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## THE WINDOW

Number: 05

August, 2000

### The Problem of Moral Conduct in the Co-education Institutions: Bangladesh Situation

-----Shah Abdul Hannan

Co-education in educational institutions is nothing new in Bangladesh. Since the inception of modern education system during the British rule co-education has been in vogue. Since the establishment of Dhaka University co-education has been in practice here. The practice is no different in other universities as well.

In college and school stages the practice is somehow different. In most of the schools and colleges there is no co-education. In most places for girl students there are separate schools and colleges. But where there is no adequate number of schools and colleges for girls, co-education system is prevalent.

In *madrashas* there is no co-education, so to say. In the past there was no *madrashas* for the girls. This is a pointer to the social failure. Now there are *madrashas* for the girls. Where there is no *madrashas* for the girls, there has been made some arrangements for teaching the girls.

In the past the number of girl students was very few in universities and colleges. The free mixing among boys and girls was very less. As a result there did not crop up any major problems (at that time). Now for obvious reasons, the number of girl students has increased tremendously and its fallout is to be seen in social fabrics. In universities and colleges most of the students being Muslims, even than due to co-education, free mixing among the boys and girls has increased considerably. Many students, boys and girls, sit together and are found gossiping, cutting jokes and indulge in making fun and frolics of all descriptions. The boys and girls go a step further. They walk hand in hand and move by the same rickshaws (a kind of transport used in Bangladesh). Islam approves none of this.

In most cases, the results are very bad. Problems of various kinds of nature are cropping up, still more in some cases illegitimate relation developing. It was on 14<sup>th</sup> May, 1998 issue of Bangladesh Observer that Dr. Sabrina Rashid wrote, "Never before did we doctors come across so many unmarried girls getting pregnant". She also writes, "It is the boys who

get more emotional and earlier too than the girls. Girls are relatively cooler all through. Therefore, even if she takes him as a friend as such, the boy is likely to emotionally involved. That is why it is better to keep a safe distance from them".

Dr. Sabrina also writes, "Talking does not stop at talking. It starts in the beginning with study talk, than it goes step by step to more personal one and finally, to emotional ones. It is because there is a surge of hormones through you, which is new for the body and the brain and therefore, has a new affect on your emotions setting them afire easily and quickly. This happens in case of the boys all the more. Because the girls are a bit cool, the boys are much more emotional. So the girls want to get the boys as friends, but the boys is likely to get emotionally involved".

So for this Dr. Rashid wants the girls of co-education system not to mix with boys and urge the girls to maintain safe distance. Dr. Sabrina Rashid's advice is quite logical. The boys and girls relation should be formal and not informal. Girl students who require coaching or help in their studies should approach good girl students and boys to good boy students. Otherwise, with few exceptions, the situation may take turn for the worse, which Islam does not approve. Care should be taken in case of private coaching. Adolescent girls should not take coaching under or be under tuition with young boys, girls should be tutored by lady teachers and senior girl students only.

Senior girl students should also be ready to do coaching of girls. This will be helpful in solving the problem.

Of course, some thoughtful men think of different solution. They think that in higher education co-education should be done away with. There have to be universities and campuses exclusively for girls. Taking steps like this is no doubt a matter of time. This can't be implemented easily. But some girls' college, universities or medical colleges can be set up without difficulties. It is also appropriate that co-education is abolished initially from school and college level, the stage in which the West sexual anarchy becomes rampant. This would require setting up of more girl schools and colleges.

Malaysia's Islamic University, however, has co-education systems in practice. But they have made arrangements for decent dress code and other necessary rules and regulations which have kept the situation well under control and modest.s

In Bangladesh measures like this, under present circumstances may not be possible. In this context Dr. Sabrina has dealt elaborately in her essay. We draw the attention of the government of the country, educationist, sociologist, Islamic thinkers, religious leaders and right-thinking students towards this serious moral issue and problem.

### Bringing an End to the World of Extremism

-----Fatima Nasreen Hasan

(Continued from the previous issue)

Indications of Extremism: There are basically four manifestation of extremism which are explained below:

(a) The first indication of extremism is bigotry and intolerance. The clearest evidence of extremism is bigotry. A bigot has a strong and unreasonable beliefs and opinions about religion and will not listen to or accept opinions of any one who disagrees. Thus a bigot or an extremist neither knows nor believes in moderation.

(b) The second characteristics of extremism is the perpetual commitment to excessiveness and the attempt to force others to do likewise, despite the existence of good reasons for facilitation. This kind of alternative is not in line with the teachings of the *Quran*. The *Quran* says: "... Allah intends every facility for you; He does not want to put you to difficulties...." [2:185]

The prophet also said, "Allah loves that His dispensations (to make things easier) be accepted as the dislikes (to see people) committing disobedience." It is also reported that, "Whenever the prophet (SAWS) was given a choice between two options, he always chose the easiest unless it was a sin." Thus it is wrong to believe that if one performs excessive *Ibadah* (so that it overburdens him), he will get more reward. An extremist therefore does not care about other people. He does not keep in mind that his action (or performance) might put others in difficulties. A *Hadith* to support this view is like this: Anas Ibn Malik narrated: "the Prophet (SAWS) said, 'When I stand for *Salah*, I intend to prolong it but I cut it short on hearing the cries of a child, because I do not like to trouble the mother.

(c) The third indication of extremism is the out of time and out of place religious excessiveness and over burdening. It is observed mainly when applying Islamic principles in non-Muslim countries or to people who have only recently been converted to Islam. One of the recent events of North America can be related here. It was found that devout young Muslims, who belong to some Muslim groups, have started a great controversy because Muslims sit on chairs during the Saturday and Sunday lectures in mosques instead of sitting on mats or ground, and those who attend wear shirts and trousers rather than loose outer coverings. In another Islamic center, people were creating fuss over the showing of historical/ educational film in a mosque. Unfortunately these Muslims ignore the fact that the purpose of the mosque is to serve the worldly as well as the spiritual interest of Muslims.

(d) Harshness in the treatment of people, roughness in the manner of approach and crudeness in calling the people in Islam are all included in the fourth characteristic of extremism. There is no doubt that the above are contrary to the teachings of *Quran* and *Sunnah*. The *Quran* states: "Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious....." [16:125] The *Quran* also address the Prophet (SAWS), defining the relation with his companions: "It is part of mercy of Allah that thou (Muhammad) dost deal gently with them.. What thou severe or harsh hearted they would have broken away from about thee....." [3:159]

### Editorial

We are extremely sorry for being late to bring out the fifth publication of "The Window". Thanks to "The Pioneer" for publishing "MOHAMMAD ASAD, *Shataborsher Shradanjali*" a book as a tribute to the 100<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mohammad Asad. Please communicate with us with your wise ideas.

Hope you all in good shape.

*Ma 'as Salam.*

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