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Redefining Defence Education

THE VISION AND LEGACY OF MR. SANDEEP GUPTA

Anjali Sharma | The CEO Magazine



Sandeep Gupta - Founder & Director of Doon Defence Academy

FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE OCEAN TO THE PINNACLE OF EDUCATION

In the serene heart of Dehradun, Doon Defence Academy (DDA) stands as a cornerstone of defence education in India. At its helm is Mr. Sandeep Gupta, whose extraordinary journey from the Indian Navy's Submarine Arm to leading one of the country's top defence academies exemplifies courage, discipline, and dedication to nation-building.

Born on 2nd October 1972, Mr. Gupta's story is one of grit and purpose. At just seventeen, he joined the Indian Navy on 2nd July 1990, opting for the elite and demanding Submarine Arm. Over the next fifteen years, he served the nation beneath the ocean's surface, mastering the values of discipline, teamwork, and resilience, qualities that would later define his leadership as an educator.

FOUNDING DOON DEFENCE ACADEMY: FROM SERVICE TO EDUCATION

After an illustrious naval career, Mr. Gupta voluntarily retired on 31st July 2005. But his spirit of service didn't

end there. Merely two weeks later, on 15th August 2005, he founded Doon Defence Academy, aiming to prepare young Indians not just to crack defence exams but to embody the spirit of service and leadership. What began as a modest coaching setup in Dehradun soon evolved into one of India's most trusted and result-oriented defence preparatory academies. In just 21 years, DDA has achieved more than 14,500 selections across the Indian Army, Navy, Air Force, and Merchant Navy.

The academy offers specialised programs for NDA, CDS, AFCAT, Merchant Navy, Agniveer, RIMC, RMS, Sainik School, and SSB preparation, covering the entire spectrum of entry points into the Indian Armed Forces. In addition to its defence-focused programs, DDA offers a comprehensive Foundation Course that integrates CBSE schooling with advanced preparation for NDA, NDA + JEE, JEE, NEET, RIMC, Sainik School, CPL (Commercial Pilot License) and CA, enabling students to simultaneously pursue excellence in defence, engineering, medical and professional fields.

NATIONAL RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

Over the years, DDA has earned national recognition and numerous awards, including the Uttarakhand Educator's Award, Dev Bhoomi Excellence Award, Uttarakhand Excellence Award, and the Uttarjan Today Samman. Mr. Gupta was also felicitated by the Indian Navy at INS Chilka, the very place where his naval journey began 35 years ago, completing a profound circle of service and honor. In 2025, DDA added yet another feather to its cap when it was named "Best Defence Coaching in India" at the World Icon Awards, where Olympian Saina Nehwal presented the honour—recognising both DDA's excellence and Mr. Gupta's transformative vision.

ANCHORED IN VALUES AND MISSION-DRIVEN EXCELLENCE

Despite its remarkable growth, DDA remains anchored in its founding values—Discipline, Dedication, and Service Before Self. Its environment mirrors the ethos of the Armed Forces—structured, aspirational, and purpose-driven. Every student who walks through its gates is mentored to lead a life guided by integrity, focus, and selfless contribution.

In an era of commercialised education, DDA stands out as a mission-driven institution, measuring success by the character, courage, and commitment of its students. Under Mr. Sandeep Gupta, DDA bridges the gap between ambition and achievement, shaping the next generation of leaders.

LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

As India advances on the global stage, Doon Defence Academy plays a key role in shaping the nation's leaders. Mr. Sandeep Gupta's journey—from submarines to education—shows that the highest service is empowering the next generation. Through DDA, he has built a lasting legacy of discipline, honor, and nation-building that will inspire generations to come.