

Should an Imaam Resign if the Muqtadis are Displeased with him?

Q: Salaah-586: Our Imaam has been serving the community for eight years and the Musallis have been pleased with him. However, certain things have transpired recently because of which some Musallis are not happy to follow him in salaah. These are

1. It is one of the principles of the Masjid that the Masjid shops are not to be let out to employees of the Masjid. The Imaam has however procured a shop using someone else's name. When the committee investigated, the Imaam denied it, but the person involved has admitted it.
2. The Imaam started a Madrassah and collected funds from the Masjid. He was planning to purchase a piece of land for the Madrassah but was unable to buy it for Madrassah purposes. He therefore deposited the money into his account. When the secretary of the committee asked him to account for the money, he delayed for four to five months and finally wrote a letter stating that the Madrassah is his own and none has the right to query the account.

A row has therefore arisen and some Musallis do not even want to perform salaah behind him. What is the ruling with regard to him being the Imaam?

Answer: Hadhrat Abu Umaamah RADI. reports that Rasulullaah SAW. said. there are three persons whose salaah does not transcend even above their ears; (1) the runaway slave until he returns, (2) the woman whose husband spends the night away from her in anger and the Imaam of a community that are upset with him. Hadith from Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar RADI. clearly states that the salaah of such an Imaam is not accepted.

Durrul Mukhtaar states that it is Makrooh Tahreemi for an Imaam to lead people in salaah when they are rightfully displeased with him on account of some wrong on his part or when they are more deserving of the post than he. This is based on the Hadith in Abu Dawood stating that the salaah of an Imaam is not accepted if the people are displeased with him. However, if their cause for displeasure is unfounded, then the sin of the Makrooh Tahreemi act will be theirs.

It appears from your question that the Musallis who are not happy to perform salaah behind the Imaam have valid cause for their complaint, committed a wrong, lied about it and even allowed it to continue for a long while. Collecting funds in the Masjid for the Madrassah and then stating that the Madrassah is his and none has the right to query is also an unacceptable act. Failing to disclose details of the funds will certainly create suspicion because this needs to be transparent. Because of the furore this has caused, the elevated post of an Imaam has become a cause for trouble. Remaining in the post will be Makrooh Tahreemi and he ought to resign from it.

The caution that one needs to exercise as an Imaam is extremely great. A narration of Abu Dawooda states that Rasulullaah SAW. was once watching a man leading others in salaah. When the man spat in the direction of the Qibla. When the salaah was over, Rasulullaah SAW. told the people not to allow him to lead them again. Consequently, when the man stepped forward to lead the next salaah, the people stopped him, saying that Rasulullaah SAW. had given them the instruction. The man approached Rasulullaah SAW. who confirmed the action,

adding that he had hurt Allaah and His Rasool SAW. by what he had done.

And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

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