**[Picture of Ka'abah in Mosque](http://www.blogger.com/)**

**Q. A joint picture of holy Ka’abah, holy Tomb of our beloved Prophet (Pbuh) and one open book say of holy Qur’an is fixed infront of Mahrab where our Pesh Imam leads us for Namaz in the mosque of our area. Is this picture permissible before the Pesh Imam in Ruku and Sajda in Namaz? Is it Bidat?**

First you must be clear about what *Bid’at* is. The tendency of calling every act *Bid’at* must be checked as a Muslim takes it more unkindly to be accused of *Bid’at* than of sin. Different groups call those acts of others *Bid’at* which they do not agree with. It is creating great divisions. Besides, the *Ad’l* (justice) of Islam demands that we call a spade a spade, no more no less.

When objected, it was replied that in Haj and Umrah we bow before Ka’abah. In Namaz Niyat, we say. “Facing before Ka’abah”. In some Janimaz (prayer mat), while in some, holy tomb is printed and we bow down in Ruku and Sajda on these. So why object when it is placed in front in the mosque. Please clarify.

The literal meaning of *Bid’at* is new act or tradition. It is generally believed that all new traditions or acts that were not in the days of the Prophet (Pbuh) and the Companions, are *Bid’at* but it is not true. *Bid’at* is such new act or tradition, which becomes an essential part of Deen in the eyes of a group of people. Sometimes a pious act could become *Bid’at*. Imam Malik never wore shoes in Madinah. He said he could not bear putting on shoes where the feet of the Prophet (Pbuh) might have touched the ground. It was the manifestation of his immense love for the Prophet (Pbuh), an act of piety. However if a group of people start following him in this, considering it a part of Deen to walk barefoot on the streets of Madinah, it will become a *Bid’at*, a sin. Kissing the finger tips and touching with them the eyes every time, the Prophet’s name is spelled, is an expression of love for the Prophet. But when a group of people start believing it to be necessary obligation of Deen, it becomes *Bid’at.* So if a group of Namazis in your mosque believe that it is necessary to hang a picture of Ka’abah there, it will become *Bid’at.* Till they do not consider it a part of Deen it is not a *Bid’at*.

Another important explanation is also essential before passing a judgment on your query. Life would become very hard if we believe we should not start anything new that was not said or done by the Prophet (Pbuh). The rule is that we should not start or do anything, which the Qur’an and the Prophet (Pbuh) forbade.

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Hanging a drawing of Ka’abah or the Mosque of Prophet (Pbuh) in front of the Imam in a mosque is neither *Bid’at* nor a sin but it must be discouraged and desisted from. It has the potential of becoming a *Bid’at*.

Besides there is another grave risk in it. The logic of your Imam is based on ignorance and if it goes a little more wayward it may become very serious. If the picture of Ka’abah in front of your Imam is considered to represent Ka’abah, then your Imam must know that a Muslim does not bow before Ka’abah. We bow not before Ka’abah but only in the direction of Ka’abah (and certainly not in the direction of the Prophet’s Tomb or Mosque). A Muslim bows before none but Allah. When in the mosque of Haram, we face Ka’abah but we do not meditate or concentrate upon it in our prayers. We are required to meditate on the presence of Allah in Namaz whether we are in Haram or somewhere else. If one thinks for a moment that he is bowing before Ka’abah he will be in danger of being very near to Shirk. Many of average Muslims in a mosque do not possess adequate knowledge of Deen. If they start believing that bowing before the picture of Ka’abah is akin to bowing before Ka’abah their Namaz will not remain pure for Allah because as I explained earlier that bowing before anything or anyone except Allah is Shirk.

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Explain this finer point to your Imam very modestly and humbly when he is alone. Admonishing him in the presence of others may hurt his ego and he may not listen to reason. However if the picture has been placed there only for being centrally located and the Namazis do not philosophise or link it with any belief, there is no need to create a controversy. There is no harm in its being there.

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