

Who has the Greatest Right to Lead the Janaazah salaah?

Q: Janaa'iz-25: Does the Imaam of the area or the successor of the deceased have a greater right to lead the Janaazah salaah? The book Shahrul Wiqaayah states that in greatest right is that of the Muslim ruler, followed by the Qaadhi, then the Imaam of the area and then successor. Please clarify whose right is the greatest?

Answer: The Imaam of the area has the greatest right to performing the Janaazah salaah on condition that no heirs of the deceased are better qualified than him. If there are any heirs better qualified than the Imaam, they will have a greater right, otherwise the right goes to the person whom they appoint.

The statement of Shahrul Wiqaayah is in order, but based on the situation where the Imaam of the area has been appointed by virtue of him being the most learned and qualified person in the community, as it ought to be in the Shari'ah. However, if the Imaam was appointed on the grounds of his lineage, due to family pride or because of a low salary, the heir who is better qualified will have the greater right. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

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