

FATAWA LOTTERY AND GAMBLING 2006

Prizes for Competitions

Subject: Competitions and Prizes

From: through Islam online

Sent: Monday, November 06, 2006 4:35 AM

Question

Dear Dr. Monzer, Assalamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh,

The committee of our high school had organized a vacation weekend a money contribution have been demanded to us (not all the cost the association have extra funds). during the weekend a competition day have been organized it contains: - sportive activities - intellectual activities - fast eating competition - also the teams have a note about some gifts given to the committees that arbitrated the different competition (we call it corruption) in the and of the weekend prizes have been disturbed to all the teams ""probably"" according to their respective rank. Can I benefit from these prizes? (the amount of the prizes is not superior for the contribution we paid for the weekend but the whole cost: residence and food... is too superior than the contribution). Jazakum Allahu Khairan for your constant help

My Answer

Bismi Allah al Rahman al Rahim

Al Hamdu li Allah Rabb al 'Alamin

wa al Salatu wa al Salamu 'ala Sayyidina Muhammad wa 'Ala 'Alihi wa Ashabihi Ajma'in

Dear Br.

Al Salamu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuh

From your description it seems that prizes are permissible so are gifts to the committees. These gifts can't be called "corruption" recognizing good efforts of other people is necessary as a form of thanking them and "those who don't thank good doers among individuals don't thank God too!" The high contributions (or charge) for the weekend vacation was meant to include donations to the high school as you hinted and necessarily to buy a chance to win a prize. YES, you can enjoy the prize you got and the gift if you were a committee member without any worry, they are permissible in our religion.

Wa Allahu A'lam

Wa Alhamdu li Allah Rabb al 'Alamin

Wassalam

Sincerely,

Dr. Monzer Kahf

Subject: Placing Money in a Savings Account to Have a Chance of Taking a Prize

From: Basheir through Islam online

Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2006 1:50 AM

Question

Dear Dr. Monzer, Assalamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh,
I have been approached by a number of Muslims concerning the following issue. We have a bank in South Africa offering the following Savings Policy: A client can place money in a savings account on a monthly basis. The minimum amount is 100 Rand. Every time he puts money in that account, he stands a chance of winning a Million Rand or a lesser prize. The more he puts in his account, the greater his chances of winning. (E.g. 200 or 300 rands)
The money he puts in his account stays his and he never loses it but it has to stay in his account for a fixed period. Could you please supply me with a Shariah Ruling on this issue since many Muslims are interested in it? Shukran Jazakum Allahu Khairan for your constant help

My Answer

Bismi Allah al Rahman al Rahim

Al Hamdu li Allah Rabb al 'Alamin

wa al Salatu wa al Salamu 'ala Sayyidina Muhammad wa 'Ala 'Alihi wa Ashabihi Ajma'in

Dear Br. Basheir,

Al Salamu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuh

There is a thin difference between marketing promotions that take the form of prizes and interest that is presented in the form of prizes. Promotional prizes are given for accounts that are needed for other reasons such as current accounts. People open current accounts in conventional banks for well known reasons of convenience and some banks announce prizes from time to time to encourage people to go to this bank instead of the others, this kind of prizes are permissible and some Islamic banks practice it with the approval of their Shari'ah boards. Saving accounts are normally opened to get interest. Having such an account un-necessarily is obviously non-advisable and its contract is an interest-based contract. Suppose such a saving account does not have interest but instead it has prizes as mentioned in the question. These prizes represent the interest that is given. Within this understanding the OIC Fiqh Academy resolved that "Bonds with prizes and no interest" are considered interest-based and these Prize bonds are as prohibited as conventional interest bonds. There is no difference between a prize account and a prize bond. They both are interest-based and therefore prohibited.

Wa Allahu A'lam

Wa Alhamdu li Allah Rabb al 'Alamin

Wassalam

Sincerely,

Dr. Monzer Kahf

Working in a Gambling Company

Subject: Working As a Security Officer in a Company Running Gambling

From: Mohamed through Islam online

Sent: Thursday, June 29, 2006 3:46 AM

Question

Dear Dr. Monzer, Assalamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh,

I currently work as a security officer as a contractor with one of the biggest gaming and racing companies in the world, they run most of the betting and a few casinos, my question is, is it haram for me to work there even if i am just a security officer and i have nothing to do with gambling?,

my job is to sit in an office and monitor cameras and alarms, and sometimes answering phones at the head office building. Jazakum Allah. Jazakum Allahu Khairan for your constant help

My Answer

Bismi Allah al Rahman al Rahim

Al Hamdu li Allah Rabb al 'Alamin

wa al Salatu wa al Salamu 'ala Sayyidina Muhammad wa 'Ala 'Alihi wa Ashabihi Ajma'in

Dear Br. Mohamed

Al Salamu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuh

I can't dare saying it is Haram to help in the security of human being whatever they do and wherever they may be. So as a job, this is not Haram as long as the job as describe does not require you to do any forbidden act (such as poking, through cameras at obscene actions of strippers in casinos). However, this kind of job definitely helps the forbidden behavior and actions by those who do it and by those who make business of them. In as much as it helps these behaviors, it has a degraded level of consideration.

Wa Allahu A'lam

Wa Alhamdu li Allah Rabb al 'Alamin

Wassalam

Sincerely,

Dr. Monzer Kahf

Children Games in Restaurants

Subject: Is This a Form of Gambling?

From: Sr. Pam through Islam online

Sent: Monday, May 15, 2006 4:01 AM

Question

Dear Dr. Monzer, Assalamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh,

There is a popular pizza chain restaurant here in the United States that is geared toward kids. The restaurant has games which are played using purchased tokens. The games give tickets--the higher the score, the more tickets given--which can then be redeemed for toys, candy, etc. Our children really enjoy going to this restaurant, but my husband and I are concerned that the way in which the games work (better score in game=more tickets=better toys, candy, etc.) may be considered a form of gambling and therefore haraam. Please comment. Thank you. Jazakum Allahu Khairan for your constant help

My Answer

Bismi Allah al Rahman al Rahim

Al Hamdu li Allah Rabb al 'Alamin

wa al Salatu wa al Salamu 'ala Sayyidina Muhammad wa 'Ala 'Alihi wa Ashabihi Ajma'in

Dear Sr. Pam

Al Salamu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuh

It doesn't seem to me that this is any sort of gambling. I think this is not Haram for two reasons:

- 1) Although some of these games are pure chance games the majority of them are skill based and skill builders; and,
- 2) These are minute and trivial games that do not fall into the prohibition as Imam Malik argue that "Riba does not apply in negligible trivial matters".

One thing I like you to kindly consider that is educationally and morally important: Do frequent visits to such games and restaurants help in building characters of hard working and smart skills in our children and does it help them be better persons with high objectives in their lives? I think you may need to worry about these and similar considerations to determine how often you may take children to such places!

Wa Allahu A'lam

Wa Alhamdu li Allah Rabb al 'Alamin

Wassalam

Sincerely,

Dr. Monzer Kahf

Money won in Lottery

Subject: Winning Lottery Draw

From: Muhammad through Islam online

Sent: Monday, February 13, 2006 1:49 AM

Question

Dear Dr. Monzer, Assalamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh,

Recently, my cousin won the lottery draw worth five millions pesos. It is called lotto. It is a part of games and amusement of Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, one of the agencies of the government. She bothered a lot because most her neighbors considered the money as Haram while others claimed that it is not Haram because the proceeds are being paid by Lotto players will go to charity works and services particularly among indigents. Now, which is which, Haram or not?

Jazakum Allahu Khairan for your constant help

My Answer

Bismi Allah al Rahman al Rahim

Al Hamdu li Allah Rabb al 'Alamin

wa al Salatu wa al Salamu 'ala Sayyidina Muhammad wa 'Ala 'Alihi wa Ashabihi Ajma'in

Dear Br. Muhammad

Al Salamu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuh

It is certainly Haram to issue lottery and to play it buy purchasing tickets. The charitable lottery, that some may think it as tolerable is in fact the specific kind that was common among the pagan Arabs at the time of the Prophet, pbuh, when the prohibition came down from God. Charity has nothing to do with the prohibition. The prohibition focuses on the matter of principle: **YOU CANNOT TRANSFER WEALTH FROM SOME PERSONS TO OTHERS (EVEN IF SOME OF IT IS USED FOR CHARITY AS AN ATTRACTION) BY SUCH REASONS AS A FLIP OF A COIN OR A RUN OF A NUMBER ROLLER.**

What is prohibited is of course what makes such a transfer; this means when ticket are sold. But if a business promotion plan that give gifts to people use such method to distribute its gifts, that is

permissible. Money won in lottery, where there are tickets purchased by people, is Haram and must be given to Muslim charities for distribution to the poor and needy.

Wa Allahu A'lam

Wa Alhamdu li Allah Rabb al 'Alamin

Wassalam

Sincerely,

Dr. Monzer Kahf
