

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> 1965  
Morning News

## Introducing Mrs. Mansoor Iqbal

TALKING with Razia Banu, as Mrs. Mansoor is known, I gathered that due to a very conservative grandfather she and her sisters were not allowed to attend school but had to continue their studies as private candidates in Meerut. Their father, a very understanding person himself, used to be the District Medical Officer.

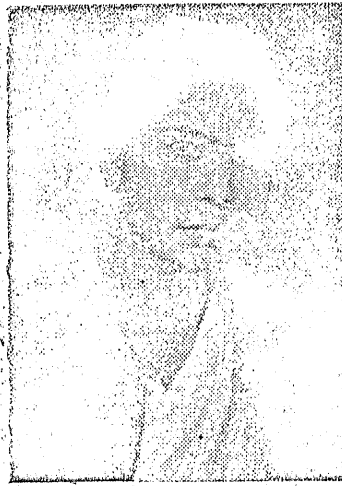
Her elder sister was the pioneer and paved the way for the rest of them to come out of purdah and avail of the opportunities for higher education. Razia Banu then completed her B.A. from Aligarh College and then her LL.B. She was intent upon taking her career and intending to start her own practice.

In 1951 on arriving from India the odds seemed against her so she decided to shelve her ambition for some time and took a job in the Karachi Customs and as she said time just slipped by and before long she was married in '56. Then with the arrival of the children they have four children ranging from seven to three, her wish to start practice was pushed further away from her mind and she continued the same job. Razia Banu is the Lady Preventive Officer in the Customs' an unusual and I am sure an interesting job which is a career shared by her husband too.

Besides the daily fixed hours of work in the day Razia Banu said that sometimes when a ship docks at different hours their duty goes on at all odd hours. Sometimes they are also posted at the air-port. Some days only one ship has to be attended to and other times there may be two or three. The mother of four children she efficiently manages home and office affairs, though they have to have a reliable aya at all times.

Razia Banu herself is from a family of ten brothers and sisters who are all academically

well-qualified. If I remember right her sister is a professor of Philosophy in the Karachi University. One of her brothers is doing his Doctorate in Zoology in America and another doing his M.Sc. in the same subject.



A second sister is teaching and also specialising in Psychology after her B.T.

We both agreed that as a lecturer or teacher one has the fulfillment of imparting knowledge to others and supplying constant nutrition to one's own mind at the same time. Razia Banu is keeping in touch with learning, this year she appeared and successfully completed her M.A. Previous in Islamic History. Today life seems so fast and so full of distraction that reading a serious book seems to become hard work. I inquired how Razia Banu could put in so much study daily. She said that she certainly could not put in the required fixed amount of study daily but she

managed to appear for the exams with six to eight weeks leave from work.

Talking of the working conditions for women today, I mentioned that it seems women never had it so good say some and others say that women do not get their due. Mrs. Mansoor Ali seems to agree with the latter opinion. She says that men still seem to feel that the world is a place for them. She does not understand why a person of a certain calibre is not given the required standard of work irrelevant of their sex. She feels that a woman is quite capable of managing and can give the same output of work as any man in an equal capacity.

I found Mrs. Iqbal an interesting person, easy to talk to. She had a beautiful style and accent in the sweet tones of the Urdu language. As we came back to the subject of her childhood and her life and family, I could imagine the warmth and the rich interesting conversation in their home when they all got together.

Mrs. HABIB