7175 - Ruling on buying food for Zakat al-Fitr a little early

the question

An Islamic centre in the west wants to buy an amount of food such as rice, for example, a while before Eid, say ten days before, then they will announce that they are prepared to accept money from Muslims for Zakat al-Fitr, which they will then distribute on their behalf. This is because it will not be possible to buy this amount of food if they take the money one or two days before Eid. What is the ruling on this?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

We put this question to Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen, may Allah preserve him, who answered as follows:

There is nothing wrong with the centre buying food a little early and then selling it to those who want to pay Zakat al-Fitr, and then distributing it within the prescribed time.