

# Spirit of mutual consultation

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

**One of the teachings of the Quran** is *shura*, that is, mutual consultation. The Quran inculcates the spirit of *shura* among believers, so that they may decide upon all issues by discussion and counselling. In the chapter entitled *Al-Shura* (Mutual Consultation), this principle — placed in the context of virtues which will entitle believers to God's beneficence — is mentioned in connection with "those who conduct their affairs by mutual consultation and spend out of what we have provided for them" (42:38).

What is consultation? Consultation means the act of discussing something with somebody before making a decision about it. Consultation is not an isolated habit. The willingness to engage in it results directly from qualities like modesty, sincerity, caution and the spirit of learning. Without these qualities, no one can engage sincerely in consultation. Belief in God brings with it all these virtues and

makes one absolutely sincere in all aspects of his life. It is this sincerity, as well as modesty, that compels a believer not to decide upon anything without first consulting others.

The best form of consultation is that in which one seeks others' advice, while endeavouring to share their experiences. A man who never consults anyone else is only half a man. While a man who does consult others becomes a whole human being. Consultation is very important, not just for the individual but also for the whole of society. As far as the individual is concerned, it is through consultation or discussion that he develops his personality. Consultation makes one a better person and a society comprising individuals of this kind becomes a wise society.

In such a society people trust and help each other. Indeed, the whole of society becomes like a family. Everyone needs to receive others' advice in his daily life.