

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



اتحاد الجمعيات الإسلامية في بريطانيا وإيرلندا

UNION OF MUSLIM ORGANISATIONS OF U.K. & EIRE

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PRESS RELEASE

The British Muslims are gravely perturbed at the attempt by the Farm Animal Welfare Council to reopen the issue of Halal slaughter of animals (Zabaha method) seventeen years after it was finally resolved by the decision of the Government in 1986 to allow the Muslims exemption from stunning as provided under existing legislation.

It should be recalled that the Farm Animal Welfare Council published its report on 29 July 1985 after extensive consultation with Muslim and Jewish groups and this report was carefully studied by the Government before it decided to retain existing legislation exempting Muslims and Jews from the requirement of stunning on religious grounds.

The Union of Muslim Organisations of U.K. & Eire (UMO) which is the representative Body of the British Muslim community presented oral evidence to the Working Party of the Council when it visited the UMO Centre in 1984 and explained that the Zabaha method of slaughter is the most humane which causes the least pain to animals. Subsequently, a UMO delegation met Mrs. Peggy Fanner, then Minister of Agriculture in May 1986 and presented scientific evidence to prove that the Islamic method is most humane. (reported in Daily Telegraph, London -14 May 1986).

It is, therefore, astonishing that the Farm Animal Welfare Council has succumbed to pressure from animal rights groups without realising that stunning actually causes more pain to the animals. Scientific research has revealed that stunning, whether by electric shock or captive bolt, contracts the flexor and extensor muscles simultaneously causing considerable pain which the animal cannot express due to loss of muscular coordination. Secondly, the loss of consciousness after a while could cause the death of the animal and it is practically impossible to detect this fact.

On the other hand, the Zabaha method of slaughter involves the cutting of the neck of animal with a sharp knife at a place where four major blood vessels are found thereby severing the jugular veins and carotid arteries without cutting the spinal cord. This stops the supply of blood to the sensory nerves of the brain and the animal suffers no pain although the heart continues to function and the blood is pumped out by muscular convulsions. This ensures total drainage of blood rendering the meat hygienically pure. Also, the Shari'a requires that ALLAH'S name be mentioned which is soothing to the animal spiritually.

Under the Shari'a, the Muslims are forbidden to eat the meat of a dead animal or to consume blood. The Zabaha method i.e. slaughter without stunning is the only way that the Muslims can consume halal meat. Therefore, we urge the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to uphold the right of British Muslims of exemption from stunning on religious grounds.

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