwan Rawat highlighted the need for strict academic quality control. He noted that the current API and peer-review systems have unintentionally supported low-quality publications. To address this, Kumaun University is developing its own Quality Publication Matrix, ensuring that faculty work aligns with recognized global standards. Prof. Rawat stressed that genuine, peer-reviewed research must guide India's academic growth and reputation. The initiative aims to foster a research environment that values integrity, originality, and scholarly excellence over quantity-based publication measures.

# Alumni Voices

## Interview with Col. (Dr.) Girija Shanker Mungali

From the serene hills of Nainital to the battlefields of the Indian Army, and from scaling mountains to shaping football governance across Asia, Col. (Dr.) Girija Shanker Mungali's journey is nothing short of remarkable. An alumnus of Kumaun University, a retired Colonel, a member of the Asian Football Confederation's Task Force, an adventurer who parajumped at the age of 70, and an educationist who recently founded Sanskriti School in Pune — his story is a living lesson in discipline, resilience, and purpose.



**In conversation with Vimarsh, he shares his reflections, achievements, and advice for students of today.**

**Q Sir, could you begin by sharing about your time at Kumaun University? Which year did you graduate, and how did your student life in Nainital influence the path you chose afterward?**

My years at Kumaun University remain one of the most formative and enriching chapters of my life. From Class I until my Ph.D., my entire academic journey was in Nainital. To have studied from childhood to doctoral level in the same town is a blessing I cherish deeply. Kumaun University, in particular, was where my personality, values, and worldview took their final shape. I have always said with pride that whatever I achieved later — in the Army, in sports administration, or in education — has its roots in Kumaun University.

I pursued my M.A. in History here and later completed my Ph.D. on “History of Mountaineering in the Himalayas, with particular reference to the Army’s mountaineering expeditions and the role of the Army in promoting adventure activities and initiating environmental care in the Himalayas.” My research was guided by none other than Dr. Shekhar Pathak, Head of the Department of History and a Padma Shri recipient. This work was not just academic — it was a testimony to my lifelong love for adventure and mountains.

During my time here, I had the privilege of being under the mentorship of some truly legendary academicians — Dr. D.D. Pant, our Principal and a renowned scientist; Prof. Dr. Dwivedi, Head of the History Department and later Principal; Prof. Rajni Singh from Economics, who deepened my understanding of society; Dr. Argal from Political Science, who instilled analytical depth in my thinking; and on a personal note, my mother-in-law, Mrs. Lilu Kumar from the English Department, who brought

into my life the power of language and expression. These stalwarts were not just professors — they were moulders of character. Kumaun University was more than an institution for me; it was a crucible of values, discipline, and vision.

**2. Were there particular mentors or experiences during your university years that continue to guide you even today?**

Absolutely. Beyond classroom learning, it was the environment of Kumaun University that shaped me profoundly. The reading room and the well-stocked library were my sanctuaries; I spent hours lost in books, developing habits of self-study and independent inquiry that have stayed with me for life.

The NCC (National Cadet Corps) played a transformative role, instilling in me discipline, physical stamina, and the first lessons of leadership. Those parades and camps laid the foundation of my future Army career.

The guidance of my professors continues to live with me every day. After being commissioned into the Army, I would return to campus just to touch their feet. Often, I couldn’t even speak — tears would roll down my eyes in gratitude. That is the greatness of Kumaun University — it doesn’t just educate, it transforms lives.

parade ground. Each of these gave me gratitude and courage — my companionship, knowledge, and discipline — building blocks of character. The friendships forged in those years remain among my life’s treasures.

**4. If you had to describe your university journey in three words, what would they be?**

Friendship.  
Foundation.  
Freedom.

**5. You went on to serve as a Colonel in the Indian Army — a life of courage, discipline, and service. What drew you to the Army, and how did you join it?**

Adventure was always part of me. Watching the Republic Day Parade inspired me to join the Army. After my master’s, I cleared the SSB and joined the Indian Military Academy in 1978 as a Gentleman Cadet. The Army became my temple of discipline, courage, and patriotism.

**6. Looking back, which moment from your Army career stands out as a turning point in shaping the person you are today?**

The Siang River expedition in Arunachal Pradesh was life-changing. Our raft was caught in a whirlpool, and I nearly drowned.

Surviving that taught me gratitude and courage — my guiding truth since then has been “Never seek counsel of your fears.”

Serving as an instructor at IMA and NDA, and later at the Army Adventure Wing, I learned that leadership is about character, not command. Watching my cadets rise to become Generals has been my greatest reward.

**7. Could you share a light-hearted or fun story from your academy days or Army service that still stays with you?**

Once in the North-East, the local tribals honored us with a meal. They cooked fresh fish straight from the river — without washing it! When I asked why, they said, “A fish lives in water all its life—it’s already clean.” We all laughed heartily. That day, I learned to respect cultures and find joy in simplicity.

**8. How did your appointment to the Asian Football Confederation’s Task Force come about, and what did it mean for India’s place in global football?**

In 2019, I was humbled to be the only Indian appointed that year to the AFC Task Force. My role was to uphold fairness and transparency in club governance.

**9. As Chairman of AIFF's Club Licensing Committee, what changes are you most proud of introducing?**

I worked to make clubs see that regulations are enablers, not barriers. My biggest achievement was changing their mindset — helping them see compliance as a path to growth.

**10. You often emphasize creating opportunities for rural youth in Uttarakhand. What is your vision for football and sports development in the state?**

Uttarakhand's youth are naturally strong and disciplined. My dream is to give them infrastructure, training, and opportunities — to make Uttarakhand known not just for its beauty but for producing athletes who carry India's flag high.

**11. At 70, you parajumped from 16,000 feet! What inspired you, and what message does it send?**

It was symbolic — proof that courage has no expiry date. I wanted to remind young people that life begins outside your comfort zone.

**12. You have also been a mountaineer and part of the Indian Army's White-Water Rafting team. How have these experiences shaped you?**

Adventure is my greatest teacher. I faced death twice — during the Siang expedition and a parachute jump near Lucknow. Those moments taught me that adversity is life's greatest teacher and strengthened my belief in my motto: *"Never seek counsel of your fears."*

**13. Beyond sports, you founded Sanskriti School in Pune. What inspired you?**

The seed was planted when Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam told me to dedicate my post-Army years to youth. My wife, Devyani, shared that vision, and we started a school focused on holistic growth. Today, Sanskriti Schools are among Maharashtra's best, but the real success is seeing children grow into compassionate citizens.

**14. Could you share more about your entrepreneurial journey?**

After taking voluntary retirement, I worked as CEO Projects at Venky's, gaining corporate experience. Later, I co-founded Sanskriti Schools and engaged in rural sports and social enterprises. I was honored to represent India at BRICS 2023 in South Africa and as part of the 2019 Vice President's delegation to Qatar.

***"Adversity is not your enemy—it is your greatest teacher."***

**15. How do you balance so many roles—Army officer, administrator, entrepreneur, mentor?**

They're not separate compartments but chapters of the same story. Balance comes from aligning everything with one's purpose.

**16. What drives you to give back?**

Service. My parents taught me compassion and humility. My mother, Late Smt. Kamala Devi, taught perseverance; my father, Late Shri Bhuwan Chandra Mungali, built schools and temples for others. Giving back is not a choice — it's a responsibility.

During COVID-19, I helped hundreds return home safely and received a Helping Hand citation from the Governor of Maharashtra

**17. What personal values have remained constant through your journey?**

Humility, perseverance, and service.

**18. Your personal motto for students?**

*"Life is about the joy of the journey, not the destination."*

*"Adversity is not your enemy—it is your greatest teacher."*

**19. What message would you like to share with Kumaun University students?**

Never confuse your present circumstances with your destiny. I started with ₹175 a month, yet Kumaun University gave me the strength to dream fearlessly. You are children of the mountains — soar high.

**20. How should they prepare for the future?**

Be resilient, empathetic, and adaptable. Kumaun University already gives you those tools — use them well

## Rapid Fire round

**1. Favorite book or author:** Napoleon's Biography, The Art of War by Sun Tzu, and The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda.

**2. Habit from the Army:**

Early rising and time management.

**3. Mountains or football field:**

Both.

**4. If not Army:** Teaching and mentoring.

**5. Message to younger self:**

*"Believe in yourself, keep dreaming bigger, and never underestimate where discipline can take you."*

***"Life is about the joy of the journey, not the destination."***



# IN CONVERSATION WITH NEETA BORA MA'AM: INSPIRING MINDS, SHAPING FUTURES



## 3. How do you approach challenges and difficult decisions in leadership?

I believe challenges are opportunities to rethink, rebuild, and reimagine. Whenever faced with a difficult decision, I follow a three-step approach:

- Listen deeply to all perspectives, especially those of students and faculty who will be most affected.
- Reflect carefully on the long-term impact rather than short-term convenience.
- Decide with courage and empathy, ensuring fairness and transparency.

Leadership is not about pleasing everyone, but about standing by the principles that safeguard the collective good.

## 4. What is one skill you believe every student should develop before graduating?

If I had to choose one skill, it would be critical thinking. In a world where information is abundant but wisdom is scarce, the ability to analyze, question, and form independent judgments is invaluable. Alongside this, I also encourage students to nurture empathy, because knowledge without compassion can never create lasting change.

## 5. What is your personal mantra or life lesson that keeps you going in tough times?

My personal mantra is simple: “Do your duty with sincerity, and leave the rest to destiny.” This lesson, instilled by my family and reinforced through my own experiences, keeps me grounded. It reminds me that while we cannot control every outcome, we can always control the integrity of our efforts. Perseverance, patience, and positivity are the keys that have carried me through the most testing times.

## Segment B: Legacy, Leadership & the Story of BSSSV

### 1. Your father, must have left behind a rich legacy of courage and values. How have his ideals influenced your life and leadership journey?

My father's life has been the strongest moral compass in my journey. His courage, simplicity, and unwavering commitment to justice shaped the foundation of my own values. From him, I learnt that leadership is not about authority, but about service – to people, to truth, and to principles larger than oneself. His ideals remind me, every single day, that education too is a form of nation-building. In carrying forward his legacy, I see my role not just as an academic or administrator, but as a custodian of values that must be passed on to future generations.

### 2. BSSSV, known fondly as Neeta Ma'am's School, holds a special place in the hearts of many. Could you share the story behind its establishment and how it connects to your family's history?

Bhartiya Shaheed Sainik Vidyalaya (BSSSV) was born out of a vision to honour the sacrifices of those who laid down their lives for the nation and to carry forward the spirit of selfless service that my father embodied. It was a way of transforming his ideals into an institution that nurtures young minds. Over time, the school came to be fondly called “Neeta Ma'am's School” – a name that humbles me deeply, because it reflects the trust and affection of the community. For me, BSSSV is not just an educational institution; it is an extension of my family's history, where values of patriotism, discipline, and compassion are woven into everyday learning. It is a living tribute to my father's legacy, and a reminder that education must always remain rooted in character and service.

## Segment A: Leadership Insights and Personal Reflections

### 1. Can you tell us about your journey in the field of education and leadership?

My journey in education has been deeply rooted in both passion and responsibility. I began my academic career as a student of Political Science, where I discovered the transformative power of education – not just as a means of livelihood, but as a force to shape societies and nations. Over the years, as a teacher and later as an administrator, I have strived to blend scholarship with leadership. Becoming the Director of DSB Campus has been both an honour and a responsibility, allowing me to guide students and young faculty toward excellence while ensuring that values of inclusivity, integrity, and innovation remain at the heart of our institution.

### 2. What has been the most fulfilling moment in your career so far?

The most fulfilling moments in my career have always been connected to my students' success. Watching young minds discover their potential, whether through academic achievement, social initiatives, or leadership roles, gives me immense satisfaction. One particularly fulfilling experience has been seeing many of our students, especially young women, rise to positions of influence and contribute meaningfully to society – proving that education is indeed the greatest enabler.

# SEGMENT C: Campus Leadership , Empowerment , & Vision for inclusive growth

## 1. In your journey as Director at DSB campus, what core values have you tried to build among students and faculty?

At DSB Campus, I have emphasised three core values – academic integrity, inclusivity, and social responsibility. Education is not just about personal success but about cultivating citizens who contribute to the community. I encourage faculty and students alike to uphold honesty in their academic pursuits, respect diversity in all its forms, and remain conscious of their responsibility toward society and the environment. These values, I believe, create not just good professionals but also good human beings.

## 2. In your view, what unique role can DSB campus play in promoting gender equality and women empowerment in today's time?

As one of the oldest and most respected campuses in Kumaun University, DSB has both a legacy and a responsibility. We have the unique opportunity to become a model campus for gender equality. By creating a culture where young women feel safe, encouraged, and celebrated, and where young men are sensitized to the importance of equity, we can lead by example. Through workshops, mentorship programs, and platforms for women's leadership, DSB campus can ensure that empowerment is not just a slogan but a lived reality.

## 3. How do you personally encourage students – especially young women – to step forward as leaders and changemakers within and beyond the campus?

I believe the first step is creating spaces where young women feel their voices matter. I encourage them by mentoring personally, highlighting women role models from history and contemporary times, and giving them leadership opportunities within campus activities. I also remind them that leadership is not limited to holding positions – it begins with the courage to take initiative, speak up, and stand by their convictions. When students see that their efforts are recognized and valued, they gain the confidence to become changemakers beyond the campus too.

## 4. How important is collaboration between students, teachers, and campus management to build a safe and empowering environment for all?

Collaboration is absolutely essential. A campus thrives when there is trust, dialogue, and shared responsibility. Students bring energy and creativity, teachers bring guidance and wisdom, and management brings resources and direction. When these three work in harmony, we can create an environment that is both safe and empowering. Without collaboration, rules remain only on paper; with collaboration, they become part of the lived culture of the campus.

## 5. Where do you see DSB campus in the next five years when it comes to academic growth, social responsibility, and empowering students for real-world challenges?

In the next five years, I envision DSB Campus as a hub of innovation and inclusivity. Academically, we will continue to strengthen our research culture and interdisciplinary learning. Socially, we will expand our outreach programs so students engage more with local communities and real-world issues. And in terms of empowerment, I see our students graduating not just with degrees but with the confidence, creativity, and compassion to navigate the challenges of an evolving world. My dream is to see DSB recognized not only for academic excellence but also for its role in shaping socially conscious and globally aware citizens. Our Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor is continuously striving to bring excellence to the university. Therefore, we receive his constant support in every constructive initiative that we wish to undertake within the campus.

# Segment D: Quick Campus Picks with Neeta Ma'am

## 1. One word that describes our university?

“Transformative.”

## 2. Your favourite spot on campus?

Main campus ground – yet full of life.

## 3. A student quality you admire most?

Curiosity – it's the root of all learning.

## 4. Your go-to motivational quote for students?

“Be the change you wish to see in the world.” – Mahatma Gandhi.

## 5. One university event you look forward to every year?

Convocation where talents are honoured

## 6. Library or Canteen – where would you unwind?

Library, always – books are my best companions.

## 7. A subject you wish you had studied as a student?

Psychology – to better understand human behaviour.

## 8. A leadership quality you believe every student leader must have?

Empathy – without it, leadership loses its purpose.

## 10. If you could introduce one new student club, what would it be?

A “Social Innovation Club” – where students brainstorm and implement solutions for community challenges.

“BE THE CHANGE YOU WISH TO SEE IN THE WORLD.”

# THE ENCHANTING TALE OF THE NANDA-SUNANDA FESTIVAL

## THE STORY BEHIND THE SISTERS

Long ago, legend says, two divine sisters – Nanda and Sunanda – set out from their mountain home on a sacred journey. But a demon in the form of a raging buffalo blocked their path. As he thundered after them, the sisters hid behind a banana grove and prayed for help.

In response, divine power descended – the demon was destroyed, and the sisters were forever remembered as the protectors of the land.

The people of Kumaon have never forgotten them. Each year, they welcome the sisters home – lovingly crafting their images from banana tree bark and bamboo, adorning them with flowers, and offering prayers for protection, prosperity, and peace.



## A FESTIVAL ROOTED IN HISTORY

The Chand kings of Kumaon (16th century) gave the festival its form, building temples and starting grand fairs where hill folk could gather, trade, and rejoice.

In Almora, Nainital, and villages scattered through the valleys, the spirit of the Chand era still lives on – in music, laughter, and the swirl of colourful shawls.

The Nainital Nanda Devi Temple, rebuilt after a devastating landslide in 1880, stands as a symbol of resilience – proof that faith, like the mountains, cannot be shaken.



## DID YOU KNOW??

### 1. Idols from Banana Trees

Instead of clay, the idols are made from banana stems and bamboo – an ancient, eco-friendly craft said to carry the divine essence of the forest itself.

### 2. The Goddess of the Peaks

Nanda Devi is not just a goddess – she is also the name of India's second-highest mountain. The peak is considered her celestial abode.

### 3. A Festival Older Than the British Raj

Historians trace it back over 400 years, making it one of the oldest continuously celebrated fairs in North India.

### 4. A Festival of Daughters

In local belief, Nanda and Sunanda are like daughters returning to their maternal home (maiti). The entire community celebrates their arrival with songs, laughter, and affection – just like welcoming a beloved child.

### 5. Eco-Spirit of the Hills

No plastic, no pollution – the idols dissolve back into the earth, symbolizing the harmony between humans and nature that defines hill traditions.

### 6. From Faith to Fiesta

Beyond its rituals, Nanda-Sunanda is a canvas for local art – folk dances like Choliya, Kumaoni songs, and colourful fairs draw visitors from all over the Himalayas.



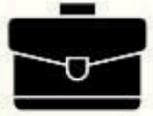
# Two Years @ KU

## Academic and research milestones



- PhD Fellowship for Best PhD Scholars
- Funding for Conferences (Master, PhD & Faculty)
- Internal Research Funding Support
- Indoor Firing Ranges (Training & Research)
- Hydroponic Research Centre
- Herbal Tea Formulation Lab
- Herbal Production & Manufacturing Unit
- BioFloc Fish Technology Centre
- Awards for Translating Text to Kumaoni Language
- Awards to Graduates for Publication

## Cultural & Knowledge Resources



- Topper's Conclave
- Book on KU History
- E-books Access & KU Open E-Library
- "Vidya Setu" Academic Collaboration Program
- MERU Status Achieved (INR 100 Crores)
- DST-PAIR Project Approved (INR 100 Crores)
- "Library Champion" Recognition Initiative
- 26.4 Acres Land at Patwadangar for MERU Campus
- VC Taking Classes
- Renovated Himalayan Museum

## Student Support & Development



- Free SSB Training for Students
- Free Admission to Orphan Students
- "Degree for All" Same Year of Graduation
- MoUs Signed with 28 Institutions
- All Hostels Renovated and Upgraded
- Research Funding to Students
- Free Education to Orphan Students

## Skill & Career Enhancement



- Construction of 10 Academic Buildings
- Renovation of:
  - Chemistry Lab
  - Botany Lab
  - Conference Hall
- Installation of Solar Panels (788 KW)
- UG/PG Internships (Rs 5000/month) & Placement Support
- Talent Hunt Program for UG/PG (INR 30 Lakhs)
- Patent Cell with Financial Support

