



Prince Charles will no longer accept large cash donations for charities

Description

USA: Royal source says heir to throne 'operates on advice', after claims sheikh gave him millions in bag and suitcase

The Prince of Wales will no longer accept large cash donations for his charities, a senior royal source has said, after Charles faced criticism over claims that he received €3m from a billionaire Qatari sheikh reportedly stuffed in a small suitcase and Fortnum & Mason carrier bag.

The Sunday Times reported that Charles personally accepted the donations, which were passed to the Prince of Wales's Charitable Fund (PWCF) from Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jaber al-Thani, who was the prime minister of Qatar between 2007 and 2013.

The three donations were said to have been made between 2011 and 2015. Clarence House has said all correct processes were followed.

A royal source said that the heir to the throne "operates on advice". "Situations, contexts change over the years. I can say with certainty for more than half a decade with the situation as it has evolved, this has not happened and it would not happen again ... That was then, this is now."

The Charity Commission is examining reports to decide whether this is a matter for it to investigate.

Although there is no suggestion of any illegality, or that Charles offered anything in return for the cash, critics have said the allegations show poor judgment on the part of the heir to the throne.

The campaign group Republic has demanded full disclosure over the matter , and has described the events as "shocking". It has written to the Charity Commission in connection with the cash donations.

The Metropolitan police is currently investigating accusations of cash-for-honours at another of the Prince's charities, the Prince's Foundation, over allegations that a Saudi millionaire was offered help to obtain a knighthood and UK citizenship in return for generous donations.

The former Liberal Democrat cabinet minister Norman Baker has called on the Met to take the cash

donation claims into account during its investigation, claiming that it contradicts previous statements from Clarence House that the prince did not directly involve himself in fundraising for his charities.

The royal source said there had been “a lot of reporting about the Prince of Wales ‘accepting’ this money”.

“It was passed immediately to his charities and it was his charities who decided to accept the money. That is a decision for them. And they did so, and, as they have confirmed, it followed all the right processes. The auditors looked at it,” the source said.

The Charity Commission has said in a statement: “We are aware of reports about donations received by the Prince of Wales’s Charitable Foundation. We will review the information to determine whether there is any role for the commission in this matter.”

Clarence House has said: “Charitable donations received from Sheikh Bin Jassim were passed immediately to one of the prince’s charities, who carried out the appropriate governance and have assured us that all the correct processes were followed.”

by Caroline Davies

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Date Created

06/30/2022