

On The Waterfront

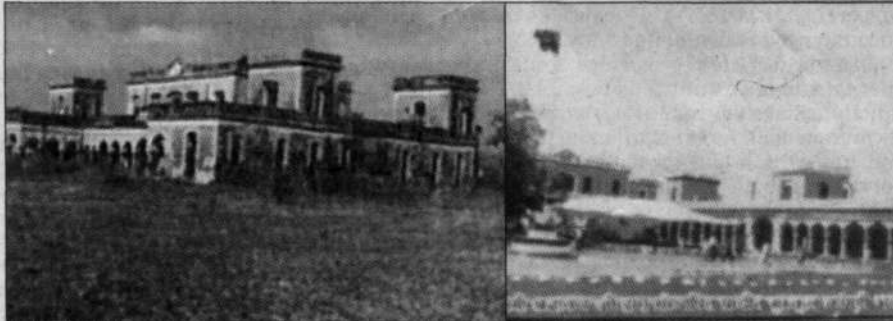
The Times of India, Mumbai, 08 Sep 2008

1 A river that is changing course can be channelized by building embankments, which should be as far away as 3.5 times its width

2 Embankments are generally made of mud and stones, 10-12m wide at the base and 5m wide at the top

3 The land between the embankments and the river is not suitable for habitation because of the risk of floods

4 Such land could be suitable for farming as floodplains are generally considered very fertile



OLD AND NEW: (Left) The old building of Gurukul University which was submerged after the Ganga changed its course in 1924. (Right) The new building at Haridwar

A SUBMERGED UNIVERSITY

The Gurukul University was established in 1902 on the banks of the Ganga in Kangri village in Bijnor district.

The institution, which was founded by Swami Shradhananda to revive the ancient Indian gurukul system of education, famously played host to Mahatma Gandhi three times.

In 1924, the Ganga changed its course and parts of the campus were submerged. The areas that escaped the swirling waters were

accessible only by boats, and that too, during low tide. Consequently, the varsity management was forced to construct a new building near Haridwar in Uttarakhand, again on the banks of the Ganga.

"The old building still remains under our management. We try to maintain it whenever it's accessible and even organise some field trips for our students although no regular classes can be held there," says its vice-chancellor Swantantra Kumar.

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