

HALAAL FRIENDLY – FRIENDLY AS FRIENDLY FIRE

It is a standing miracle of Almighty Allah that He has made man from the lowly origins of dust from a single set of parents into tribes and nations that are spread all over the world. The world population today is 7 billion people of which 1, 6 billion are Muslims.

And if you reflect further on the marvels of this then one can't help but be in awe that Allah Ta'ala gifted humans the intellectual capacity to speak different languages, a power given only to man. Animals don't have this privilege and therefore a bark of a dog, a bird's song, a bull's bellow, a cricket's chirp or a frog's croak has remained the same on every continent over the ages.

It is stated in the Glorious Quraan ***“And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colours: verily in that are Signs for those who know.”*** (Surah 30 Verse 22)

There are 6500 languages in use in the world today amongst which English features very highly. It's a global ***lingua franca***, an official language in 60 countries and spoken by about one billion people. All languages have their own structures, semantics, pragmatics, rules of grammar, pronunciations, idiosyncrasies etc. From the English lexicon, we get the term euphemism which is the deliberate substitution of a mild or indirect expression for one considered offensive, blunt or hurtful, especially one concerning religion or death.

The military together with politicians are particularly adroit at employing euphemisms. Take the expression friendly fire, which is anything but friendly, as it entails the killing of one's own troops. How demoralising would it be for the families, friends and of the unit of the servicemen if the incident was expressed truthfully in its stark shocking reality with headlines screaming of death by the very army and country that the soldier enlisted to fight for. This murder or culpable homicide is couched in words such as “troops lay down lives in friendly fire incident” which is far more palatable to digest and making it easier to manage public opinion.

Similar proficiency and dexterity is shown by the euphemistic use of the term “collateral damage” to minimise the impact of innocent civilians killed by the military. It assuages the naked truth of the lives of

men, women and children who have no part in a conflict being cruelly exterminated.

Let's examine the term ***“Halaal Friendly”***:

1. There is absolutely no such thing as Halaal friendly. An outlet is either Halaal through compliance with the Shariah requirements or it is not.

2. Halaal friendly in fact suggests that the establishment has been unable to meet the requirements of Halaal. It would invariably be a facility that uses non-Halaal and Halaal ingredients/products at the same premises. Haraam cannot be precluded from this as there is the possibility of the presence of alcohol and pork products.

3. The euphemism has been coined by establishments that are generally not exclusively Halaal yet they are desirous of attracting the Muslim consumer. They are aware that consuming Halaal for the Muslim is a mandatory article of faith yet make these claims to fool and mislead those who aren't particularly careful.

4. The motive is purely commercial gain and not altruism as Muslims make up one fifth of mankind. The absence of similar terminology such as ***“Christian friendly, kosher friendly, Shudda friendly, vegan friendly etc.”*** is indicative of the veracity of these statements.

5. It serves as a subtle upfront precautionary disclaimer in the event of items not meeting the Halaal standard i.e. ***“We said Halaal Friendly not Halaal.”*** Over the years we have seen this excuse surface when these Halaal friendly outlets were found to be frying eggs on the same griddle as bacon; toasted cheese and tomato sandwiches being sliced with the same knife that had just cut through a ham and egg sandwich; personnel in the preparation areas handling Haraam and Halaal on the same chopping board; contamination with use of same utensils and equipment for both, etc.

Don't be fooled by the euphemism ***“Halaal friendly”***. The effect on your spiritual wellbeing and salvation could be just as deadly and devastating as friendly fire and collateral damage.

Halaal Friendly is anything but friendly – don't put your Imaan in the firing line.