2184 - Using drums to call people to prayer

the question

In some mosques in the Philippines and elsewhere, they use drums to call the people to prayer, then they call the Adhaan after that. Is this permissible according to Islam?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Drums and the like are musical instruments, and it is not permissible to use them to tell the people that the time for prayer has come, or that the time is approaching. This is a forbidden innovation (bid'ah), and what is obligatory is to let the Adhaan as prescribed in sharee'ah suffice. It was reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever innovates anything in this matter of ours [Islam] that is not part of it will have it rejected." (Narrated by al-Bukhaari and Muslim).

Al-'Arbaad ibn Saariyah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: "The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) preached to us in a beautiful and moving manner, which made us weep. We said, 'O Messenger of Allaah, it is as if this is a farewell, so give us some advice.' He said, 'I advise you to fear Allaah and to hear and obey, even if an Ethiopian slave is appointed over you. Those of you who live will see a lot of differences arise, so I urge you to adhere to my Sunnah and the sunnah of the rightly guided Khulafa' (al-Khulafa' al-Raashideen), and to seize it firmly. Beware of newly-innovated things, for every innovation is a going-astray." (Reported by Abu Dawood and al-Tirmidhi, who said, it is a saheeh hasan hadeeth.)

And we should remember the hadeeth of Abu 'Umayr ibn Anas from his uncles among the Ansaar. He said: the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was concerned about how to call the people together to pray. Someone suggested raising a flag when the time for prayer came, so that when they saw it they could call one another, but he did not like this idea. Someone mentioned a ram's horn, like the shofar, but he did not like this idea, and said, "That belongs to the Jews." A bell was suggested, but he said, "That belongs to the Christians." 'Abd-Allaah ibn

Zayd ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi went away, thinking about this matter that was of concern to the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). Then he saw the Adhaan in a dream, and he came to the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) the next day and told him about it. The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, “O Bilaal, go and see what ‘Abd-Allaah ibn Zayd wants you to do, then do it.” So Bilaal called the Adhaan. Reported by Abu Dawood, 420; this is a saheeh hadeeth.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) rejected the ram’s horn and the bell, so how can the Muslims accept the drum? Allaah has given them the Adhaan and they have no need of anything else.

And Allaah knows best.