

Collections for the Imaam, Distributing Sweets and Giving Gifts

Q: Salaah-484: It has been a practice with the Musallis of our Masjid to collect money for the Imaam and Mu'adhin every Ramadhaan and people usually contribute happily to it. This is over and above the Imaam's salary which is 125 Rupees and the Mu'adhin's salary, which is 100 Rupees. It so happened that the collection committee collected 50 to 60 Rupees less this year and when it was presented to the Imaam, he remarked, "What am I to do with such a small amount!" The chairman of the collection committee then made an announcement the following day, asking people to contribute more and when they did, an amount even more than the previous years was collected. The Imaam is however still not pleased and is still complaining, threatening to even return the amount. In the light of the above, we have the following questions:

1. Is it permissible or not for the committee members to pursue this age-old? custom of collecting for the Imaam and Mu'adhin?
2. What is the ruling since the Muqtadis regard the amount to be the right of the Imaam and Mu'adhin and the Imaam and Mu'adhin regard it as their right?
3. Can such an Imaam who looks down on the amount given be appointed to lead the salaah and the Taraaweesh salaah?
4. What is the ruling concerning gifts that are given as a ritual?
5. What about distribution sweets on the occasion of completing the Qur'aan?
6. A new practice has started now in the Masjid. The student that the Imaam has appointed to lead the Taraaweesh salaah with him is made to stand before the people on the day of completion and the Imaam presents him with a gift. To this, someone in the crowd gets up to say, "The Imaam is putting us to shame. We ought to be giving the gift." Is this action of the Imaam correct?

Answer: (1,2) If the salaries paid to the Imaam and Mu'adhin are unreasonably low, there is no harm in collecting from the people on condition that the people are not forced to contribute. How else can the imaam and Mu'adhin be expected to lead their lives? The best is, of course, to pay them a good salary so that the collection need never take place.

(3) If the collection is a payment for the Taraaweesh salaah, then his leading the salaah will be doubtful.

(4) If the donors are donating happily and are doing so with the intention of assisting the Imaam and Mu'adhin, there will be no harm in doing so.

(5) While it will be incorrect to use the Masjid's funds for the sweets or to make a collection for

it, there will be no harm if someone sponsors them.

(6) There is no harm in the Imaam presenting a gift to his student, the precondition is sincerity, The Musallis may also give gifts on condition that it is not payment for Taraaweesh salaah. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

Fatawa Rahimiyyah vol.2