146475 - Taking electricity from someone else and renting out lights for playing football (soccer)

the question

We have in our street in Jeddah (in Saudi Arabia) a simple football playground which neither we own nor we know the owner of it (government or individuals we don't know). We used to play in this playground since a long time, and as long as we take care of it since years (cleaning it…etc), it's regarded by society to belong to us according to customs and traditions in our local area. In summer and during Ramadan month, we make football championships on this playground, and we spend money to take care of this piece of land; this is the streets' system here in Jeddah. Dear Sheikh, we have spent big amounts of money to have pole lights installed in this playground in order to play therein at night, thanks to Allah this installation is finished and we managed to take electricity from a neighbor house after taking permission from the owner of that house provided that he will not be responsible for any troubles that may happen with government of local authorities), we agreed on this condition, and thanks to Allah, things go well.
Now, some people from within or outside our district come to play at night so they want us to turn on the pole lights for them, in return we asked them to pay small fees against this light source, and already they agreed. Now we hire these pole lights to anyone wants to play. So what is ruling on hiring these lights knowing that that we don't hire the land itself neither do we prevent anyone from playing on it anytime? Only we take fees against the light source. Advise please Sheikh as we fear to be unjust. Also, must we tell the owner of the house from which we take light source about such a hiring? He is non-Saudi, so all he wants is just to avoid troubles with the authorities here.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

It is not permissible to rent these lights to anyone, because the electricity used for them does not belong to you. What you have to do is tell the owner of the house and ask his permission to let

others use it, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “It is not permissible (to take) the property of a Muslim except with his consent.” Narrated by Ahmad, 20172; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Jaami‘, 7662.

And Abu Dawood (5003) narrated from ‘Abd-Allah ibn al-Saa’ib from his father from his grandfather, that he heard the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say: “No one of you should take his brother’s property in play or in earnest. And whoever has taken his brother’s staff, let him return it.” Classed as hasan by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

And Ahmad (27803) narrated from Abu Humayd al-Saa‘idi (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “It is not permissible for a man to take his brother’s staff without his consent.” That is because of the fact that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) emphatically forbade one Muslim to take the property of another Muslim. Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in al-Silsilah al-Saheehah, 5/280

It says in Subul al-Salaam (3/61): The hadeeths indicate that the property of a Muslim is haraam unless it is given willingly, even if it is small, and there is scholarly consensus to that effect. End quote.

It is no secret that the owner of the house pays money in return for what he uses of electricity. Taking electricity from him without his permission is a transgression and wrongdoing. If we add to that the fact that you are taking money from others in return for that, it comes under the heading of consuming people's wealth unlawfully.

Based on that, you have to do three things:

1.Repent to Allah, may He be exalted, from transgressing against the rights of your brother and using his property without his permission.

2.Tell him of what has happened in the past and ask him for forgiveness, and pay for electricity that you have used if he wants that.

3.Do not take electricity from him for anyone except with his permission.

We should point out that it is not permissible to organise football matches in return for payment.

See the answer to question number 131652.

And Allah knows best.