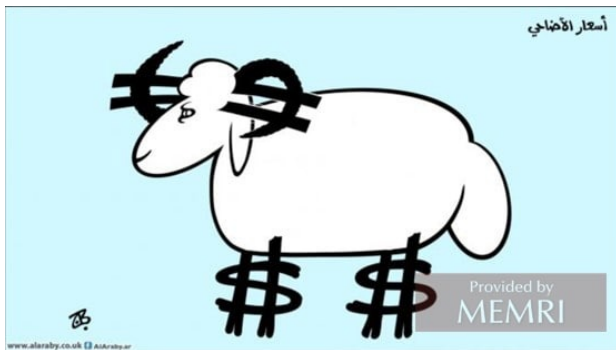


Ahead of Eid Al-Adha, Egyptian Journalist Calls To Adopt Humane Modern Methods Of Slaughtering Livestock

Ahead of the Muslim festival of Eid Al-Adha, Egyptian journalist Refa'at Rashad decried the massive slaughter of sheep and calves for the holiday feast, a practice which, he said, destabilizes the Egyptian meat and dairy market and causes a sharp rise in the price of these commodities. Writing in his column in the Al-Watan daily, he questioned the custom whereby each and every Egyptian is required to ritually sacrifice an animal for the holiday, although many cannot afford to and while Egypt has never managed to achieve self-sufficiency in meat and dairy production.

Rashad also harshly criticized the slaughter methods used in Egypt, which he said are inhumane and cause the animals needless suffering. He called on the clerics and local governors to promote the adoption of modern humane methods of slaughter, so as to spare the animals pain, as Islam commands and as is customary in many countries around the world.



"The price of the [Eid Al-Adha] sacrifices" (alaraby.co.uk, June 27, 2023)

The following are excerpts from his article:[\[1\]](#)

"In a few days we will celebrate Eid Al-Adha, whose name derives from the custom of sacrificing a ram or a sheep, as was done by Abraham, the Father of the Prophets.[\[2\]](#) On this holiday Muslims ritually sacrifice and consume millions of sheep and calves. The slaughter of millions of rams and other livestock has considerable impact on the Egyptian market, [since it causes a shortage] not only of meat but of dairy products... and [thus] a sharp rise in the price of meat. Meat prices indeed rose at an incredible rate this year.

"I wonder why the clerics do not intervene [and call for] legislation regarding [the custom of] sacrifice that will match both the directives of the religion and the interest of the state and the public. Egypt imports huge amounts of meat, and has never achieved self-sufficiency in this context. I saw footage of a speech by the late Egyptian president [Gamal] 'Abd Al-Nasser in which he addressed the Egyptian people, saying: 'You consume meat that comes from China, Ecuador, Brazil and other countries.' This means that the problem of meat supply has been ongoing for a long time. So why don't we adopt a new way of thinking and find a way to meet our own needs [in this domain]? Moreover, in light of the rise in prices, should we stick to the [custom of requiring] every citizen to make a ritual sacrifice, even if he cannot afford to?

"The most painful sight on the day of the sacrifice is that of the sheep and calves being slaughtered, for the slaughterers enjoy torturing the animals. After being concentrated in front of the slaughterhouse, they are tied by the neck, especially the calves, so that they can hardly move their heads. The same thing happens when they are transported in vehicles that are not [properly] equipped. The butcher ties them to the vehicle and they stumble around throughout the trip. The calves are [then] left in front of the slaughterhouse, and in the morning, when the slaughter begins, they see other calves being killed in front of their eyes. This contravenes the principles of the faith and of compassion. If the butcher has 20 calves, they all watch one another being slaughtered.

"Calves and other animals have feelings and experience pain, yet human beings – carrying Allah's mission and trust [i.e., all of Man's duties towards the Creator] – feel no compassion for them and do not pity them, even in their last moments. When a calf is selected for slaughter, the butchers crowd around it to keep it from moving and then grab it and force it to the ground, while it struggles in fear and tries to escape and save its life. Watching this scene is extremely painful.

"Why shouldn't slaughter be performed in a more humane way, which leaves the animal ignorant of the fate awaiting it? I once watched a video filmed by one of the [slaughterers], and saw him bragging about managing to bring down a calf that was trying to escape!! I felt sorry for the calf, who had done nothing wrong except to be the victim of an Egyptian citizen or slaughterer who was not a professional and therefore caused the animals pain.

"We [human beings] boast about being compassionate and having noble humane and religious sensibilities, but I see no evidence of this when it

comes to the sacrifice [of these animals]. Other world countries use modern humane methods of slaughtering livestock, so that the animals, God's creatures, are not aware of their fate and are not filled with fear and terror.

"I charge the religious scholars to find more compassionate ways of making the sacrifice, as the religion instructs [us to do], and charge the local [authorities] to require the slaughterers to operate [suitably] equipped facilities, in order to spare the public the torment of seeing the slaughter and to save the streets from the pools of blood left behind after the slaughter. These are not difficult problems. They can be solved if the clerics in charge and the local governors perform their duty."

[1] *Al-Watan* (Egypt), June 8, 2023.

[2] Eid Al-Adha ("the Feast of Sacrifice") honors the willingness of Ibrahim (Abraham) to sacrifice his son Isma'il, who was replaced at the last moment with a ram.