

The NIKAH PROCESS and MARRIAGE RITUALS

Department of Rishta Nata

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

United States of America

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

WHAT STEPS MUST THE NEW COUPLE TAKE BEFORE THE NIKAH TO ENSURE THAT THE NIKAH TAKES PLACE?

1. Complete the Nikah Forms (contact nikah@ahmadiyya.us for help)
2. File for Civil Marriage and obtain a Marriage License
3. Undergo Premarital Counseling with a Jama'at Premarital Counselor
4. Agree upon an appropriate Dower amount (Haq Mehr)
5. Complete and sign the "Binding Arbitration Agreement"

Civil Marriage

IS A CIVIL MARRIAGE REQUIRED BEFORE THE NIKAH?

In the United States, "civil marriage" is required for a marriage license, and this constitutes legal marriage. Therefore, the Jama'at requires that the civil marriage is done prior to the Nikah and the marriage certificate is produced at the time of Nikah. If civil marriage cannot be performed before the Nikah, then written approval from Amir USA is required that the Nikah can be performed without the civil marriage. This approval note should be submitted with the completed Nikah Forms to the National Headquarters.

To become legally married, both the prospective bride and groom must appear in person at the local city or town Marriage License Bureau or office of the County Clerk and apply for a marriage license. Marriage by proxy – through a third party who attends and acts on behalf of the bride or groom



Rishta Nata
United States of America

– is not allowed in most states. The couple should plan ahead and submit the application well in advance of the marriage/Nikah date since there may be a waiting period before they can marry.

Premarital Counseling

WHAT IS PREMARITAL COUNSELING AND HOW IS IT CONDUCTED?

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (may Allah be his Helper) has made premarital counseling a requisite of the Nikah. (National Shura, Jama'at USA, 2016). Counselors from the Rishta Nata Department discuss various premarital issues with the bride and groom, and their parents, usually via Skype or other video platforms, or in-person where possible. These are done for the bride and groom and their families. The session lasts 1-2 hours. Topics addressed in premarital counseling are intended to highlight ways to handle the relationship according to Islamic teachings, in order to enhance the marriage. Documents are made available to all parties in advance to review carefully, and then these are discussed during the session.

WHAT IF THE BRIDE OR GROOM IS NOT IN THE USA, IS IT STILL REQUIRED?

Any member of the US Jama'at who is getting married must go through counseling with his/her spouse, arranged and conducted by Rishta Nata USA. For overseas, these are typically done via video (Zoom, Skype etc) at a time which works best for all parties (the counselors, bride, groom and parents). If the bride or groom is not from the USA and premarital counseling is also provided by the other country (e.g. Canada, Germany, UK, Pakistan), you have a choice to have it arranged by Rishta Nata USA or it can be conducted there as well, provided a certificate of verification is provided at time of Nikah.

WHO ARE THE PREMARITAL COUNSELORS AND DO THEY HAVE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING?

Most of our counselors are missionaries and we also have husband-wife couples on our team. They are not professional marriage counselors; they go

through internal training and have thoroughly learned the material and are experienced in engaging in these discussions. A list of counselors can be found on rishtanata.ahmadiyya.us . You may request a specific counselor although it is subject to his/her availability.

IN WHAT LANGUAGE IS THE COUNSELING DONE?

The counseling session is done in English. We also have counselors fluent in Urdu and Spanish if that is preferred.

HOW AND WHEN SHOULD A PREMARITAL COUNSELING REQUEST BE SUBMITTED?

- The Pre-Marital Counseling requests should be submitted at least **four weeks before the Nikah date** through the Rishta Nata website at rishtanata.ahmadiyya.us under the Nikah Process tab or by sending an email to PMC@Rishtanata.us.
- The Premarital Counseling Certificate is issued by the Rishta Nata Department after completion of the counseling session, and sent to the bride and groom. It must be attached to the completed Nikah forms when they are sent to National Headquarters.

Haq Mehr (Dower)

WHAT IS HAQ MEHR?

- Haq Mehr is dower money paid by the groom to the bride to ensure her security and rights in the marriage. It is an integral part of Islamic marriage and announced at the time of Nīkāh. The amount of the Ḥaq Mehr should be agreed upon by both sides. The bridegroom has to pay the Haq Mehr to his wife as soon as possible, preferably immediately after the Rukhsati, and it is her right to receive it. (Fiqh Ahmadiyya, part 2, pg 43)

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE HAQ MEHR?

- The amount of dower money (Haq Mehr) must be clearly stated in US



dollars. Otherwise, please specify the currency (Pakistani Rupees, Canadian dollars, etc.). The dowry (Mehr) is a mandatory gift from the husband to the wife. (See *the Holy Qur'an*, 4:25). This sum should be proportionate to the husband's means.

- The dower amount is announced at the time of the Nikah ceremony. It can be given to the wife in full at once, or in incremental payments. Once given, it is solely the property of the wife, and she may use it as she pleases. The amount should be agreeable to both parties.

It was suggested by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih II (may Allah be pleased with him) that the amount of the Haq Mehr should be equivalent

to the groom's income of 6 to 12 months. (See *Farmoodat-e-Musleh Maud (ra)*, Page 207; *Al-Fazal*, December 12, 1940, Vol: 28, No: 282, Page: 1)

CAN THE BRIDE DECLINE HAQ MEHR?

Once, a companion of the Promised Messiah (as) said, "My wife has forgiven me her Haq Mehr." The Promised Messiah (as) asked if he had placed it in her hand. He replied, "No." The Promised Messiah (as) said, "Go and place it in her hand and then it is acceptable if she forgives it." When the companion returned he said, "I placed it in her hand and she refused to give it back to me." The Promised Messiah (as) said, "This should be the way." (*Talkees Al Izhar lazwatul Khumar*, page 160)

"There is another issue regarding Haq Mehr payment. Once a question was raised before the Promised Messiah (as) that a woman would not forgo her Haq Mehr (after the wedding the in-laws wanted her to forgo it). The Promised Messiah (as) said, "This is a woman's right. It should be paid firstly at the time of Nikah or afterwards. In Punjab and India, its [considered] a benevolent act on the part of women if they forgo their Haq Mehr to their husbands before or at the time of death. This is only a custom." (*Friday Sermon*, November 25, 2005 / *Malfoozat*, Volume 3, page 606).



IF HAQ MEHR IS NOT GIVEN AT THE TIME OF MARRIAGE, BUT IS THEN PAID LATER WHEN THE VALUE OF CURRENCY CHANGES, AT WHAT RATE SHOULD IT BE PAID?

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV (rh) said, “The Haq Mehr should have been given at the time of the marriage. Its value can diminish over time. So, if the wife did not seek her right (of the Haq Mehr at the time of marriage) and the husband does not remember (to give the Haq Mehr on time), its value will diminish. The value of the Haq Mehr cannot be increased using inflation. It will remain the same (amount).” (*Majlis-e-Irfan, March 19, 2000*)

The National Umur e Amma (General Affairs) Department has prepared an information-packed document on Haq Mehr, available from your local President or Umur e Amma Secretary. Additional references include:

1. Tarbiyat Department’s information booklet on marriage (<https://spiritualfit.files.wordpress.com/2020/08/importance-of-the-haq-mehr.pdf>)
2. Publication by Lajna Ima’illah, USA: “Garments for Each Other” (<https://www.alislam.org/library/books/Garments-for-Each-Other.pdf>),
- and 3. Domestic Issues: Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (May Allah be his Helper) (<https://www.alislam.org/library/books/Domestic-Issues.pdf>)

IS JEWELRY GIVEN TO THE BRIDE AT THE TIME OF NIKAH PART OF HAQ Mehr?

Jewelry given at the time of Nīkāh can be considered part of the Haq Mehr and recorded as such on the Nikah form. If a marriage breaks down, these items are part of the Haq Mehr. Once a marriage is established, such jewelry becomes the asset of the wife.



WHAT ABOUT MARRIAGE GIFTS?

Additional jewelry, clothes and other items given at the time of marriage are gifts and become the property of the one who receives them. If a marriage breaks down, there should be no expectation that gifts will be returned. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has likened taking back a gift to eating one's own vomit. (See Sahih Muslim 1622 g)

Binding Arbitration Agreement

WHAT IS THE BINDING ARBITRATION AGREEMENT?

This agreement is intended to facilitate the timely and proper resolution of issues related to Haq Mehr. When properly executed, this agreement is enforceable in the court of law in the USA. It should only be used when the parties are expected to reside in the USA.

Signed copies of the Binding Arbitration Form along with the completed Nikah form should be kept at a safe place both by the prospective husband and wife.

WHO NEEDS TO COMPLETE THE BINDING ARBITRATION AGREEMENT?

Both the bride and the groom must complete the "Binding Arbitration Agreement" and have this form notarized. A note should be added if one party is outside of the US that the "Binding Arbitration Form" will be completed as soon as both parties are in the US.

This note should be signed by the bride and/or groom, whoever is in the US. Make sure that the binding arbitration form is completed as soon as both parties are in the US and submit the completed form to the National



Headquarters. Please keep in mind that this is a legal document which needs to be notarized.

The Nikah Forms

IS THE NIKAH FORM A LEGAL DOCUMENT?

Yes, the Nikah form is considered a legal document. For example, if the Nikah is performed in Pakistan, then the Nikah form is the only proof of the marriage. Both parties (the Bride and the Bridegroom), witnesses, and the Jama'at President should read all instructions carefully. Since the Nikah form is a legal document; do not alter it in any way (e.g. white-out or cross-out and writing over existing text).

HOW MANY COPIES OF NIKAH FORMS NEED TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS?

After the Nikah announcement, all four (4) completed originals of the Nikah forms (with signatures) must be submitted to the national headquarters for registration.

CAN THE NIKAH FORM BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY OR ONLINE?

No, it must be submitted in writing with ink signatures.

WHO SUBMITS THE NIKAH FORM TO NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS?

The Missionary (or the person performing the Nikah) submits all four forms to the National Headquarters (Attn: Office of Rishta Nata USA, 15000 Good Hope Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905-4120). The National Headquarters registers the Nikah and sends two copies back to the person who submitted the forms. This person then provides one copy each to the bride and groom for their records. Written acknowledgment should be obtained



Rishta Nata
United States of America

from both parties that they have received the fully executed forms. The other two forms are kept in the Office of General Secretary.

WHAT IS THE MINIMUM PROCESSING TIME FOR VERIFICATION FROM HEADQUARTERS?

The minimum processing time for headquarters' verification is seven (7) days from the date of receipt of a completed form. Allow at least another week for mailing. If you plan to bring the form for verification by hand, please call 301-879-0110 and make an appointment before coming to the Baitur Rahman Mosque, Silver Spring, Maryland.

I NEED MY NIKAH FORMS QUICKLY. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

The US Jama'at sends signed forms via USPS first class mail, which can take 5-7 business days to receive the completed Nikah forms within the 50-contiguous states of the USA. If you wish to receive the signed Nikah forms urgently, please include a prepaid FedEx label for overnight delivery when you submit forms for signatures.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE SUBMITTED WITH THE NIKAH FORM?

A completed Nikah form must be submitted with the following documents:

1. Marriage certificate issued by the government authority.
2. Fully executed Binding Arbitration Agreement.
3. In case of prior divorce, a Legal Divorce Decree (or Jama'at Divorce/Khula Certificate)
4. Premarital counseling (PMC) certificate issued by Jama'at USA or other Jama'at

WHAT IS THE PROCESS OF SIGNATURES ON THE NIKAH FORM?

Presidents: Do not sign a Nikah form if the person does not belong to



Rishta Nata
United States of America

your Jama'at.

The Jama'at President is responsible for ensuring that the name, member code (in Section IV - The Bride Section and/or Section VI - The Groom Section) and all other relevant information are accurate before signing a Nikah form.

Either party (bride or bridegroom) can initiate the process of Nikah form completion. Four copies of the Nikah forms are to be completed with original signatures.

The bride, bridegroom, and the guardian (Wali) should sign the Nikah form in the presence of witnesses, and the date of the witness signatures must be the same as the date of the signatures of the bride, bridegroom, and the guardian.

The Jama'at President should place the official stamp in addition to his signature. If the stamp is not available, the President should print his full name, phone number, and the name of the Jama'at.

If both the bride and bridegroom reside in the US, and the Nikah is to be performed in the US, then the signature of National Amir is not required.

NAMES ON THE NIKAH FORM

Names on the Nikah form should match official documents, like passport or driver's license.

If the civil marriage ceremony has been held and the bride has changed her last name to match her husband's name, even then the Nikah documents should use the bride's maiden name (name before the civil marriage).

DATE FORMAT FOR NIKAH FORM?

When writing dates on the Nikah form, please spell out the month. For example, instead of writing 2/1/2020, write February 1, 2020, to avoid confusion.

ARE PHOTOCOPIES OF THE SIGNATURES ACCEPTABLE?

All signatures should be original on all four copies (photocopies of signatures are not acceptable).

Writing should be clear and readable. No cutting/strikeout or use of white-out is allowed on the form. In the case of any such thing a new form should be used and refilled.

HOW SHOULD HAQ MEHR BE INDICATED ON THE FORM?

The amount of Haq Mehr shall be written in both words and digits.

Currency of amount of Haq Mehr shall also be mentioned on the Nikah form.

If the Haq Mehr has already been paid, then this fact shall be clearly mentioned on the Nikah form.

HOW MANY WITNESSES ARE NEEDED FOR THE NIKAH FORM?

Two male adults (18 years or older) should be the witnesses. The bride's guardian (Wali) is **NOT** permitted to be a witness. The same two individuals can serve as a witness for both the bride and the groom.

WHO CAN SERVE AS THE BRIDE'S GUARDIAN (WALI)?

The Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) says:

"Islam does not approve that a woman shall marry someone without a guardian (Wali); the guardian should be either father, brother or any other next of kin."

(Chashma Ma'arifat, Ruhani Khaza'in, Volume 23, page 289)

The bride's biological father serves as the guardian.



If for any reason, the father cannot serve as the guardian, then one of the bride's relatives in the following order will have to serve as the guardian (according to Fiqah Ahmadiyya, part 2, pg 41):

1. Bride's grandfather
2. Bride's biological brother
3. Bride's stepbrother
4. Bride's uncle (the brother of the bride's father)

If due to any reason the girl desires to have someone as her guardian (Wali) other than her true guardian (Wali), then before the announcement of Nikah further guidance should be obtained from Markaz. For this purpose, the girl shall submit an application with her own signature. This application shall be duly signed by two witnesses, which shall then be attested by the Jama'at President.

The proposed guardian (Wali) shall also submit his consent in written format.

If the guardian (Wali) is unable to be present at the Nikah ceremony, he shall then appoint someone as his representative (Wakil). But the Nikah form will be signed by the guardian (Wali) himself, and witnesses of the guardian's signatures shall be from the place of his residence.

Written consent and signatures of the representative (Wakil) on the Nikah form are also necessary.

Dates of the signature of boy/girl and his/her witnesses shall be alike.

Important note: If none of the above guardians are available, a request should be submitted to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih (May Allah be his Helper) to appoint a guardian. **No one else** has the authority to appoint a guardian for the bride.

- A mature woman, who is a divorcé or a widow of sound understanding and intellect, has full authority to agree to her Nikah



on her own accord and desire without the guardian being present or approval of a guardian.

- **For a female convert to Islam-Ahmadiyyat**, the guardian can only be appointed by Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih (May Allah be his Helper). This request should be submitted at least **60 days** before the Nikah date through the office of the National Amir, USA.

WHO ANNOUNCES THE NIKAH?

- A Nikah must be announced by a Missionary (Murabbi e Silsilah)
- If this is not possible, written permission must be obtained from the National Amir for the local President or another person to announce the Nikah.

ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS IF THE BRIDE OR BRIDEGROOM RESIDE OVERSEAS?

- The signature of the National Amir is required if either the bride or the bridegroom reside outside the US, or if the Nikah will be performed overseas. Nikah forms of this type must be sent to the Office of the General Secretary at National Headquarters USA for the signature of the National Ameer Jama'at USA.
- It is important that one party should complete their part of the Nikah forms in full before sending it to the other party. This includes all original signatures, dates, attestation by the local President, and verification by National Amir.

ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS IF THE NIKAH IS TO BE PERFORMED IN INDIA?

Yes. US Nikah forms are not valid if the Nikah is to be performed in India. Jama'at Ahmadiyya India requires the following documents in such cases:

1. Nikah forms must be obtained from Qadian, India as they have a



unique serial number.

2. In addition to the above-mentioned general instructions, a verification letter from National Amir USA is to be attached to a completed Nikah form. The National Headquarters will issue the said letter within two weeks of receiving a completed Nikah form. It is the responsibility of the concerned party in the US to ensure that the verification letter is kept along with the Nikah forms as the Nikah may not be announced without it.

WHAT IS THE WAITING PERIOD FOR NEW CONVERTS?

- In the case of a male convert to Islam-Ahmadiyyat, a waiting period of one year should be observed before the Nikah can be performed.
- In the case of a female convert to Islam-Ahmadiyyat, there is no waiting period
- In the case of the Nikah of a male Ahmadi Muslim to a non-Muslim female, permission must first be obtained from Hazrat Khalifatul Masih (May Allah be his Helper).
- Nikah/marriage of a female Ahmadi Muslim to a non-Ahmadi Muslim/non-Muslim is not permitted. (See Promised Messiah (as), Al Hakam Volume 12, No. 27, pg. 1-27, Dated April 14th, 1908; Malfuzat vol. 5, pg. 525)

WHAT IF THE BRIDE OR BRIDEGROOM IS A DIVORCE(E)?

- In the case of a **divorced man or woman**, a copy of the divorce decree/certificate must be attached to the Nikah form.
- The party (whether groom or bride, if previously divorced) has to either submit the legal Divorce Decree or Jama'at Divorce/ Khula Certificate.
- If the divorce included a decision by the Qadha Board, verification by the Department of Umur' Amma regarding the



implementation of the decision is required before the Nikah can be announced.

WHAT IF THE FORMS ARE COMPLETED AND SIGNED BUT THEN THE NIKAH GETS DELAYED? DOES IT ALL NEED TO BE REDONE?

- In the Nikah is delayed by more than three months from the date of the completed forms, the forms will need to be redone and signed again.

ETIQUETTE OF MARRIAGE RITUALS

(refer to Friday Sermon of Huzoor on September 25, 2009, January 15th, 2010; *Garments for Each Other*: Selected Excerpts of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V relating to Marital Harmony)

The Mehndi

IS A 'MEHNDI' GATHERING ALLOWED AND IS IT OBLIGATORY?

A Mehndi function can be held if desired but is not obligatory. It should be held in the bride's home and be limited to the bride's female relatives and close friends. The noise level must be such that it does not leave the confines of the home and be heard outside. Even the backyard deck shouldn't be used. No sound system or excessive lighting should be utilized. If the home is small, permission may be requested from the National Amir to rent a space. Only female members of the groom's family may be invited.



WHAT ARE SOME THINGS THAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED AT THE ‘MEHNDI’?

1. To keep it as simple as possible, money should not be wasted on:
 - a. Multiple celebrations over several days well before the wedding day.
 - b. Lavish decorations of stage and bride’s seating for each day.
 - c. A large variety of food.
 - d. Printed invitation cards just for the Mehndi party.
 - e. Expensive and excessive clothing for the bride, groom, and other family members.

The selection of songs to be sung by the bride’s friends should be decent and avoid any indecent language. The songs should not promote the concept of “shirk” (association of someone with Allah) or concepts of other religions.

WHO PROVIDES THE HENNA FOR THE ‘MEHNDI’?

The bride’s family provides the henna. The ceremonial bringing of henna by the groom’s family is a custom borrowed from other religions and should not be done.

The Wedding (Shadi)

CAN SPEECHES BY FAMILY MEMBERS OR GUESTS BE MADE AT THE WEDDING RECEPTION?

The Islamic tradition at the wedding is only Tilawat, Nazm and Du’a. Lengthy speeches should be avoided and families should be made aware of this in advance.

If non-Muslims or non-Ahmadi guests are present (at the marriage ceremonies), if you say something, from a preaching perspective, about the process of marriage in Islam, then that is a different matter. It may be done to educate them, otherwise, such things are all vain. *(Circular from Huzoor e Anwar Ayyadahulaaho Ta’ala binasrihil Aziz to Canada Jama’at on October*



17, 2020)

IS SINGING AND/OR DANCING ALLOWED AT A MEHNDI CEREMONY OR ANY OTHER WEDDING RELATED EVENT?

Absolutely no dancing is allowed in any function.

IS A RONAQ CELEBRATION ALLOWED?

“Ronaq” (celebration) from the groom’s side is very strongly discouraged.

WHAT ARE PREREQUISITES OF A WEDDING RECEPTION?

Purdah must be strictly observed with separate seating areas for men and women. Money should NOT be wasted on:

1. Expensive and fancy bridal dresses for the purpose of showing off or to impress others.
2. Expensive wedding invitations, excessive decoration of the house, stage, the bride’s seating.
3. A large variety of foods.
4. Money should not be wasted on the rental of expensive cars or limousines.

CAN SONGS OR MUSIC BE PLAYED AT A WEDDING CEREMONY?

Playing songs or music is not permitted.

CAN THE GROOM WEAR A GOLD WEDDING RING?

Any ring given to the groom, or worn by any Ahmadi Muslim man, should not be made of gold. (Sahih Muslim, Book of Clothes & Adornment)



WHAT ABOUT GIVING MILK OR HIDING THE GROOM'S SHOES DURING THE CEREMONY?

Giving the groom milk to drink and hiding his shoes to demand money from him should be avoided; this custom comes from other religions.

IS A MALE PHOTOGRAPHER ALLOWED ON THE FEMALE SIDE?

Only a female photographer/videographer is permitted on the women's side when purdah-observing women are present. Men should not come to the women's side for this purpose if non-family women are present.

Non-family men are not allowed to videotape at family events.

IS THE GROOM ALLOWED ON THE FEMALE SIDE?

- Yes, only after Purdah-observing non-relative women have been informed.
- The groom and his male friends/relatives should not be called to the women's side when purdah-observing women are present.
- An announcement should be made so that they can put on their purdah, or leave the gathering.

CAN MALE SERVERS SERVE ON THE WOMEN'S SIDE?

Only women servers should be used on the women's side. This arrangement can be made beforehand if /when a caterer is being selected.

WHAT ARE THE PURDAH INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE BRIDE?

The bride should observe purdah when she arrives on the women's side and when she leaves with her husband. A large chador (covering) can be used for purdah.



IS IT PERMISSIBLE TO HOLD THE HOLY QUR'AN OVER THE BRIDE'S OR GROOM'S HEAD?

The Holy Qur'an should never be held over the bride's head to have her walk under it at the time of Rukhsati (formal giving away of the bride to the groom and the couple's departure). This is a Bid'at (an undesirable innovation in religious belief or practice)

WHAT ARE THE INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING 'JAHAIZ'?

- Showing off the Jahaiz (clothes/jewelry/household items given to the bride by her parents) should not be practiced. Jahaiz is from the culture of the Indian subcontinent (not in Islam), given by the bride to the bridegroom.
- Gifts, money, or any form of Jahaiz from the bride's family should not be expected or demanded by the groom's family. Giving gifts to the groom's family or relatives from the bride's family is an acquired custom from other religions/cultures and should not be practiced.

The Walimah

WHAT ARE THE INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING WALIMAH?

- At the wedding (Shadi), Tilawat, Nazm and Du'a is done. But at the Walima, only Du'a is done. (*Circular from Huzoor e Anwar Ayyadahulaaho Ta'ala binasrihil Aziz to Canada Jama'at on October 17, 2020*).

Other than this, the same principles apply as prescribed for the Wedding ceremony.

- Mixed gatherings are never allowed.
- It was a Sunnah (practice) of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of



Allah be on him) to serve food at the Walima, but it is not necessary that it should be a lavish feast or on a large scale. The scale of the Walimah should be according to one's own means. (*Sahih Muslim, Book of Marriage*)

CAN THE SHADI AND WALIMA BE COMBINED INTO ONE EVENT?

There is a growing custom where, instead of hosting a Rukhsati event from the bride's side and a Walima function from the groom's side separately, the bride and groom both combine their funds and hold just one function in very expensive hotels or wedding halls and in this way Shadi and Walima are being combined and given the name "Shaleema". Hazrat Khalifatul Masih (may Allah be his Helper) instructed:

"This is wrong according to Sharia. Walima cannot happen until the husband and wife are not in "Khalwate Sahiha" (which means that after the Rukhsati, husband and wife go to some place alone where no one is allowed to enter without permission).

Source: Circular to USA Jama'at from Tabshir, Islamabad, UK on February 19, 2024

CAN THE BRIDE'S FAMILY BE ASKED TO HELP WITH EXPENSES RELATED TO THE WALIMA?

The bride's family should not be asked to contribute to the Walimah. It is the responsibility of the groom.

WHAT ARE SOME OTHER INNOVATIONS (BID'AT) TO AVOID?

Here are some innovations (bid'at) from non-Islamic cultures that should be avoided:

1. Gift Registry



2. Bridal Shower
3. Requesting “no box gifts” (i.e. requesting monetary gifts only)
4. Father walking bride into women’s side or bridegroom receiving bride on women’s side when non-family women are present.
5. Bride and groom cutting the cake together.
6. Mixed gatherings are never permitted in any function. Purdah should always be observed.
7. Dancing, at any event, is not allowed.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SEE ANY FORBIDDEN OR INAPPROPRIATE CUSTOMS OR ACTIONS TAKING PLACE?

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (May Allah be his Helper) has instructed all Ahmadis, and especially Jama’at office holders, to abstain from attending inappropriate functions or gatherings. If, while attending a function, any Ahmadi sees inappropriate action occurring, they should approach the relevant individuals in charge and attempt to put a stop to it. If such actions continue, then it is the duty of a sincere Ahmadi to immediately leave that function and report such inappropriate behavior to their relevant Jama’at office-holder.



Rishta Nata
United States of America

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This version is updated as of February 19, 2024.

For assistance in completing the Nikah form or if clarification, e-mail nikah@ahmadiyya.us.

Nikah forms are sent to Daftar (Office of) Nikah, 15000 Good Hope Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905.



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