

It is an episode of three hours' delight thrice a week in an Embassy which runs a double mission. This happens in the BADC house at Eskaton Gardens where a green flag with the "Kalema and Sword" flies high. The flag itself works miracle on the mind of believers who instantly utter Kalema and renew their faith as they pass by.

The gate of the residency is wide open for any woman learner to step in. None feels the presence of an excellency or highness while entering. There does not exist any protocol or formalities for entrance. Entire living style is permitted with the spirit of Islam. Religion is practised as the way of life. The names of the embassy children are clearly identified—Mohammed, Abdul Hameed, Abu Baker, Fatema, Ayesha wing one to our cherished land of pilgrimage. One is choked up with the spirit that the great religion has bestowed on them.

While studying in her class it reminds the learners the early days of Islam when Hazrat Khadizatul Kobra the first and the greatest lady teacher of the world started her "Darul Haika" at her house corner fourteen hundred years ago for the believers.

Mohterema is a freelance teacher in spite of her demanding social role. Her students are amusingly diverse in talents and abilities. It is an assemblage of heterogeneous persons which includes high school kids, house wives, professionals, teachers, lay women. They address her as madam, 'apa,'

An embassy is a diplomatic institution and is normally shrouded in secrecy. The Saudi Arabian Embassy in Darca is, however, also spreading the message of goodwill in a non-conventional way. Meherunnessa Islam writes

An open-door mission

sister as they like and she accepts them with the spirit of a teacher and preacher. She has unlimited patience and dedication and handles every work as a professional. Her method, approach and course offerings are stimulating. It is a non-formal strategy based on conversation, discussion followed by primer supplied free to each student. She does not follow the stereo-typed methods, but evolves new approaches daily. She gives courage and confidence in failures, makes

up deficiencies and weaknesses with endless repetition. Her drawing room, dining room, lobby, library are packed up with rowdy students leaving no peace behind. Younger kids are separately taken care of by a sweet tongued Kaari.

Although Arabic pronunciation poses difficulty for the soft tongued Bangladeshi the alphabets look like shorthand, hour passes quickly through fun of learning. "It is Asar prayer time, get ready quickly." The teacher announces. The class is sus-

pended and students assemble in congregation for prayer. Her lobby cum library corner serves as a prayer hall.

"There is no water in the tap, what will you do boys and girls?" she questions "just put up your two hands on soil, clap, and rub on your face and you are ready to face Allah. Islam is a very practical religion to follow without any hardships. It is comforting to hear such nice and simple solution.

Every day a child is selected as Muazzin to call for prayer. The Kaari leads the prayer followed by children along with women in the last row. Namaz seems very short and simple. Story telling session starts for the children after prayer. Women sit beside and start searching their hearts for the truth. The session is followed by recitation from the Holy Quoran. Melody spreads wild as the children compete with each other for prizes.

All are warmed up at tea-time, the children are free to play around after tea. The group of elders go to revision and correction work with home tasks. Hot home made cake and cookies are served with traditional Arabian hospitality by Umme Kulsum a loving personality of the embassy family.

With the call of Mugreb prayer three hours long enjoyable teaching learning exercises ends. Open air Mugreb prayer at the residency compound is a solemn affair led by His Excellency the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia himself. Men, women, children, masters, servants stand shoulder to shoulder on the same platform before the Almighty for prayer. Men stand at the front line followed by the children and women behind. Prayer is short and simple.

Joy of sharing prayer is a missing past. Women here are underprivileged segregated group. They pray in isolation at their home corners and never feel the impact of unity in prayer. But this is one of the easy ways to enhance role and status of women. Embassy of Saudi Arabia is an eye opener in this line.

An embassy is the highest institution of goodwill and mutual understanding between governments and countries. Embassy of Saudi Arabia has opened a new socio-religious frontier to fill up the communication gap and carrying more messages for which the Islamic World is aspiring.