

A FRIEND IN KNEAD IS A FRIEND INDEED

In the last 48 hours a serious allegation has been circulating on social media. It alleges that a non-Muslim owned bakery certified as Halaal, has no Muslim supervision and was willing to bake a birthday cake with an image of a brand of alcohol on edible paper as well as utilising the alcohol itself. This has prompted queries on SANHA's position in this matter.

SANHA cannot and will not comment on the specific allegation, its veracity, method of obtaining the information and processes followed in making claims of Halaal as it neither certifies the outlet nor accredited any other body or persons to grant such approval. It will not prescribe to those who accept such alleged standards.

For our legion of members, subscribers and supporters we certainly can comment on the complexities and challenges faced on the certification of bakery outlets which is regarded amongst the most critical areas of Halaal certification. In fact we go further and aver that outlets which are not certified/approved should be avoided as they fall within the category of mushtabihāt (doubtful areas) for the following very important reasons:-

- Ingredients/premixes used may contain improvers such as l-cysteine which is commonly derived from human hair.
- Pan greases may not be Halaal compliant.
- Possible use of animal fats, such as lard, for glazing or greasing purposes. Expert bakers report that the best fat to give "browning" and a crispy crust to bread is lard. Lard is rendered pig fat which has excellent flaking property and is the ideal ingredient for pastries. The huge advantage lard has is that it is comparatively cheap since pork has excess fat and is the world's most produced meat. Of course, the pig is labelled by Shari'ah as 'najisul ain' i.e. a core

impurity and thus its usage must be avoided by Muslims.

- Contamination with Haraam (non-Halaal) meat products in storage, handling, preparation and processing is highly possible. This includes staff bringing in non- Halaal food in the processing area.
- Natural basting brushes used in bakeries are commonly manufactured using pig hair. Even the argument of a kosher approval of the brushes cannot justify its use as Jewish law permits use of pig hair while in terms of Shar'iah law the entire animal and all by products are Haraam.
- Possible use of brandy, sherry and other alcohol etc. in certain confectionery products.
- Gelatine derived from non-Halaal slaughtered animals is sometimes used as a stabiliser and aerating agent in mousses, cheesecakes, and in fresh and sour creams that are used by bakeries. Around half of the US\$2.7bn-worth of gelatine produced last year was from pigs.
- Some colourants, such as carmine,- also known as - E120, carminic acid, CI 75470, natural red 4 and crimson lake are derived from the crushing of the female cochineal beetle insect and their babies (nymphs) is not permitted.

The perfect Exemplar to mankind, our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated, "*The Halaal is clear and the Haraam is clear; in between these two there are doubtful matters concerning which people do not know (whether they are Halaal or Haraam). One who avoids them, in order to safeguard his religion and his honour, is safe. Anyone who gets involved in any of these doubtful items, may fall into the Haraam*".

DON'T GO OFF HALF-BAKED WHEN IT COMES TO OUR IMAAN.

Further reading:

Selecting Your Halaal Certifying Body - [click here](#)