

WOMEN ON THE MOVE

HARASSMENT II Days of the Raj Revisited This Woman's Point of View

by Nadia S. Hossain

I don't believe one person has the right to make other peoples lives miserable. Especially when the sole reason is purely based on the color of their skin. Survival for the larger part of the population of Bangladesh, especially us women, is difficult enough without having to be punished by non-Bangladeshis for the color of their skin. People don't need this kind of suffering as well. The number of cases of racial harassment in Bangladesh these days is on the rise and by people who come from abroad, who are for all intents and purposes visitors in our country. It's unfair, it's unnecessary, it's unacceptable and it's a form of bullying.

An incident that has caused a lot of disturbance amongst family and friends recently is one that first comes to mind. It was at an international school with a minority of children from Bangladesh. The facilities are better than any other school, unfortunately, I cannot say much for the member of school staff that a friend and I had the unfortunate unlucky and unpleasant experience of meeting.

The school was hosting an annual dance for their teenage students. My friend and I were asked to assist with the music for the dance. We were treated rudely and humiliated in front of a large number of thirteen and fourteen year olds. The person in question began by speaking incredibly rudely to a member of the school's own maintenance staff and then to the young brown eyed black haired student not to mention my friend who just happened to be Bangladeshi as well!

All four of us were spoken to as if we were uneducated, uncouth pieces of scum, without any provocation whatsoever. Ironically, we were treated like we were trespassers in a land foreign to us. As young adults I presumed that we were entitled to a few words in defense. I was wrong, this teacher wouldn't have it, he just wouldn't listen. His behavior was despicable, apalling, unspeakable and downright racist! Nothing more or nothing less. Before we were harassed any more we made our departure. It was then that I came upon a piece of information that confirmed my accusations of racism.

Whilst on a school field outside Dhaka, this same teacher had man handled some of the local people of the villages. Correct me if I'm wrong, but does this man have any right to do this? As a visitor in our country this man should not be allowed to treat us as if he were superior and



school premises during dinner before the dance. Why? Because the poor kid had booked his ticket but due to unavoidable circumstances was unable to give his teacher the money for it. The ethnic origin of the boy well, guess. That's right. Third time may have been lucky for this man, but I can assure you there shall be no fourth. This teacher is supposed to setting an example for these young children. They are at a vulnerable age, what they see and hear around them makes a big impact on their own character. From what I have seen this man is a danger to them, and the way they grow up to view other people, not only of different races but those older than themselves.

Another horrifying incident was one that took place outside Dhaka, this same teacher had man handled some of the local people of the villages. Correct me if I'm wrong, but does this man have any right to do this? As a visitor in our country this man should not be allowed to treat us as if he were superior and

Introduction

As in many countries in the world, endeavour to prevent crime from Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) was also started through private initiative. Some farsighted social workers felt their moral responsibility to work in this regard for diminishing the increasing trend of crime. In 1965, they formed the 'Association for Correction and Social Reclamation' (ACSR), a voluntary organization for prevention of crime and rehabilitation of socially handicapped women. Since then, till 1971, when the liberation war started, about 100 female jail returnees were rehabilitated by the association. During the period of the liberation war, because of the uncertainty and social disorder, the association's work remained suspended. The association was again reactivated in 1978 and managed to purchase a plot of land of one bigha (30 decimal) at Mirpur for a project on the rehabilitation of socially handicapped persons.

From the beginning, the association consisted of renowned government officials and other senior citizens i.e. university teachers, lawyers, journalists, philanthropists, etc. With the intelligence and dynamic leadership of the patrons, the association has set up four branches in four divisions in Bangladesh. It has also been patronizing a youth development project 'Dhanshiri' which has been working for the prevention of juvenile delinquency in Dhaka.

Since its commencement, it has received financial and other support mainly from the government to run its activities. In 1992, it got Tk. 16.75.000 from the Canada Fund for building a training-cum-rehabilitation center for the female jail returnees and women in moral danger at the plot purchased by the association at Mirpur. Recently it has also received a grant from the government of Japan through its Bangladesh mission, in order maintaining the activities of the center.

Nirmal Asray Prakalpa (The Happy Home Project)

The aptly named Happy Home Project is a training and rehabilitation center for female jail returnees and offenders, and women in moral danger and with specific objectives.

To provide legal support for under trial prisoners;

To rehabilitate the released female prisoners and offenders;

To provide shelter, food, lodging, medicare;

To provide functional education and vocational training;

To ensure socio-economic development of the inmates by way of creating employment opportunities so as to enable them to make their own living in the subsequent period.

Arrange to reunite the inmates with their families and take necessary steps to rehabilitate them in their respective families and communities.

Target Group

a) Female jail returnees



Proudly showing her award

preconceptions of the role of women in society in order to overcome professional obstacles.

In the late 1970s, she was the first female officer to travel to remote rural areas of Bangladesh in order to monitor Food for Work schemes. She demonstrated considerable courage and determination, frequently facing the scepticism of both government officials and many of her WFP colleagues.

Since 1974, WFP has been supporting the Government of Bangladesh in addressing the needs of the poorest people in rural areas through two development programmes, namely Rural Development (previously known as Food for Work) and Vulnerable Groups Development (VGD). Since the mid-1980s, Rehana Banoo has devoted all her professional and personal efforts to the VGD programme.

The VGD programme aims to increase the self-reliance of poor women in rural Bangladesh by giving them a monthly income transfer of 31 kg of wheat for two years. In addition, women are enrolled in training courses and have access to savings and credit facilities. The programme is focused on poultry rearing and other non-traditional income earning activities. During the two-year programme, from 1994-96, more than 70 per cent of the 400,000 women covered by VGD will have access to a variety of support services that will enable them to sustain their households above the hard-core poverty line.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo strongly believes that men and women can work together as equal partners for the development of their country. She has played a vital role in strengthening the position of women in this context. She will have the pleasure of joining the WFP Executive Director Ms Catherine Bertini at the WFP delegation to Beijing, China, for the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo strongly believes that men and women can work together as equal partners for the development of their country. She has played a vital role in strengthening the position of women in this context. She will have the pleasure of joining the WFP Executive Director Ms Catherine Bertini at the WFP delegation to Beijing, China, for the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo strongly believes that men and women can work together as equal partners for the development of their country. She has played a vital role in strengthening the position of women in this context. She will have the pleasure of joining the WFP Executive Director Ms Catherine Bertini at the WFP delegation to Beijing, China, for the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs, especially BRAC, and to her colleagues in WFP, who have contributed to her efforts to improve the standing of poor women in Bangladesh.

Rehana Banoo has contributed effectively to the mobilization of national support for the programme and worked particularly closely

with the government's Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation (DRR) and NGOs,