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known to have travelled (physically) around the globe, just to meet their cyber ‘boy/girl-friends’. Many ‘cyberfriends’, known to each other by only their ‘nicks’, arrange to meet each other in shopping malls, cinemas, rave clubs, bhangra bashes and so on. The ‘net’ has made possible the meeting of strangers on a scale that was unimaginable in the past. It may surprise people to learn that many prospective Muslim couples have had their first ‘meeting’ and intimate ‘chat’ on the ‘net’. This could have led to physical meetings in ‘real time’ and after a short romance on (and off) the ‘net’, ‘the knot was tied’. Alas! The possibility of that ‘knot’ being untied before long is just not a matter of ‘virtual reality’. It is reality itself proven by real-life cases.

#### **Victims of shaytaan’s ‘web’.**

But the young and innocent are not the only victims, as age is of no consequence on the ‘net’. If this is how easy and ‘cool’ it is to hop onto the cyber-highway and ‘disappear’ into ‘virtual reality’, it is not too surprising to hear many married men who enjoy a friendly ‘chat’ with some exciting female (supposedly; it is difficult to make out a male from female on the ‘net’), without the poor wife suspecting a thing. The reverse of this could also be true. Well, shaytaan is known to have many NETS and WEBS in

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his possession, and if this is one, then the final outcome of these ‘chats’ is not difficult to imagine.

Even if the ‘chat’ itself is clean and straight, this kind of ‘chat’ with a non-mahram person is forbidden in Islam, whether it be by phone, mobile, pen or mail, it is simply not allowed. Then consider the filthy and rude language used by most persons in ‘chatrooms’ – this cannot be evaded and one is bound to be affected by this rude language sooner or later.

#### **Gross wastage of Allah’s Favours**

Hours and hours of good, useful and constructive time – the most valuable entity on Earth – is squandered uselessly on the ‘Net’ and in chatrooms. If only that time – and the Almighty Allah swears an oath on the value of time – was used to do some virtuous deeds, how beneficial and profitable it would have been! If only the money wasted could have been used to feed a hungry family in Ethiopia or elsewhere; If only it could have been contributed to a needy and deserving Masjid or Madrasah project, how useful it would have proved? This is yet another serious drawback of the Internet for a good practicing Muslim.

#### **Dangers to ‘aqeedah & morality**

Then there is the deluge of Kufr sites,

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masquerading as good and informative Muslim sites and a plethora of sites by the myriads of deviated sects, all crouching like hungry lions at the water hole, hoping to pounce upon, savage and devour the unwary ‘prey’ that may come out there way. How can one whose knowledge of Islaam is nominal hope to come out unscathed in his Imaan after such ‘encounters’? Then the unfiltered flood of the filthiest pornography and sleaze imaginable, that permeates every area of the ‘Net’, is yet another total ‘no-go zone’ for any Muslim.

The temptations to just ‘take a peek’ are very compelling and once this slippery path is walked upon, it is very difficult for most people to turn back. So before you or your innocent little ones connect (or reconnect) to the ‘Net’, think, think, carefully! Is it for a pious or worthy purpose or is it just for fun and entertainment, to pass time! If this is so, you may have easily ‘connected’ to the ‘Net’ but you could end up, Allah forbid, ‘disconnecting your Imaan, your Islaam and your morality in the process! Is it worth it?

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# Will Your Internet Connection

## Disconnect You



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Is it sheer coincidence that the internet and WWW (Worldwide Web) contain the words ‘NET’ and ‘WEB’ read on and work it out for yourself. Now, picture a person trapped in a net, battling to get out. Also try to imagine a fly caught in a web, struggling to escape. Since the crisis is visible and tangible in the above cases, sympathy is felt and may be rendered if required. But there is another NET, a WEB, much stronger and highly invisible, which traps its way, the poor ‘victim’, far from wanting to escape, actually begins to enjoy and relish this ‘captivity’. Yes, this sticky WEB, this unseen NET is none other than what is called INTERNET, its WWW and its ‘chat rooms’.

### **What is the cure for the ‘addiction virus’?**

Such is the terrible addiction attraction to the NET and the WEB, it is difficult to say whether the ‘surfer’ has been bit by a ‘bug’ or is just on some kind of heavy ‘drug’. Many are concerned about ‘viruses’ infecting their beloved PC’s but what cure is there for the user who maybe infected by the ‘addiction virus’? Once ‘on line’ and into ‘cyber space’ the user seems to have forgotten everything in the real world and enters into a kind of trance that is described as being in state of

‘virtual reality’ where everything is really unreal but appears to be so real! For many, once they enter this ‘cyber world’ it is as if they are on another planet. Then gone is the concern for salah, good deeds, work, studies and other important chores in life. Now it is the sheer thrill of being ‘connected’ and ‘on line’. A Muslim must be concerned that being ‘connected’ to the net must not ‘disconnect’ him from Allah and being ‘on-line’ should not take him ‘off-track’ from the straight path.

### **Sharee’ah Principles governing the use of internet**

Unlike medieval Christianity, Islam has never been opposed to technology and modern inventions – in fact it has encouraged the study of ‘natural’ phenomena for the purposes of subjugating the forces of the universe for the benefit of mankind. Such inventions and technology are deemed beneficial so long as they enhance the purpose of man’s creation on earth. If however, they obstruct and distract from this purpose, then Islam does not take a favourable view of such inventions.

The internet and its use may be evaluated on the basis of the above principal. If it proves to be beneficial to its user, its use is permissible and in some instances, meritorious, especially for Da’wah and educational uses. But if it provides the opposite effect, that of

distracting its user from the purpose of his creation, then not only is its use frowned upon but may even be deemed unlawful in certain instances.

As with every matter in life, the Internet comes with its collection of pluses and minuses. In case of others, there are only minuses. For such people, the Internet is a bane and curse. And unfortunately the majority of users fall in this category.

### **Parents blissfully ignorant of inherent dangers**

With the quantum leaps the IT industry has recently been witnessing, many parents and guardians of children and youth, the prime users of Internet, are in a total ‘time-warp’. They are groping in the dark with regard to the reality and nature of the Internet and what it is all about. They appear quite pleased and proud that their dear off-spring are such ‘wizards of the web’, little realising the potential dangers that the internet holds within itself. It is with a view to enlighten parents and elders about this dark aspect of the Internet that this article is being presented.

Which decent Muslim parent would allow his child, especially a pretty, young daughter out in the streets, into dubious dimly-lit smoke-filled billiards’ room to meet and chat

to complete strangers for hours on end, with a possibility of such unknown entities even being considered as prospective marriage partners by their innocent daughters? Any respectable Muslim parent would recoil in horror and shrink at the very thought. My daughter in such a horrible place? IMPOSSIBLE!

### **‘Cyber friends’ meet each other in ‘chatrooms’**

No, infact it is very well possible. The decent and respectable Muslim parents of our time may well be in for a pretty rude shock! That innocent little girl (or boy), locked away safely in her bedroom for nights on end, may; virtually’ be ‘MEETING’, ‘TALKING’ to and ‘BEFRIENDING’ all kinds of weird strangers for hours on end, under the very noses of their parents, without them ever suspecting a thing! How is this possible? Well the answer is clear and straight; thanks to the internet, this is not only possible but a REALITY in thousands of good Muslim homes all over the world! So when you find that teenager, uncannily quiet and seemingly busy, don’t be fooled and deceived. They could possibly be in intimate conversation with some stranger in one of thousands of ‘chatrooms’ available on the ‘net!’

Forget the days of ‘penpals’. That was rather innocent stuff. Nowadays boys (and girls) are