



Labelling and the Conspiracy Theory

Conspiracy theories serve the interests of diverse fringe groups in politics, religion, military, etc. Driven by firm belief or malicious intent, it projects opponents as elitists and blames them for economic and social catastrophes, on the assumption that things will be better once popular action can remove them from positions of power. Their *modus operandi* is of demonising enemies as part of an insidious plot against the common good and a wider truth whilst elevating themselves as heroes for sounding the alarm.

The slightest sliver of truth is manipulated to enable it to thrive in the realm of myth, where imaginations run wild, fears trump facts, and evidence is ignored. Scores of this type of theories are in existence and still fuelled today. A few of them are that the moon landings were an elaborate hoax, American President John F. Kennedy was assassinated by organized crime or by Fidel Castro of Cuba, aliens from outer space crash landed in California, HIV Aids was created as a tool for genocide and a means for population control, Hitler never died in the bunker, Elvis Presley is still alive today and the Indian Ocean Tsunami was caused by an underground nuclear explosion by the United States etc.

Having failed to derail SANHA's steady progress of service to the community, the denizens of extremism, the Majlis and the Shariah tabloids, Scholars of the Truth, SA Muslims together with their cohorts are now attempting to incite the public by seizing on human errors in the labelling of products and elevating it into a conspiracy theory. The extremist axis are milking the labelling errors to its fullest with the falsehood that this was a "*scheme to neutralise Muslim inhibition to Haraam meat*" and "logical consequences" of this is the labelling of actual pork as Halaal. And to ramp up this despicable scheme they even throw in the fear factor in their ranting that "*even if Hadhrat Jibrael (alayhis salaam) had to come and testify, the inordinate bestial craving for the carrion filth and rot to which many Muslims have become addicted, will constrain them to ignore this.*"

That there were labeling errors has never been denied. What the miscreants usually do is to try and drown out any honest review of the facts with a deafening cacophony of negative smear campaigning. Wendy Knowler, the award-winning consumer journalist and

activist cites the mantra, "*as always companies ought to be judged not by their mistakes but how they choose to take responsibility for them.*" Here is a review of the facts;

1. It is estimated that SANHA's certification of 1100 licencees covers an aggregate of 45000 product items. The use of the SANHA mark is governed by a legally binding contractual agreement which precludes the use of our logo on products with a Haraam connotation notwithstanding the fact that they contain all Halaal ingredients.

2. In SANHA's fourteen years of existence there have been a mere seven instances of labelling errors we can recall where our logo was appended on rum and raisin ice cream and yoghurts, a spice blend for pork, a casino brand's bottled water, on a coffee shop menu that had names of alcoholic drinks, on a Steers advert showing a pork item and a ham flavoured cottage cheese. Click here to view article

3. In every one of these instances no fraudulent or malicious intent was in play, no pork or alcohol ingredient was ever used and consequently never consumed.

4. Corrective action in the form of written apologies, removal and destruction of the offensive packaging, blanking out of our logo and monitoring of the situation to sell out stage was undertaken.

5. Although the Muslim community is generally vigilant and does not intentionally seek out products with Haraam connotations, we informed them of these errors specifically and through general educational information via the media and notification to our membership and subscribers.

Whilst these occasional labeling errors were disconcerting, they were harmless and a reflection of human nature. A sage said, "*to err is inherent in humans, that is why every pencil has an eraser attached to it.*" Unfortunately, in stark contrast to this, the vengeful eye of anger of our detractors see nothing but a conspiracy under every label. Our Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "*verily, I fear most for my Ummah, such aimmah (Leaders) who lead my Ummah astray.*"

"Always verify & clarify before you amplify..."