12010 - Celebrating a child’s twenty-first birthday

the question

Here in South Africa, when a young man or young woman reaches the age of twenty-one, people celebrate it, read Qur’aan and cook various kinds of food. They gather together and give a key to the young person who has reached the age of 21. Are these things permitted in Islam?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

What you have mentioned about celebrating and reciting Qur’aan when a young man or woman reaches the age of twenty-one has no basis in sharee’ah. It is bid’ah and a kind of imitating the Christians around you. It was proven in the hadeeth of ‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Whoever does an action that is not in accordance with this matter of ours (Islam) will have it rejected.” (Narrated by Muslim and by Ahmad in al-Musnad). And Abu Dawood narrated from Ibn ‘Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Whoever imitates a people is one of them.”

And Allaah is the Source of strength. May Allaah bless our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions, and grant them peace.