

FATWA

Consuming of crab, oyster and other shell fish.

Q. I would like to know if any of these things are halaal: crab, sea crab, oyster, chip chip, conce and any other shell fish?

A. Due to the fact that there are no direct/clear out evidences for the allowance/disallowance of the above, the early jurists of Islam have differing opinions regarding these. Imam Hanifa as well as other Imams have upheld the view that besides the fish, all other sea animals are not permissible to consume. Other Imams of Fiqh have stated that all other sea creatures can be eaten. They have used the general meaning of the verse of the Holy Quraan which states, 'And permitted to you is the hunt of the sea'. The Prophet (S.A) has also stated, 'The sea, its water is clean and its carrion is Halaal'.

To this, Imam Abu Hanifa explained that the message of the Quraan is that the act of hunting in the sea is permissible, not necessarily the animal of hunt. The word which is present in the verse is 'hunting' and not 'hunt' (i.e. the hunted animal). Hence, while it is generally permitted to hunt in the sea (i.e. to do the act of fishing), this does not mean that everything which is caught can be eaten.

As for what can be eaten, the Prophet (S.A) highlighted it in a tradition where he said, 'Two types of carrion are lawful for us, they are the locusts and the fish'.

This Hadith goes to show that of all the things which die on its own, (thereby falling into the category of carrion), only two have been made allowable. They are the locusts and the fish.

As such, based upon this Hadith, Imam Abu Hanifah has stated that all those creatures of the sea which may fall into the fish family/category/group will be permissible, while all others will be impermissible. None of the jurists have allowed the land Crab to be consumed.

And Allah knows best.

Mufti Waseem Khan