

COURSES AT NOMINAL FEE FOR NEW TOWN YOUTHS

Xavier's the friendly neighbour

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New Town: St Xavier's University will open its doors to marginalised students from villages around the New Town campus, offering them short-term certificate courses at a nominal fee.

The six-month courses will be designed to develop professional skills and promote "small jobs".

"The villages around our campus are not very developed. There is hardly any facility available for youths from poor families. A Jesuit institution like ours is run with an aim to achieve academic excellence. But our institutions have also played a major role in upgrading the academic environment of their surrounding areas," vice-chancellor Father Felix Raj said.

"The short-term courses are a part of our plan to establish a friendly and

REACH OUT

- Six-month certificate courses
- Aimed at developing professional skills and promoting "small jobs"
- Nominal monthly fee of Rs 100
- Subjects may include computer and electronics, mobile repair and hotel management

genial relationship with our neighbourhood," he said.

The students will be charged a nominal fee of not more than Rs 100 a month.

The topics for the courses are yet to be finalised but the university is considering subjects such as computer and electronics, mobile repair and hotel management. "We want the students to get some hands-on training and also

understand certain practical aspects of the profession," Felix Raj said.

Nearly 100 students and some teachers from the university have been visiting the local villages to conduct a survey on the kind of facilities available in the neighbourhood. The survey, a part of the St Xavier's outreach programme, seeks to find out the number of schools in each village, the number of students, the standard of education, how many students attend school regularly and health-care facilities.

The courses will be finalised based on the findings of the survey. "Since we are a Jesuit institution we must have an impact on the neighbourhood," said the vice-chancellor.

The university has drawn up a plan to host various educational and cultural programmes on the campus for the children of the locality.