126415 - Permissibility of announcing death in chat rooms for the purpose of receiving condolences

the question

I often see in chat rooms pages that are just for condolences on the death of one of the relatives of the member in the chat room. What is your opinion?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

It seems to us that it is permissible to announce the death in a chat room of one of its members or one of his relatives for the purpose of receiving condolences and so that people may pray for mercy if it is the member who is deceased, or offer condolences to the one who has lost a family member. This does not come under the heading of the kind of death announcements that are forbidden, so long as it is free from exaggeration in praising the deceased and it does not involve the forbidden matter for which those scholars who forbade it, forbade making announcements in newspapers, namely undue expenses.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-Azeez ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked:

What is the ruling on offering condolences in newspapers? Is it regarded as a kind of death announcement that is forbidden?

He replied:

That does not come under the heading of death announcements that are forbidden, although not doing it is preferable, because it costs a lot of money.

Fataawa al-Shaykh Ibn Baaz, 13/408.

There are interests to be served by announcing the death before the burial such as: supplication

may be offered for mercy for him and for him to be made steadfast during the questioning in the grave; the numbers of good people who offered a funeral prayer for him can be increased; the grief of his family may be reduced by these who are close to him. As for announcing the death after the burial, interests are also served by this, among the most important of which are: condolences to the member who has lost one of his family or one of his relatives.

Among the evidence which points to the principle that we have mentioned here, which is that it is permissible to announce the death of a Muslim, especially before the burial, without any exaggeration in praise of the deceased, is the fact that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) announced the death of the Negus, the King of Abyssinia.

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) announced to us the death of the Negus, the ruler of Abyssinia, on the day on which he died, and he said: “Pray for forgiveness for your brother.”

Al-Bukhaari (1263) and Muslim (951).

In the hadeeth there is a mention of the deceased so that others are encouraged to pray for him as he deserves and to offer the funeral prayer for him, as the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) offered the funeral prayer in absentia with his companions.

Ibn Qudaamah (may Allah have mercy upon him) said:

Al-Kharqi said, it is recommended to offer condolences to the family of the deceased.

We do not know of any difference of opinion concerning this matter.

The purpose behind offering condolences is to console the family that has been bereaved, to fulfil their rights and to draw closer to them; the need for that after the burial is the same as the need for it before the burial.

Al-Mughni, 2/408

Al-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

It should be noted that offering condolences is recommended before the burial and afterwards.

al-Adhkaar, p. 148, 149.

There is no specific time for offering condolences and no specific place. Simply announcing a death in a chat room is not contrary to any text or any of the aims of sharee'ah.

The Scholars of the Standing Committee said: there is no specific time or place for offering condolences.

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah, 9/134.

For more details please see the answer to question number 119130.

For information on the haraam type of kind of death announcements, and that simply announcing the death is permissible in and of itself, and for information on the words of the scholars and what they quoted as evidence of the hadeeth about the Negus and others, please see the answer to question number 60008.

And Allah knows best.