

## Mass I'tikaaf, another objection

Written by Administrator

Tuesday, 04 August 2015 10:57 - Last Updated Friday, 07 August 2015 10:28

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### ANOTHER SPURIOUS OBJECTION

A resident of Lusaka, Zambia, in defence of the mass I'tikaaf held in Ramadhaan in Zambia, by Mr. Zulfiqar Ahmad, writes:

Assalaamualyikum wa rahmatullahi wabaraakatuhu.

I am a resident of Lusaka,Zambia.

I am writing with regards to the article that appeared on [www.themajlis.co.za](http://www.themajlis.co.za) dated 28th July 2015 entitled "SATANISM IN THE GARB OF ITIKAAF: MOCKERY AND PILLAGE OF IBAADAH THE FARCE IN ZAMBIA"

Before I begin, I would like to state that I understand that the response to the letter that was given by The Majlis was based on the information provided by the brother who wrote the letter ( lets call him Bakr).

However, it appears that the brother who was narrating the itikaaf incident to Bakr( lets call him Zayd) had not revealed all the necessary details regarding the itikaaf. Zayds information regarding the itikaaf is vague and it is also his personal opinion. As a result, it is very easy for a person reading the letter to jump to incorrect conclusions.

I therefore felt obliged to clarify the contents of the letter written by brother Bakr as narrated to him by brother Zayd.

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I hope and pray that the contents of this email are reproduced so that the misconceptions and misunderstandings surrounding Shaykh Zulfiqar and the itikaaf in Zambia are clarified.

I will reproduce brother Bakrs letter and I will insert my findings/clarifications in CAPITAL LETTERS wherever I deem it necessary to do so.

The reproduced letter with clarifications:

“Recently one brother returned from I'tikaaf from Zambia . The set up was 650 men and several women (wives of the mureeds). Only 200 could fit in the masjid and the remaining 450 were in a tent. The women were doing nafl I'tikaaf in a hall.

(BROTHER ZAYD MADE IT SOUND LIKE THE MEN AND WOMEN WERE TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE. THIS WAS NOT THE CASE. THE WOMEN WERE IN A HALL LOCATED IN A DIFFERENT LOCALITY APPROXIMATELY 15 KM AWAY FROM THE MASJID (MASJIDE UMAR) AND TENT.

YES, THERE WERE 200 MUTAKIFS DOING SUNNAH ITIKAAF IN THE MASJID. THOSE IN THE TENT WERE IN NAFAL ITIKAAF. HOWEVER, THE TENT WAS NOT THE VENUE FOR ITIKAAF. THE TENT WAS USED FOR SLEEPING AND EATING PURPOSES FOR THOSE WHO WERE IN NAFAL ITIKAAF. THESE BROTHERS WOULD ACTUALLY BE IN THE MASJID FOR NAFAL ITIKAAF MOST OF THE TIME AND THEY WOULD ONLY GO BACK TO THE TENT FOR SUHOOR, IFTAAR AND TO SLEEP.

THE MUTAKIFS IN THE MASJID WOULD ROLL UP THEIR BEDDINGS AND WOULD PLACE THEIR BELONGINGS ELSEWHERE SO AS TO CREATE SPACE IN THE MASJID FOR ANY COMING BROTHES TO PRAY, THUS MINIMISING ON THE INCONVENIENCE CAUSED TO OTHER MEN WHO WERE NOT IN ITIKAAF BUT WOULD COME TO THE MASJID TO DO IBAADAH.

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EVEN WHILST THE MUTAKIFS IN THE MASJID WERE SLEEPING, THEY USED TO LEAVE SPACE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MASJID SO THAT OTHERS COULD MAKE IBAADAH IF THEY WANTED TO.)

The Shaikh Zulfiqar Naqshbandi from Pakistan had mureeds from all over the world including ulema from Deoband.

What was disturbing was the affluent brother who sponsored the event runs a soda company. It costs about two thousand dollars for the plane ticket alone.

(THE BROTHER WHO RUNS THE SODA COMPANY IS NOT THE SPONSOR OF THE ITIKAAF. YES HE IS VERY CLOSE TO SHAYKH ZULFIQAR. HOWEVER, HE DOES NOT SPONSOR THE MUTAKIFS. THEY COME ON THEIR OWN WILL, PAYING FOR THEIR OWN TICKETS)

The meal sequence was biryani every day and then at night ice cream, falooda, and other sweets.

(BIRYANI WAS NOT SERVED EVERYDAY. YES THERE WERE SMALL SNACKS SERVED AROUND 11PM FOR THOSE THAT WERE HUNGRY. HOWEVER, NO ONE WAS OBLIGED TO EAT.)

They had a 'khidmaat jamaat who would roll out the dastkhaans and futons for all the guests. The food was so much and so delicious according to the brother he suffered from diarrhoea while he was there.

(BROTHER ZAYD MAY HAVE OVEREATEN HIMSELF AND POSSIBLY THE FOOD MAY NOT HAVE AGREED WITH HIM. AS A RESULT, HE HIMSELF SUFFERED FROM DIARRHOEA. WE CAN NOT GENERALIZE WITH REGARDS TO THE OTHER MUTAKIFS AND CONCLUDE THAT THEY ALSO ATE SO MUCH THAT THEY HAD DIARRHOEA.

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SHAYKH ZULFIQAR HAD STRESSED GREATLY ON 3 THINGS DURING THE ITIKAAF :  
QILLATE KALAAM,QILLATE TA'AAM AND QILLATE MANAAM.

HE GREATLY STRESSED TO THE MUTAKIFS THAT THE MASJID IS THE HOUSE OF ALLAH SWT AND NOT A PLACE OF MERRYMAKING AND MINGLING.HE ALSO ADVISED THE MUTAKIFS TO CONSIDER THE TIME SPENT IN ITIKAAF AS VALUABLE AND THAT THEY SHOULD USE IT FOR TILAAWAT, ZIKR, DUAA, MURAAQABAH AND NAWAAFIL SALAAT.)

He was also telling me how the soda was delicious.

The brother who runs the soda factory is planning to expand the masjid to accommodate 1000 people next year.

(THE BROTHER WHO RUNS THE SODA COMPANY IS NOT PLANNING TO EXPAND MASJIDE UMAR.)

There were some other strange and weird things. In order to see the shaikh one had to pass through at least ten persons.

(SHAYKH ZULFIQAR PREFERED NOT TO BE DISTURBED DURING ITIKAAF.HE DETESTED THAT THE MUTAKIFS TALK DURING ITIKAAF.WHY THEN WOULD HE EVEN WANT TO MEET WITH PEOPLE?!)

He mentioned something very queer. I want clarification on it.

1. He said the shaikh would cast his gaze on a person and he would be inclined to zikr. One Maulana in the past told me that even non-Muslims could do such things. It is not something to be impressed with. Please advise.

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2. He talk about the noorani faces of the people serving the people. Is it possible to have a noorani face with so much food and extravagance that the brother gets diarrhoea. How can a face glitter with noor when so much doubtful and perhaps haraam food and sodas were consumed? Is there some kind of deception in this show?

(AS MENTIONED BEFORE, BROTHER ZAYD HIMSELF MAY HAVE OVER EATEN. THIS DOESN'T MEAN THAT ALL THE MUTAKIFS AND KHUDDAMS ALSO OVER ATE. THE MUTAKIFS WERE ADVISED TO EAT LESS SO AS TO NOT DEFEAT THE PURPOSE OF FASTING. THE FOOD AND SODA WERE 100% HALAAL).

3. Does the Shariah allow women to undertake journeys from other countries to sit in I'tikaaf in tents at a venue overflowing with a crowd of men and women? We all know that it is not permissible for women to attend even the Masjid for Salaat, even if stringent conditions are in place. So how is it permissible for them to travel from one country to another with strange men all along the journey to participate in a function which has no substantiation in the Sunnah?

(SHAYKH ZULFIQAR HAS NEVER INSTRUCTED THE WOMEN TO SIT FOR ITIKAAF IN TENTS CLOSE TO THE MEN, LET ALONE MINGLE WITH THE MEN.

THE WOMEN TRAVELLED WITH THEIR HUSBANDS/MAHAARIM.

AS MENTIONED EARLIER, THE WOMEN WERE NOT AT THE SAME VENUE AS THE MEN. THEY WERE APPROXIMATELY 15 KM AWAY FROM THE MASJID AND TENT.

SHAYKH ZULFIQAR IS VERY PARTICULAR ABOUT HAYAA AND PARDAH AND HE

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GREATLY STRESSES ON THESE TOPICS.

INFAC T, MOST OF THE WOMEN IN LUSAKA STARTED DONNING THE NIQAAB AFTER THE COMINGS OF SHAYKH ZULFIQAR .

THOSE THAT PERSONALLY KNOW SHAYKH ZULFIQAR WILL ATTEST TO THE FACT THAT THEY DONT KNOW OF ANYONE WHO IS MORE PARTICULAR ABOUT THE RULES OF SHARIAH AND THE SUNNAH THAN HIM.HE ALWAYS ENCOURAGES HIS MURIDEEN AND PEOPLE IN GENERAL TO FOLLOW THE SHARIAH AND ADOPT THE SUNNAH INTO THEIR LIVES.).

4. The brother got khilifaat also, but in the past 25 years that he has been bayt, the shaikh barely spoke and/hardly corresponded with him. His shaikh barely knows anything about him. He sat with him for 5 minutes. Is it proper to give khilafaat like this.

(I HAVE NO SAY IN THIS REGARD AS I COULD NOT CLARIFY THIS STATEMENT. HOWEVER I AM AWARE THAT SHAYKH ZULFIQAR GREATLY STRESSES ON RAABITAAE SHAYKH. I KNOW FOR A FACT THAT ALL HIS OTHER KHULAFAA USED TO CONSTANTLY KEEP IN TOUCH WITH HIM VIA EMAIL, LETTERS AND PHONE CALLS PRIOR TO GAINING KHILAFAH. IF HE WAS IN THEIR AREA, THEY WOULD CERTAINLY GO VISIT HIM. INFAC T, HIS KHULAFAA STILL MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH HIM .)

5. Should i say anything to the brother.” (End of letter)

I END HERE TOO.

JAZAKUMULLAH

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WA MAA TAUFEEQEE ILLAA BILLAAH.

BROTHER IN ISLAM

MA'AS SALAAM.

### OUR RESPONSE

(1) Even if the women were at a different venue away from the Masjid, it is highly improper to invite women out of their homes, and worse, from other countries, to undertake journeys to observe Nafil I'tikaaf. If a woman is desirous of observing I'tikaaf, she should demarcate a small section in her home and remain there for I'tikaaf. It is haraam for women to undertake journeys for an act which the Shariah does not impose on them at all. From the time they leave home, they are involved in sin at almost every step of the journey.

The venue for the women's 'I'tikaaf being elsewhere does not mitigate the bid'ah of the mass I'tikaaf, nor does it justify the presence of the women at the tent/hall to observe nafil I'tikaaf far, very far from their home sanctuaries. The Shaikh purports to be a Deobandi, yet he fails to understand the simple mas'alah that women are not allowed to emerge from their homes to attend the Fardh Salaat in the Masjid despite the fact that this was allowed during the time of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), but banned by the Sahaabah.

What Imaani logic permits the separation of a women from her husband in a foreign county to enable her to go to a tent 15 km away from him to sit in a mock 'nafl I'tikaaf'. From whence did the shaikh acquire this mas'alah? Whose sunnah is he following?

Brother, your attempt to justify the bid'ah festival with the argument that the women were in a

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tent 15 kilometres away is devoid of Shar'i substance.

(2) The venue of I'tikaaf is the Masjid, not the tent. There was absolutely no need for crowds of people to travel to Zambia for observing Nafil I'tikaaf. Did the hundreds of people undertake journeys to come and sleep in a tent under guise of observing the last 10 days of Ramadhaan in I'tikaaf? Could they not observe valid Nafil I'tikaaf in the Musaaqid in their own localities? By what stretch of Shar'i reasoning did they waste so much money, and travel to Zambia to observe nafl I'tikaaf?

(3) Your explanation about the campers making space for the usual musallis is untenable. The 200 persons filled the Masjid to capacity. No matter how much they may have cramped themselves, the reality of the Masjid being unnecessarily overcrowded cannot be refuted with honesty. Furthermore, we have observed with our own eyes in a Masjid in India where a very prominent Buzrug held his mass I'tikaaf, one could hardly find space during the day time for Salaat. Literally one had to walk over sleeping 'mu'takifeen' who blocked the entire area of the Masjid. This problem is not restricted to the Masjid in Zambia. It is an evil in all Musjids where mass I'tikaaf takes place. The shaikh has become a cult leader.

(4) Regardless of who paid the airfares. The fact remains that huge amounts of money were squandered for an event not ordered by the Shariah. Why did the shaikh not advise his mureeds to contribute the money to the suffering Ummah? The shaikh is not ignorant of the plight of the Syrian refugees, of the Rohingya brutalized Muslims, etc. He is responsible for the huge waste of money, etc. How much did it cost to hire the tents for the men and the women?

(5) Brother Zayd, the one who narrated the festival, is in fact a khalifah of Mr.Zulfiqar Ahmad. Whether you are speaking the truth or whether Zayd or whether he is lying or you, the fact of the mass I'tikaaf remains. It is a bid'ah innovated by the so-called sufis of this age. If these shaikhs had a proper understanding of Tasawwuf, they would never have embarked on their bid'ah 'mass itikaaf' festivals for which there is no basis in Islam.

(6) The emphasis of the shaikh on the three things is devoid of reality. In fact, in the light of the colossal Israaf, his statements are hypocritical. His advices are empty words devoid of substance because he is the organizer of the festival which entails so much waste and merrymaking. The shaikh should recall the wedding which he had organized in the most expensive hotel in Dubai and what it entailed. His advices at the mass I'tikaaf are all hollow.



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(7) One brother who attended says that the soda man intends expanding the Masjid to accommodate 1000 persons. You say it is not so. Who speaks the truth? Anyhow, whether he expands the Masjid or not, the mass I'tikaaf is bid'ah. It cannot be justified.

(8) If the shaikh is a lover of solitude and detests speaking whilst in I'tikaaf, how does he justify logically his mass I'tikaaf? How does he justify the journeys which men and women undertake at great expense, inconvenience and commission of haraam along the journey? Mass bid'ah I'tikaaf is not the way of a Man of Allah who loves *khalwat*. These excuses all fall within the scope of the aayat: “In fact, man  
*has awareness over his nafs even though he puts forth excuses.”*

(9) His weird act is casting *tawajjuh* on females – haraam *tawajjuh*. This is among his practices. The women here testify to this act. A 'shaikh' who practises *tawajjuh* on females is not to be trusted.

(10) All sodas are haram.

(11) Mr. Zulfiqar is in fact responsible for the journeys undertaken by the women regardless of the presence of their mahrams. It has not been alleged that the women travelled without their mahrams. You are diverting the issue with confusion. The issue is that women have undertaken journeys for a festival not imposed or ordered by the Shariah. The shaikh is responsible for the entire mess. He should not now plead innocence. The women journeyed to attend the festival he had organized.

(12) The niqaab is not the be all of Purdah. The primary demand of Purdah is for women to remain at home, not to undertake journeys in an immoral world to sit in some type of nafl I'tikaaf with a crowd of other women in a tent thousands of miles away from home and separated from her husband.

Furthermore, a man who practices *tawajjuh* on women cannot lay claims to hayaa.

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(13) With regard to khilaafat – in this era this is a very cheap commodity. Just any Tom, Dick or Harry is appointed 'khalifah'. There is a glut of khalifahs. They are available very cheaply.

In conclusion, be aware that the vindication you have proffered is baseless. The little discrepancies which you believe were reported by Zayd do not detract from the fact that the mass I'tikaaf festivals which 'shaikhs' of this age are organizing all over the show are acts of bid'ah. The very concept of mass I'tikaaf is bid'ah even if we have to assume that waste does not occur.

Mass I'tikaaf oversteps the limits of the Shariah. The shaikhs who are responsible for these mass festival functions should spend some time to learn the masaa-il and the aadaab of I'tikaaf. They will render themselves and the Ummah a favour if they learn to perform I'tikaaf the Sunnah way, not in ways innovated by Buzrugs.

It is our dua that Allah Ta'ala guides us, for you and for the shaikh.

*18 Shawwaal 1436 – 4 August 2015*