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Fatwa No. 4766

Q: We travel by land to spend our vacations, weekends, and spring break in a campus two hundred kilos away from our city. We take with us a water container which we use to perform Wudu' for Salah. We shorten the four-Rak`ah Salah (Prayer consisting of four units) and combine Zhuhr and `Asr Salah offering them in the time of `Asr. We also combine Maghrib and `Isha' offering them in the time of Maghrib prayer. A group of us say that we should shorten the four-Rak`ah Salah offering each Salah in two Rak`ahs only but in their due time, for this is better, as we are staying in a place where there are no hardships. The other group argues that we should shorten the four-Rak`ah Salah and combine them as this is permissible. They argue that the water which they use in performing Wudu' is carried to them by containers and if they performed Wudu', it can be sufficient for the two Salah and that they have young people whom they urge to offer Salah in congregation. They are afraid that the young people cannot perform Wudu' every time for it is cold. We would like you to advise us according to the soundest opinions of scholars. Is it permissible for the first group to act according to their opinion, even if they offered prayer individually while the rest combine and shorten Salah as described? Please, clarify this matter. As-salamu `alaykum warahmatullah wabarakatuh (May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you!)

A: If you settle in this place more than four days with the intention of remaining there, you should offer Salah in full and

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at its due time. On the other hand, if you stay less than this period, you should shorten the four-Rak`ah Salah and offer each one at its due time or combine Zhuhr and `Asr Prayers in the due time of either of them and Maghrib and `Isha' in the due time of either of them. Indeed, the matter is flexible, but it is preferable to offer each Salah at its due time in this case.

May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

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