177510 - He wants to organise a contest that involves guessing who will win in a football match

the question

Is it permissible to organise a contest based on guessing the outcome of football matches, predicting who will win and what the score will be in return for prizes such as money, coupons or gifts? Participation in the contest will be free and there will be no fees. Is this halaal or haraam?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

It is not permissible to organise contests for cash prizes or other prizes in which the contestants guess who will win a football match, and the prize is given to the one who guesses right. That is for a number of reasons, including the following:

1.

This does not come under the heading of the kinds of contests that are permitted in Islam; rather it comes under the heading of the kinds of contests that are forbidden, because of the report narrated by Abu Dawood (2574), at-Tirmidhi (1700) – and he classed it as hasan – and Ibn Maajah (2878) from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “There should be no (money) prizes for racing except races with camels and horses, and archery contests.” Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood, and others.

The “(money) prize” is a payment or prize that is given to the one who wins the race or contest. Ibn al-Atheer said in an-Nihaayah (2/844): It is money that is set aside as a pledge for the winner. End quote.

As-Sindi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Al-Khattaabi said: i.e., it is not permissible to accept money for racing except in two cases: camel racing and horse racing. And added to that are similar things such as use of weapons, because offering prizes for these things is encouraging jihad.

End quote from Haashiyat as-Sindi ‘ala Sunan Ibn Maajah, 2/206

So it is not permissible to give prizes for such contests, whether the money comes from one of the two contestants or from another party.

2.

Predicting the outcome and saying that such-and-such team will win and the score will be such-and-such is speculation that has no foundation. How does one know that the score will be as he is predicting?

3.

Holding such contests is a kind of cooperating in sin and transgression. In fact, competing in football itself only leads to corruption and there is no benefit in it. What should be done is prohibiting it, not organizing contests and offering prizes that support it.

The scholars of the (Standing) Committee said:

Football matches for money or other prizes are haraam, because that is gambling. It is not permissible to receive prizes for anything except that which is permitted in sharee‘ah, which is horse and camel racing and archery. Based on that, attending matches is also haraam, as is watching them, for the one who knows that the match is being played for money, because attending it is showing approval of it. But if the match is not for prizes and it will not distract from what Allah has enjoined of prayer and other duties, and it does not involve anything haraam such as uncovering the ‘awrah, or mixing of men and women, or musical instruments, then there is nothing wrong with it or with watching it.

End quote from Fataawa al-Lajnah ad-Daa’imah, 15/239

If this is the ruling on watching it, what would the ruling be on helping in it and allocating prizes for that?

Based on that, it is not permissible to organize the contest mentioned in the question. The Muslim should keep himself busy with that which concerns him of both worldly and spiritual matters.

For more information on football and contests connected to it, please see the answers to questions no. 75644, 114530 and 131652.

And Allah knows best.