

FATWA REGARDING STUNNING

By Mufti Shabbir Ahmad, Darul Uloom Bury

Making an animal unconscious prior to slaughter, whether by means of a current or pistol, contains from a shar`ee perspective a number of major flaws which have been detailed by Shaykh Ashraf Ali Thanwi in Imdadul Fatawa and then by my teacher Shaykh Mufti Muzaffar Hussain, Director and Mufti of Madarsah Mazahir Uloom, Saharanpur in response to a legal query. I briefly present an exposition of this. This method of practice (due to the reasons given) is, therefore, in no way permissible. It is an obligation on Muslims to make all efforts in trying to bring this method of practice to an end and under no circumstances to accept this method.

The Fuqahaa have specifically mentioned that it is forbidden to cause unneeded pain and suffering to the animal to be slaughtered.

Since the above shock cannot constitute slaughter, it is apparent that it is, therefore, a means of unneeded pain and suffering which is not permitted by the Shari`ah. If it is claimed that this act does not cause the animal pain and suffering but rather aids the expulsion of blood from the body and annuls the animal's senses, this too would be incorrect as prior to being made unconscious the animal senses were in working order and so their suspension after unconsciousness is not certain as it is possible that this instrument may have caused a suspension in movement (paralysis) whilst senses are still functioning, and it is obvious that in the case of the senses remaining, the usage of these instruments will be a means of increase suffering.

The Shari`ah has declared the releasing of flowing blood as the reason behind slaughtering. Now it is apparent that the workings of the physical organs are strongest in the state of consciousness, and it is also apparent that the expulsion of the blood is a physical act. Therefore, the stronger (and more actively) the organs function, the more blood will be released and the objective of the Legislator will be well realised. Thus, to intentionally enervate the organs and thereby cause a decrease in the amount of blood pumped out would not be permitted by the Shari`ah as this clashes with the objective of the Legislator.

The third reason, which is more abhorrent than the others and alone would suffice in making this matter impermissible is that those that adopt such methods consider them preferable to the way prescribed by the Shari`ah (in which the animal is not made

unconscious), and consider the method of Shari`ah inferior and deficient, and giving preference to the innovated over the prescribed is close to Kufr.

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Mufti Shabbir Ahmad
Darul Uloom Al-Arabiyyah Al-Islamiyyah
Holcombe Hall, Holcombe, Bury

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