111827 - Is it permissible to eat mynah birds?

the question

Is it permissible to eat a type of bird that exist in Medina; that has several names ‘Myna’ is its most famous name. It is a brown bird that has a yellow beak, and has a yellow spot around its eyes.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Mynah is the name of several types of birds of the zarzoor (starling) type which are native to India, Burma and other parts of Asia. These birds feed on plants, insects and worms. Al-Mawsoo’ah al-Arabiyyah al-‘Aalamiyyah.

It is permissible to eat this kind of bird because there is nothing to indicate that it is haram. That is because the basic principle is that all birds are halaal, because Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say (O Muhammad): I find not in that which has been revealed to me anything forbidden to be eaten by one who wishes to eat it, unless it be Maytah (a dead animal) or blood poured forth (by slaughtering or the like), or the flesh of swine (pork); for that surely, is impure or impious (unlawful) meat (of an animal) which is slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allah (or has been slaughtered for idols, or on which Allah’s Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering). But whosoever is forced by necessity without wilful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits; (for him) certainly, your Lord is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful” [al-An’aam 6:145].

Excluded from that is that for which there is evidence that it is haram; and based on the evidence there are four such types:

(i)

Birds which have talons with which they catch prey, because of the report narrated by Muslim (1934) from Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade every wild animal with fangs and every bird with talons.

It says in Zaad al-Mustaqni’: That which has talons with which it catches prey.

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said: What is meant by talons here is not the thing [spur] that protrudes from the leg of the rooster; that is a talon but it does not catch prey with it. End quote from al-Sharh al-Mumti’ (15/20).

(ii)

That which eats carrion, such as vultures and speckled crows.

It says in al-Mawsoo’ah al-Fiqhiyyah al-Kuwaitiyyah (5/135): The Hanafis, Shaafa’is and Hanbalis are agreed that it is haram to eat large black crows and speckled crows, which are both types that usually eat only carrion, so they are abhorrent to those of a sound nature. This type also include vultures, because they only eat carrion, even though they do not have talons with which they catch prey. End quote.

(iii)

That which is off-putting, such as bats. There is a difference of opinion among the scholars as to what constitutes off-putting, which there is no room to discuss here.

(iv)

That which it is forbidden to kill, such as hoopoes, because of the report narrated by Abu Dawood (5267) and Ibn Majaah (3224) from Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade killing four kinds of animals: ants, bees, hoopoes and sparrow-hawks. Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi

Dawood.

Everything apart from that is permissible in principle.

The fact that this bird is sometimes called a crow does not matter. Many of the fuqaha' regarded farm crows as permissible, and gave as the reason for that the fact that they do not eat carrion.

It says in al-Majmoo' (9/26): We have mentioned our view concerning farm crows and ravens. Maalik, Abu Haneefah and Ahmad (may Allah have mercy on them) stated that they are permissible. End quote.

Al-Mardaawi said in al-Insaaf (9/364): His words "and farm crows" mean that they are permissible. This is our view and the view of our companions.

Note; farm crows have red beaks and feet. Or it was said that farm crows are large and black. End quote.

Ibn Qudaamah (may Allah be pleased with him) indicated the guideline on this issue by saying: Everything that does not catch prey with its talons and does not eat carrion and is not off-putting, is halaal. End quote from al-Mughni (9/329).

Thus it is clear that Mynah birds are among those that it is permissible to eat.

And Allah knows best.