

Listening and disseminating different news

Question: Is it permissible to listen to or pass on the news which is heard via different mediums with regards to what happens inside one's country and abroad?

Answer: It is not permissible to do so due to the following harms:

1. Most of the information (relayed through the news) is useless and contains no benefit, it does not benefit one's religion nor one's worldly life. The Islam of that person who does not refrain from useless matters is not loved by Allah Ta'ala. Rasoolullah *Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam* has said:

من حسن إسلام المرء تركه ما لا يعنيه

From the beauty of a person's Islam is that he/she refrains from that which does not concern him.

2. The majority of the information on the news is unverified, spreading and speaking about unverified matters is tantamount to lying. Rasoolullah *Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam* has said:

كفى بالمرء كذباً أن يحدث بكل ما سمع

It is sufficient for a man to be termed as a liar if he speaks (spreads) all that which he hears.

3. Most news articles contain slander and backbiting, backbiting is worse than fornication and slander is worse than backbiting.
4. News Agencies spread such propaganda which is against the religion of Islam and Muslims, certain simple-minded Muslims who are unaware of the reality unknowingly get affected by this propaganda, ultimately their hearts get affected by the words of the enemies of Islam who will mention matters pertaining to Islam which are far from the reality, this in turn will further these Muslim's away from Islam and will cause hatred for Islam in their hearts.
5. Hatred and tribalism amongst different groups of people and localities is created.
6. Anarchy, fear, panic and cowardice spreads (amongst the people) when news concerning turmoil and corruption are (constantly) heard. The Noble Quran mentions that the spreading of such matters is an evil trait of the hypocrites - Allah Ta'ala mentions:

وإذا جاءهم أمر من الأمن أو الخوف أذاعوا به

“When (news of) any matter of peace or fear comes to them (the Munaafiqeen and ignorant Muslims), they (immediately) broadcast it (thereby causing harm to the Muslims)”
(Surah Nisaa, 83)

In another verse Allah Ta’ala mentions:

لأن لم ينتهي المنافقون والذين في قلوبهم مرض والمرجفون في المدينة لأنه ريانك بهم ثم لا
يجاورونك فيها إلا قليلا

“If the hypocrites, those with a disease (doubts about Islaam) in their hearts and those who spread rumours in Madinah do not desist (from hurting the Muslims and causing problems among them), We will definitely grant you (O Rasulullaah (sallallahu alai wa sallam) authority over them (the authority to expel them from Madinah), after which they will hardly be able to live with you there (in Madinah) (When they do not refrain from their evil activities).”

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The above is an English translation of an Urdu Fatwa in Ahsanul Fatawa (VL.8. PG 212)].

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