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Issues related to *Slaughtering* ⬥

The slaughtering of permissible animals for day today consumption or for religious offerings remains one of the key aspect of Islamic worship. Islam prescribes a distinct set of guidelines for proper slaughtering. However, due to general ignorance and complexities of modern life several issues have emerged in this regard and the Seventh Seminar of the Islamic Fiqh Academy provided suitable guidelines for the permitted course of action.

The First Resolution:

24.1 Literally *Zabh* means to perform a surgical operation and in Shariah it means to cut the fold and breath pipes and both the jugular veins of an under control animal or to injure or inflict wound on any part of an animal who is not under control for slaughtering.

24.2 *Zabh* is of two kinds *Zabh Ikhtiyaari* and *Zabh Ghair Ikhityaari*. In the first kind of *Zabh* all that four arteries or most of them are severed and it happens with those animals that are under the full control of the slaughterer at the time of *Zabh* (slaughtering according to the Islamic tenets). This sort of slaughtering is generally done to the reared animals with the exception that the animal may somehow become out of control at the time of slaughtering. In the second type of slaughtering, wound is inflicted on any part of the body of the out of control animal and let the blood flow from the wound. This sort of slaughtering is done on untamed (hunting) wild animals who are not under the control of human beings with the exception that a wild animal may be caught and tamed or is somehow caught alive.

24.3 Common conditions for both types of slaughtering are:

(i) The slaughterer should be a Muslim or *Ahle Kitāb* (the follower of some revealed book).

(ii) He should be sane.

(iii) Name of Allah is recited at the time of slaughtering.

(iv) No other name should be included with the name of Allah.

(v) The animal should be alive at the time of slaughtering.

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(vi)   The animal should die only on account of slaughtering.

(vii) The weapon should be sharp edged.

Special conditions regarding *Zabh Ikhtiyaari*:

(a)   To recite *Tasmia* (In the name of Allah the compassionate, the merciful) on the animal set for slaughter.

(b)   To severe the particular arteries.

(c)   There should not be much delay between the recitation of *Tasmia* and *Zabh.*

Special conditions regarding *Zabh Ghair Ikhtiyaari:*
(a)   The hunter should not be in his *Ihraam*.

(b)   The animal belonging to *Haraam* should not be hunted.

(c)   The hunter bird or animal should be a trained one.

(d)   *Tasmia* should be recited while releasing the hunter bird or animal or while throwing the spear or arrow.

24.4   The occasions for *Zabh* under control and *Zabh* out of control are quite different. The out of control type of *Zabh* is permissible only when the *Zabh* under control is not possible. Therefore, the permission of *Zabh* out of control in the place of *Zabh* under control is not unanimous.

The Second Resolution:

24.5   The qualifications of a person performing the act of *Zabh* (the slaughterer) according to Shariah are that he should be sane and major. In case of his being a minor, he should be wise and sagacious and last but not the least he should be either a Muslim or the follower of some divine/revealed book (*Ahle Kitaab*).

24.6   By the follower of any revealed book means that he should follow one of the revealed/divine books testified by the Holy Qur'an. The Jews and Christians are such persons in the present age.

24.7   The *Zabiha* of the Jews and Christians will be lawful with the exception that it is proved beyond doubt that such a person is heathen and does not believe in Allah.

24.8   The *Zabiha* by a Qadyani will in no case be lawful even if he calls himself Ahmadi or Lahouri.

24.9   It should be made clear that the conditions set by Shariah should be positively found in *Zabh* even though the slaughterer is a Muslim or a follower of some revealed book. Hence, all those conditions in which an animal is slaughtered directly or by means of some machine in such a way that it cannot be dubbed as *Zabiha* according to Shariah, the animal thus slaughtered will neither be *Zabh* nor will be legal for consumption. Its examples are to shoot and kill the animal, to burn the places of *Zabh* by electric current or by wounding some part of the body and let the animal die by the flow of blood from that wound or other means similar to these.

The Third Resolution:

24.10 According to the Islamic Shariah the name of Allah should be uttered at the time of slaughtering and if the animal is slaughtered in the name of some one other than Allah it will not be *Halāl* (Permissible).

24.11 If an animal is slaughtered without uttering the name of Allah, such things happens only either knowingly or by forgetfulness. The slaughter will be lawful if *Bismillah*, is simply forgotten to recite. But if it is deliberately not recited, such slaughter, according to the majority of jurists, will not be permissible.

24.12 Reverend Imam Shafai holds that if *Bismillah* is not read as a matter of disdain, the slaughter (*Zabiha*) will not be lawful. But if the reason is not disdain and *Bismillah* is not over looked intentionally, such slaughter will be lawful because according to him it is *Sunnah* to say "*Bismillah*".

(a) Be it clear that the majority of Islamic jurists hold the utterance of *Bismillah* as obligatory while Imam Shafai thinks it as "Traditional" *(Masnoon)*. However *Tasmia* (recitation of *Bismillah*) is obligatory or traditionally every Muslim is generally expected that he will not perform *Zabh* by intentionally not reciting the name of Allah. It is not our duty to ascertain whether a Muslim while performing *Zabh* deliberately omitted *Bismillah*? Therefore, the *Zabiha* by every Muslim should be considered as lawful.

(b) It should be clear that, while slaughtering, the recitation of the name of Allah is obligatory for each animal. Therefore, if the act of slaughtering is performed several times the recitation of Allah's name will also be recited as many times and if the slaughtering is done only once, the name of Allah will be recited only once, for example, an animal is being slaughtered after reciting "*Bismillah*", but before the act of *Zabh* is complete, the animal somehow gets out of control and runs away. Now, if it is caught and again put down for *Zabh*, in this case, *Bismillah* shall be recited once again. In *Zabh Ikhtiyaari* every time when an animal is slaughtered and *Bismillah* is read, there should be full knowledge and determination of the animal, which is being slaughtered, and if some other animal instead of the predetermined one is slaughtered, it will not be lawful.

(c) Sometimes while slaughtering an animal more than one person join this act, for example, two hands of two different people are gripping the handle of the knife, or one hand of a weak person and on his hand the hand of a stronger person, in such case both these persons will have to recite the name of Allah, however, the persons holding the head or legs or body of the animal will not be considered as participants in slaughtering.

Fourth Resolution:

24.13 Now-a-days it is becoming a general practice that before putting the animal to slaughter, they are made unconscious by electric shock or some other means supposing that it is a way of mitigating the pain of the animal. This Seminar does not agree with this presumption and holds that the better way is to complete the act of *Zabh* without making it unconscious.

24.14 But, in case this practice is in vogue somewhere, and the animal is slaughtered only after rendering it unconscious and it is also fully certain that the animal has become only unconscious temporarily by the electric shock or by some other means and is not dead, and if it is ascertained diligently that the electric voltage is adjusted only to render the animal unconscious, in this case if such an unconscious animal is slaughtered, the *Zabiha* will be lawful.