



JAMIA HAMDARD UNIVERSITY

# Setting a benchmark in education

JAMIA HAMDARD UNIVERSITY AIMS TO INTRODUCE SUPER SPECIALITY CLINICAL COURSES TO RAISE A GENERATION OF COMPETENT SAVIOURS

Nithin Belle

**A** highly qualified scientist, recipient of several prestigious awards globally, a policy maker and an administrator, Prof Seyed E. Hasnain is now the Vice-Chancellor of Jamia Hamdard University.

"I have been associated with Jamia Hamdard for a long time in various capacities," Prof Hasnain told *Khaleej Times* during an interview in Delhi. "I've been a member of the academic council and a nominee of the Chancellor in all selection committees."

The first Director of the Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics, a Government of India institution (who also made it a gold standard for DNA-based crime investigations), the professor now has ambitious plans for Jamia Hamdard, a deemed university accredited by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council in the 'A' grade.

"We are a minority institution, but if you look at our faculty and other things, we do not discriminate," he explains. "As per law, we have taken 50 per cent students from the minority community, but we do not compromise on quality. All these students sit through the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET)."

Referring to the group's medical college, he points out that the Medical Council of India (MCI) allows such an institution to take up postgraduate courses only after five years of operation. "The MCI has told us



Prof Seyed E. Hasnain, Vice-Chancellor of Jamia Hamdard University

that we will be given non-clinical subjects to start with. We have applied for biochemistry, physiology and anatomy," he adds.

Next year, the institution hopes to start its MD programmes. "We will then be able to include clinical subjects and add more beds to our hospital, so that we can go for super-speciality status," says Prof Hasnain. "There is huge demand for super speciality courses, but you need good teachers."

The medical school has now set a new benchmark for Jamia Hamdard, adds the vice-chancellor. "We are trying to create parallel structures with the same benchmark as the medical school," he explains. "Our engineering school, for instance, offers postgraduate courses in computer science and engineering. These are much in demand. Last year, for instance, 35 of the 40 students who graduated were picked in on-campus interviews by TCS Ltd."

According to Prof Hasnain, the university's fee structure is quite reasonable. "We are here to take care of the minority community," he says. "Hamdard means - 'I'm with you in pain. I want to share your pain'. It is in the context of uplifting marginalised communities including Sikhs, Christians and Muslims."

Jamia Hamdard has been trying to reinvent itself, regrouping colleges and institutions and creating a modified structure for governance by giving more autonomy. "I'm hopeful of doubling our intake by 2018, from 8,000 at present to 15,000," he says.

New courses and programmes will soon begin. "We have the capabilities and competences. About a year ago, we started the Institute of Molecular Medicine. I hold the academic and administrative charges of this

as well," notes the professor.

According to him, the pharmacy institution in Jamia is one of its jewels. "Much of our visibility is because of the pharmacy school," he points out.

Beginning next year, the group will start five-year undergraduate programmes in biochemistry, biotechnology, toxicology, bio-informatics, botany and clinical research.

"Given the fact that we cater to a community that may not find it affordable to pay more, our fee structure is very reasonable," explains Prof Hasnain.

The university is also keen on expanding its international student population, as it attempts to attract more students from the Middle East, the West and Far East.

The university does not have many undergraduate programmes, but would like to attract more students for the available courses. "We have approved a proposal to start undergraduate courses and about 240 students will be joining us this year," he says. "We also propose building two new hostels."

The university, which also operates a leading nursing college whose graduates staff hospitals in India and the Middle East, aims to expand this institution as well. It has a campus in Kannur in Kerala, where it plans to launch a nursing course.

Prof Hasnain was a member of the Science Advisory Council to the Prime Minister between 2004-09 and 2009-14; a member of the Scientific Advisory Committee to the Union Cabinet; Chairman of the Biotech Advisory Council, Government of Andhra Pradesh; and a member of the Biotech Advisory Council of many other state governments, including Gujarat.



PHOTOS: SUPPLIED



SERVING WITH COMMITMENT: Jamia Hamdard University has a place for all.