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IGNOU launches course in urban planning

Special Correspondent

It will focus on how to meet the challenges of rapid urbanisation

Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), which has been offering distance education courses in various subjects, has now entered the urban planning and development sector.

Challenges

Realising the challenges lying ahead for planners and policy makers in view of increasing urbanisation, the university has introduced a one-year postgraduate English diploma course in Urban Planning and Development. It is mainly aimed at councillors, civil engineers, architects, real estate promoters and those who are handling development projects in municipal corporations, municipalities and town panchayats.

S. Mohanan, Regional Director of IGNOU-Madurai Regional Centre, told *The Hindu* on Wednesday that the admissions for the January session had commenced.

He said that soon he would write to District Collectors and Corporation Commissioners to encourage their town planning staff to join the course.

Efficiency

This distance learning programme was designed by the varsity's School of Extension and Development Studies to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the people working in urban planning divisions and non-governmental organisations.

An introductory note prepared by IGNOU said urbanisation had created various problems with regard to transportation, unauthorised housing and construction and displacement of people. Mr.Mohanan said any graduate could join the course, the fee for which was fixed at Rs.2,800.

“Support needed”

“Soon I will also meet the Collectors of the districts coming under the jurisdiction of Madurai Regional Centre and seek their support. Municipal authorities can sponsor their senior employees as it will help them address the challenges of growing urbanisation and find ways to tackle them,” he noted. The IGNOU-Madurai Regional Centre covers 15 districts and the overall student enrolment in this admission season had been encouraging, he added.

Admitting inmates of Madurai, Coimbatore and Tiruchi prisons to suitable courses and skill development programmes and opening of a programme centre for law in Government Law College in Madurai were among the other priorities of the centre, he pointed out.