



Prizes for competitors

Fatwa no. 3219

Q: A horse-riding club, under the leadership of the National Guard, suggested awarding surprise gifts to visitors to the club by assigning gifts to certain tickets, which the ticket holders know nothing about. Then, during the race or after the end of a round, the holder of the winning ticket number will be called to come and get a gift,

(Part No : 15, Page No: 171)

such as a watch, for example, or less or more. Our question is: Is this permissible according to the Shari'ah (Islamic law), as the aim is to motivate people to practice and like horse-riding? We would like to have a Fatwa (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar) on this, and on other types of races. May Allah save and protect you!

A: The question is a quite general, so we would like to mention something in the answer about the different types of racing and the rulings on each of them. **First:** Racing on horses and camels, training in arms and other apparatus of Jihad (fighting/striving in the Cause of Allah), such as planes, tanks, and horsemanship, are Wajib (obligatory) or Mustahab (desirable), according to the need of Muslims for Jihad to defend their property or religion, or to facilitate the spread of Islam. Anyone who undertakes these activities or helps others to do so by their ideas, skills, or money, will be rewarded. **Second:** It is permissible to receive the prizes that are given to the winners of a race, if they are given by the ruler or his deputy, or if they are donated by someone other than the competitors themselves. Anyone other than a competitor who offers a prize will be rewarded, if they do it for the Sake of Allah. Allah (may He be Exalted) says, ﴿ [And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war \(tanks, planes, missiles, artillery\) to threaten thereby the enemy of Allâh and your enemy, and others besides them whom you may not know, \(but\) whom Allâh does know. And whatever you shall spend in the Cause of Allâh shall be repaid to you, and you shall not be treated unjustly.](#) ﴾

(Part No : 15, Page No: 172)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, ﴿ ["No prize money is allowed except for a pad \(i.e. camel racing\), or an arrowhead \(i.e. archery\), or a hoof \(i.e. horse racing\)."](#) ﴾ (Related by Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Al-Nasa'y and Al-Tirmidhy, who graded it as Hasan [a Hadith whose chain of narration contains a narrator with weak exactitude, but is free from eccentricity or blemish], while it was graded as Sahih [a Hadith that has been transmitted by people known for their uprightness and exactitude; free from eccentricity and blemish] by [Ibn Al-Qattan and Ibn Habbab](#)) If the prizes are given by one of the competitors from the goodness of their heart to be given to the winner, this is permissible, as there is no gambling in it. But if the prizes are for some among those who buy tickets just to come and watch the race, this is not permissible, as it is a gamble between those who come to watch the competitors. However, if the prizes are donated by the ruler or a benevolent person and

they are given as mementos to those who come to watch the race for nothing in return, there is no harm in this, since the aim of holding and attending the race is fulfilled, and it is Shar'y (Islamically lawful). May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

Permanent Committee for Scholarly Research and Ifta'

Deputy Chairman	The Chairman
`Abdul-Razzaq `Afify	`Abdul-`Aziz ibn `Abdullah ibn Baz

The General Presidency of Scholarly Research and Ifta'. All Rights Reserved.