

Opening restaurant during daytime in Ramadhaan to serve meals

The Permanent Committee for Scholarly Research and Ifta'

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Question: First, the Company where we work opens its restaurant during the daytime in Ramadhaan to serve meals to non-Muslim employees. The evil consequences of such violation led some weak Muslims to break their Sawm (Fast) and share food with the non-Muslim. This happened last year, and the Committee for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice (CPVPV) has been notified about a case that was filed against a Muslim who deliberately broke his fast in the above-mentioned restaurant during Ramadhaan without a valid excuse.

Second: The workers at the restaurant are not permitted to offer the Dhuhr (Noon) Prayer in congregation at the nearby Masjid (mosque) because they have to serve lunch for non-Muslims at that time. Therefore, they become busy preparing food in the restaurant for non-Muslims.

Third: We are extremely offended by the smell of food coming from the restaurant as we pray in the adjacent Masjid.

Fourth: All Sabic Companies, except ours, give permission to their non-Muslim employees to go home to have lunch. Our company is the only one that opens its restaurant during the daytime in Ramadhaan.

Fifth: The behaviour of our Company stands as a blatant violation of the directions of our Muslim rulers, may Allaah safeguard them. They expressively warned against this violation through all forms of media.

We ask Allaah (*Glorified and Exalted be He*) to help you find a solution to this problem. At least, we wish to help our Muslim brothers who work in this restaurant during the daytime in Ramadhaan to be allowed to offer the Dhuhr Prayer at its appointed time. As I have explained above, at the time of Dhuhr Prayer, they are obliged to prepare lunch for non-Muslims, and hence cannot offer the Prayer. May Allaah guide you to that which is right and most pleasing to Him.

Answer: It is not permissible to open the restaurant during the daytime in Ramadhaan to prepare food for non-Muslims. This is because doing so may give rise to indulgence in grave prohibitions, such as assisting them in committing what Allaah (*Exalted be He*) has prohibited.

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It is well-known that Muslims are obligated to invite non-Muslims to follow the fundamental as well as the secondary rulings of Sharee'ah (Islaamic Law). And certainly, the Fast of Ramadhaan is one of the pillars of Islaam. Non-Muslims are encouraged first to embrace Islaam and then to observe the Fast. Therefore, it is not permissible for the Muslim to assist non-Muslims to abandon what Allaah (*Exalted be He*) has originally obligated them. Moreover, it is not permissible for a Muslim to serve non-Muslims in a way that brings humiliation to him like serving food to them. Non-Muslims who come to live in Muslim countries are obliged not to do any act which openly violates the rites of Islaam and harms the feelings of Muslims. Therefore, we see that the aforesaid restaurant must be closed during the daytime in Ramadhaan.

May Allaah grant us success. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions.