

Jamia course a hit... *led by alumnus Rangachari*

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New Delhi: It's one thing wanting to learn a foreign language like French, German, Portuguese, Japanese or Italian. How about Pashto, Kazhaki, Turkmenin or Uzbek to take advantage of the booming medical tourism? The Jamia Milia Islamia (JMI) here shows you the way.

The university has been offering certificate and diploma courses in the Central Asian languages, apart from Turkish and Chinese, and there is no dearth of takers.

The university also offers certificate and diploma courses in several European languages including French, Italian, Russian, Portuguese and Spanish.

Pashto is quite in demand here. "We have 20 plus seats for Pashto and all of them are usually filled. We offer certificate, diploma and advanced diploma in Pashto and Persian languages," said Iraq Raza Zaidi, head of the Persian department at Jamia Millia Islamia.

But again, there is always a demand for Uzbek language. "People learn Uzbek language to help them in trade and tourism. We have 25 seats for the certificate course and receive sufficient number of applications," said **TCA Rangachari**, director of JMI's academy of international studies.

The language most in demand, however, is Chinese, Rangachari added. This is thanks to India's booming trade with China.

On an average, the Academy receives around 100 applications for 25-plus seats. "This year we have increased the number of seats to 30," Rangachari told a news agency.

Unlike many other languages where teaching hours are limited to 4-5 hours per week, the Chinese course is quite intensive, with students attending classes for four hours every day on an average.

"Our speciality is that we teach the original Chinese language that is still used in Taiwan. We have specially hired a teacher from Taiwan's National Tsing Hua University," Rangachari said.

The original Chinese slightly differs in script from the language currently being used in mainland China.

"It easier to move to mainland language from the original Chinese but difficult the other way around. So we teach original Chinese," Rangachari pointed out.

Career – diplomat “ Ranga ” is BA His Hons 1966 MA 1968 Hindu College and retired as Ambassador to Paris in 2007 . He is a contemporary of legendary journalist and debater , the late Chand Joshi BA Hons 1963 and veteran SK Pande BA His Hons 1964.