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Teacher Education And Curricula

—Principal M. N. Karim

BANGLADESH is a Muslim majority country and it is represented as an important Muslim country in the international forum of the Muslim world since its creation. It now plays an important role in all affairs of the Muslim world. It is, therefore, the fitness of things that due attention should be given to the proper education of our teachers and students. Islam insists on a firm faith in Allah and a total submission to His Will with a belief in life hereafter. The ultimate aim of the education of the Muslims (as stressed in the First World Conference on Muslim Education held in Mecca 1977) therefore, lies in the realisation of complete submission to Allah on the level of individual, the community and humanity at large.

The Muslim teachers are respected to be the carriers (torch bearers) of the Islamic values of life to the minds of the Muslim children. They can only do so not by their mere scholarly lectures and instructions but by their having deep faith in the Islamic values which should be reflected in their clear and definite Islamic philosophy of life and should be able to interpret things through their teaching lessons in the light of Islamic values given in the Quran and the Sunna and in the glorious past of Islam. Young minds are very much receptive and creative in nature. They easily catch the contagion of the environment of the educational institutions created by the teachers by their ideas and examples.

If education is to produce men and women of character with qualities of leadership based on truth, sincerity, patriotism and genuine fear of Allah, and if educational institutions are to inculcate in the younger generation the spirit of Islam and make this generation aware of our distinctive culture and heritage and if we are to catch the young and inculcate in him the Islamic motto of service before self and purity in thought and action, we must assess how far these objectives can be achieved through the teachers concerned with the education of our children.

In the context of this and also in view of the fact that Islam is a universal code of life and a unifying force for the cause of humanity at large, there should be a compulsory subject for the Muslims and optional for the non-Muslims (if not compulsory) on Islamic ideology in all the Teacher Training Colleges of Bangladesh. As a matter of fact such a subject was compulsory for all irrespective of caste and creed before the dawn of independence. It will deal with the fundamentals of Islam, of the Eternal truth and of the universal character of Islam with outlines of Islam's contribution to world civilisation.

In the fields of the common general subjects of the course of study taught in the Teacher Education institutions, such as history of education, philosophy of education, educational psychology, educational measurements etc. we are to see how much we can take from the field of Islamic cultural

regions though we can accept something useful from others with no harm to our ideology and culture as per instruction of our Holy Prophet (SM). In the above fields of study the contributions of great Muslim Philosophers like Ibn Sina, Al-Farabi, Al-Gazzali, Ibn Rushd and Ibn-Khaldun should be taken into consideration. Ibn-Rushd, for example, wrote on the concord of religion with philosophy and stressed the need of prophetic revelation like Ibn-Sina who in his last thesis on metaphysics argues the necessity of prophetism for mankind.

As to the methods of teaching different subjects in which also a course of teaching and practical work is pursued in teacher education institutions, Islamic bias has to be given both in theory and practice as far as possible. The science teachers, for example, should be taught and trained to draw inspiration from the Quran as there are direct references to the study of the Cosmic world and of the natural sciences which in the opinion of great scholars like Dr. Maurice Bucille 'does not contain a single statement that is assailable from a modern scientific point of view' (His book on the Bible the Quran and science). Similarly in teaching history, a history teacher should be induced to draw conclusions from the Quranic stories of the people of the past in which are given the causes of the rise, sufferings and downfall of people in different places of the world. The stories of Aaad Thamud Pharaoh for examples show that neither

nations, nor individuals, however mighty, prosperous or firmly established may be destroyed if they transgress the law of Allah. They law of Allah which is the law of higher nature which He has bestowed on us, made, those people in the first place great and glorious; when they fell from it and "heaped mischief on mischief", they were swept away.

Like manner in teaching other subjects also Islamic bias can be produced for the benefit of students because where there is knowledge and will there is way.

As the teacher education institutions need some training for the teachers in the method of teaching, the teachers also need simultaneous training in some useful co-curricular activities within the campus of the institutions and outside during their off hours and holiday period. These are gardening, 'grow more food campaign', literacy campaign among the less fortunate, holding of religious symposia, function on human rights on the ideals of Islam, holding of Miladun Nabi and of cultural functions on the contribution of Muslim thinkers, regular organisation for the performance of prayers in congregation within the campus of the institutions etc. The importance of such co-curricular activities in the context of society and present day world can never be minimised. It is through such activities that practical training may be given to teachers in such Islamic values and virtues as leadership discipline sacrifice devotion service dignity in labour, fellow feeling for the benefit of the pupils.