



## SUPPLEMENT No. 2

TO

THE CYPRUS GAZETTE No. 3674 OF 25TH FEBRUARY, 1953.

## LEGISLATION.

# THE STATUTE LAWS OF CYPRUS

No. 5 OF 1953.

A LAW TO MAKE PROVISION FOR THE ELECTION OF A  
RELIGIOUS HEAD OF THE TURKISH COMMUNITY  
IN CYPRUS.

A. B. WRIGHT,] [24th February, 1953.  
Governor.

**WHEREAS** it has been represented to the Government that, in the interests of the Turkish Community in Cyprus, it is desirable to make provision for the election of a Mufti as Religious Head of the said Community.

BE it, therefore, enacted by His Excellency the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Colony of Cyprus as follows:—

1. This Law may be cited as the Turkish Religious Head (Mufti) Law, 1953. Short title.

(11)

Interpretation.

2. In this Law, unless the context otherwise requires—  
 “Presiding Officer” means the person appointed by the Governor as provided in sub-paragraph (1) of paragraph 1 of the Schedule and includes any person nominated by him as provided in sub-paragraph (2) of paragraph 1 of the said Schedule ;

Schedule.

“quarter” means a quarter of a town or village.

Election in accordance with Schedule.

3. The election of a Religious Head of the Turkish Community (in this Law referred to as “the Mufti”), shall take place in accordance with the provisions set out in the Schedule.

Qualifications for election as Mufti.

4.—(1) No person shall be eligible for election or shall be elected as a Mufti unless he is a moslem of Turkish race who has attained the age of forty years and possesses an Ijaset diploma or a degree in theology from the Istanbul, Ankara or El Azhar universities.

(2) For the purposes of this section “Ijaset diploma” means a certificate of competence granted by a former “Medreseh”, that is to say, an authoritative high school of religion functioning at the time, in the presence of religious dignitaries, to those who had completed their studies therein on the following subjects :—

Arabic language and literature,  
 Sheri law and jurisprudence of Islam,  
 Traditions of Mohammed and commentaries thereon,  
 Interpretation and commentaries on Koran,  
 Theology, Logic, Philosophy, and  
 The Moslem Sacred Law of Inheritance.

Notification of election to Governor for his approval.

5. Upon the election of a Mufti, the Presiding Officer shall notify the name of the person elected to the Governor for his approval, and, upon such approval being signified, the person elected shall be the Mufti invested with all duties and powers as in this Law provided :

Provided that no approval shall be given unless the Governor is satisfied that the person elected possesses the qualifications set out in sub-section (1) of section 4.

Duties and powers of Mufti.

6. The Mufti shall have and exercise the following duties and powers with regard to matters concerning persons of the Turkish Community in Cyprus, that is to say :—

(a) to appoint, due regard being had to the funds available, Muderris, the Mussevit, Imams, Muezzins, Preachers and such other personnel as may be required to assist in religious functions and prescribe their training and duties, exercising such supervision over them as may be necessary to secure proper compliance, with power to suspend or dismiss them if they fail to carry out their respective duties in a satisfactory manner ;

- (b) to pay periodical visits to towns and villages, to deliver sermons in the Mosques and, generally, to advise the members of the Turkish Community on religious matters ;
- (c) to issue "Fetvas" defining religious principles and prescribing the religious holidays, the time for prayers, and the fasting hours ;
- (d) to direct and supervise the distribution to the poor of alms and "Zekats" contributed by moslems ;
- (e) to authorize the erection of new Mosques and major repairs to existing Mosques and to supervise the running of Mosques, Tekkes, Shrines and Moslem Cemeteries, due regard being had to the funds available.

7. If for any reason the Mufti ceases to hold office the senior Mudderris shall exercise all the duties and powers of a Mufti until a Mufti is elected.

Vacancy in the office of Mufti.

8. Subject to the provisions of section 9, a Mufti shall retire on attaining his seventy-fifth year.

Retiring age.

9.—(1) If at any time a representation is made to the Governor that a Mufti—

Compulsory retirement and removal of Mufti.

(a) by reason of physical or other disability is unable to attend or perform the duties of his office ; or

(b) has been guilty of conduct unbecoming to the office of Mufti as by this Law established or of serious, persistent or continuous neglect of duty,

the Governor may appoint a committee consisting of four moslems of Turkish race under the chairmanship of a Turkish judicial or legal officer of moslem faith to inquire into the matter.

(2) An inquiry under this section shall be conducted in such manner as the Governor may direct and, at every such inquiry, the Mufti shall have a right to be present or be represented.

(3) If, after inquiring into the matter, the committee is satisfied as to the truth of any representation made under this section, it may require the Mufti to retire or may advise him with regard to his future conduct in the matter forming the subject of the inquiry.

(4) Any decision of the committee shall be subject to appeal to the Supreme Court, whose decision shall be final and conclusive. The Rules of Court relating to civil appeals in force for the time being shall be applicable to any such appeal.

(5) Any decision which involves the removal of the Mufti shall be published in the *Gazette* and, thereupon, the Mufti shall cease to hold office and the office of the Mufti shall become vacant,