146441 - Ruling on a woman being alone in a room with an officer so that she may get what she is entitled to

the question

I would like to know if it is allowed for a woman to be alone with a man in one room , for example in the embassy . If she needs the money and it is nessesary to talk to the officer about a job possibility and she has no one to go with her .
If she wears islamic dress and also niqab , is there something wrong with it ?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

It is not permissible for a man to be alone with a woman who is not his mahram, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “No man should be alone with a woman unless there is a mahram with them.” Narrated by al-Bukhaari (1862) and Muslim (1341). And he (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “No man is alone with a woman but the Shaytaan is the third one present.” Narrated by al-Tirmidhi (1171) and classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi.

Al-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) narrated in Sharh Muslim (14/153) that there was consensus among the scholars that it is haraam for a man to be alone with a woman who is not his mahram. This was narrated by al-Haafiz in al-Fath (4/77).

“Being alone with” (khalwah) refers to when the man and woman are in a place where no one can see them.

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas were asked: Does khalwah (“being alone with”) refer to when a man is alone with a woman in some house, far away from the eyes of people, or does it refer to any situation in which a man is alone with a woman, even if they can be seen by others?

They replied: What is meant by the “being alone with” (khalwah) that is forbidden in sharee‘ah is not only when a man is alone with a woman who is not his mahram in a place where they cannot be seen; rather it also includes situations in which he is alone with her in a place where she can converse with him and he can converse with her, even if they can be seen by other people, but their words cannot be heard, whether that is out in the open or in a car or on the roof of a house, and so on. That is because khalwah has been forbidden because it is the harbinger of zina and the means that leads to it. So everything that could lead to that, even making an arrangement to do that later, comes under the ruling of physical khalwah or being alone in a place where they cannot be seen. End quote.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn ‘Abd-Allah ibn Baaz; Shaykh ‘Abd al-Razzaaq ‘Afeefi; Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah ibn Ghadyaan; Shaykh ‘Abd-Allah ibn Qa ‘ood

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah, 17/57

Khalwah can be avoided with the presence of a mahram or the presence of a righteous woman, according to the correct opinion.

It says in Asna’l-Mataalib (3/407): It is permissible for a man to be alone with two women, but not the opposite; i.e., it is not permissible for two non-mahram men to be alone with a woman even if it is unlikely that they would agree to commit immoral actions, as was clearly stated by al-Nawawi in al-Majmoo‘; that is because a woman feels more shy of another woman than a man feels shy of another man.

End quote.

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said: In the case of someone who drives the girls or female teachers, no woman should ever ride on her own with him, because that is “being alone with” (khalwah) that is haraam. But if two women ride, there is nothing wrong with that.

End quote from al-Liqa’ al-Shahri, 58/1

Based on that, if you need to meet this official and you do not have a mahram with you, then you should take a righteous woman to be with you during the meeting.

And Allah knows best.