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# Open Varsity to enroll 1,16,000 students

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Admission to formal academic session in the first open university of the country will begin at the end of 1993 when 1,16,000 students will be enrolled in different courses.

In an exclusive interview with BSS Special Correspondent Gaziur Rahman Vice Chancellor of the university Prof Shamsur Ali said in the meantime some life oriented educational programmes would be started by utilising the existing distance education facilities in the country.

Prof Ali said works for development of physical facilities including full-fledged audio and video studies at the old campus of the Islamic University at Gazipur was in progress and the development project of the university was expected to be completed in five years (1991-96).

He said the project would be completed at an estimated cost of about Taka 170 crore including Taka 42 crore in foreign exchange. Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide 81 per cent of the project cost, he added.

Prof Ali said open university was a concept where there was no personal contact between teachers and students and the methodology of teaching was based on audio-visual materials and printed texts prepared by team of experts in the respective fields. He said the activities of the university would be conducted through audio, television and postal services.

Prof Ali said in the open university various options were allowed for the students. There is no limitation of age, number of students and the time required for entry into a course.

He said the objectives of the university were to make available all sorts of education including mass education to the people as well as to acquaint the working people with the advancement of modern technologies through distance teaching method.

He said the programmes of the university would benefit mostly the drop outs from the formal educational institutions, the unemployed youths, the rural women, working people in different trades and professions and health, family welfare and agricultural workers. He said the courses would be prepared based on the needs of the society.

Prof Ali said programmes of the university would also help increase peoples awareness and participation in different national development activities.

He said the University will have formal courses where degrees, diplomas and certificates would be awarded and in non-formal courses life-oriented programmes would be made in solving everyday problems of the people, he said.

The Vice Chancellor said besides the main centre at Gazipur the open university will have 10 regional and 81 study centres all over the country.

He said in the beginning, the academic programmes of the University would start with eight schools on education, management, humanities and language, health science, agriculture and rural development, engineering and technology, social sciences and women studies and school of sciences.

He said under the open university project 36,000 primary and secondary school teachers and 9,000 mass education teachers would be trained. Besides, 1000 students will be trained in each of disaster management and computer application courses.

He said diploma would be given to 4,500 students in management, 1000 in nursing and

1000 in health and family welfare.

Prof Ali said a second channel of television will have to be opened to telecast open university programmes.

The university will have one Vice Chancellor, three Pro Vice Chancellors, 11 professors, 30 directors, 21 associate professors, 18 deputy directors, one chief engineer, one librarian, 66 assistant professors and 29 lecturers.

When completed, he said, the annual expenditure of the university would be around taka 12 crore as against an income of taka nine crore.