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Jamia shapes IAS Dreams in its Free Coaching Academy

NEW DELHI: Thirty-four of its 300 students have cracked the civil services exam and, of the 12 who made it this year, two were ranked as high as 17 and 90. But this is not just another money-spinning coaching shop. It's the free Residential Coaching Academy of Jamia Millia Islamia. Funded by the University Grants Commission and ministry of minority affairs, it has scripted success stories for candidates from SC/ST category, women and minorities in the past three years.

While the genesis of this coaching academy dates back to 1983 when Jamia established Centre for Coaching and Career Planning, "it was in 2010 with a grant of Rs 15 crore the coaching academy was set up in project mode initially for three years. State-of-the-art infrastructure was created with a round-the-clock library and residential facility. All these are free of cost, aimed at mentoring bright candidates from among women, and SC/ST and minority communities. And the result is there for all to see", Prof. Anisur Rahman, honorary director of the academy, proudly says.

Of the 100 students of the 2013 batch, 12 got an entry to the elite civil service list and 51 others were selected for a variety of other services like [Intelligence Bureau](#), Bank PO, Central Armed Paramilitary Forces and state administrative services.

The academy is now planning to increase the number of intake from 100 to 120 annually. The aspirants are selected on basis of an all-India written test followed by individual interviews. Last year, there were 2,800 applicants. But what make the academy interesting are the peer group and the academic environment it provides for intensive preparations.

It currently has representation from 10 states-Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. Its latest success stories include those of a graduate from IIM Ahmedabad, a doctor doing his residency from AIIMS, and a graduate from Shivaji College, DU.

This year's shining star is Faiz Al Ahmed Mumtaz. A hotel management graduate from Darjeeling, Mumtaz is the highest ranked student from the academy with an all-India position of 17 even while Sana Akhtar ranked 90.

Speaking to TOI, Mumtaz said he will opt for the Indian Administrative Service, though he is

eligible for Foreign Service as well. "I want to work in the country and for the country. Through this service, I will get to know about my country and its people, and if I can do something good that will be a good reward," he says.

Speaking about the academy, Mumtaz says, "This is probably the best coaching centre in Delhi. The faculty is excellent and the environment is very conducive to study as you get to stay with your peer group and prepare for the same exam. I stayed here for two years."

The other 10 who made it to the list from the academy this year are Tejaswani Gautam, Afaq Ahmad Giri, Raunaq Jamil Ansari, Mohammad Saim, Dayama Harish Kumar, Satendra Singh Mehra, Avais Patwegar, Jyoti Virdi, Bhanu Prabha and Balram Meena.

Patwegar, who was with AIIMS, took admission enrolled in a private coaching centre and spent Rs 35,000. "I dropped out after a month because of quality issues. I was looking for a good library and Jamia has one. Added to that was the free residential and coaching facility. One will not get such an assembly of teachers anywhere other than Jamia. It made all the difference," he says.

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