HANDLING OF CRISIS COMMUNICATION: A CASE STUDY OF CADBURY
PORCINE DNA ROW

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Prologue

It was 10 p.m., 24th May 2014. Raja Zalina has just returned from her business trip to Paris. The luggage was still left unpacked at the corner of her bedroom. She was sitting on a couch, scrolling through the list of unread messages on her phone. During one week stay in Paris, she was occupied with several client meetings. Raja Zalina has been the Head of Corporate and Government Affairs at Mondelēz International (Mondelēz) for more than ten years. At Mondelēz, Raja Zalina’s task was to ensure effective communication was implemented in the branding and commercialisation of its products with every member of the stakeholders, including the public. Mondelēz was renowned for its delicious snacks and legendary brands names. They emphasised good values and quality products for customers worldwide.

Getting the company’s products into the market and were sustainable for consumer was among the main tasks that Raja Zalina had to deal with. In Malaysia, Mondelēz guaranteed all of its products were certified halal by Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM or Department of Islamic Development Malaysia). Raja Zalina ensured that all the documentations were in order, and regularly consulted JAKIM for any new issues arising out from new recipe or formulation in the company’s products. When the company decided to go for Halal certification, Raja Zalina studied the details how the manufacturing process would be aligned to comply with the Manual Procedure for Malaysia Halal Certification. It did not take long for them to get the products certified since the quality and assurance control system has been in place for many years.
There were 30 conversations received while she was on board. The list was long as she got really tired reading them through. “URGENT!!! PLEASE CALL ME BACK” a message on WhatsApp from Azmira, her Internal Communication Executive caught her eye. Raja Zalina knew her very well that she would not text her with such phrases unless it was extremely important. It was kind of annoying since she thought of taking a good sleep that night.

Mondelēz International Company

Mondelēz Malaysia is a part of the Mondelēz International group of companies. It is widely known as one of Malaysia’s favourite snacking companies which have been trusted by local consumers for their quality, safety and taste. The products and all the brands produced have been certified Halal by JAKIM. The company focuses on creating delicious moments of joy whenever and wherever the products were consumed. Mondelēz promotes indulgence and comforting, wholesome and nourishing as core values in its food products to ensure the sustainability of the brands for the communities and the world. Mondelēz took a practical approach that the company should serve the foods that fit the way people eat today and to bring joy to those small eating moments. Besides, the varieties of products allowed better choices for the families by creating new solutions and improving the company portfolio’s nutrition profile.

As one of the largest snack companies, Mondelēz took responsibility on nutrition of three distinct areas. First, it aimed at improving nutrition profile current portfolio, by setting global targets to reduce sodium and saturated fat and increasing whole grains. Second, the company gave greater focus on the control by offering individually wrapped products with 200 calories or less; to help consumers managed calories and be mindful of portions. Lastly, Mondelēz believed in varieties and choices. The range of products offered by the company provides better choice than the existing brands especially when Mondelēz had a strict regulation on nutrition criteria.

Safety of People and Products

Responsible growth of Mondelēz depends on support of its employees and guarantee of safe food sold to consumers. Mondelēz worked tirelessly to achieve world-class safety standards for the foods they sold and the environment in which the employees work. As a multinational
confectionary company, Mondelēz was responsible for local market and a part of the market operating abroad. In sum, the company’s success relies chiefly on the trust of the consumers and customers. A strong emphasis was given to food safety and quality system for our ingredients and products. Mondelēz engaged closely with its stakeholders, including colleagues, consumers, customers, and regulators and paid attention to needs of improving regulatory compliance and meeting market demand.

**Chocolate Products**

Cadbury was founded in 1824 when John Cadbury opened a grocer’s shop at 93 Bull Street, Birmingham, England. Among other things, he sold cocoa and drinking chocolate, which he prepared himself using a pestle and mortar. The brand offered a host of delicious chocolates and drinks, including the Cadbury Egg, Cadbury Dairy Milk chocolates, Flake, Wispa, Twirl and Eclairs chocolates and Cadbury Bourneville drinking chocolate.

**Figuring It Out**

On 23rd May 2014, photos of confidential, unverified lab test report dated 27th February 2014 showing the two batches in Cadbury dairy products; Cadbury Dairy Milk Hazelnut 175g with batch number 200813M01H I2 (expired on 3rd November 2014) and Cadbury Dairy Milk Roast Almond Batch 175g with batch number 221013N01R I1 (expired on 15th January 2015) were tested positive for porcine DNA went viral on WhatsApp (Picture 1). On 24th May 2014, the Ministry of Health confirmed that the report was issued by one of its laboratories and the affected batches were tainted. There were mounting queries from the Muslims about the halal status of the products across various social media sites, largely contesting the integrity of company as Halal certificate holder and the credibility of JAKIM in issuing the certificate to the company’s products.
On 24\textsuperscript{th} May 2017, JAKIM made an immediate press release that they would conduct a comprehensive investigation on other samples of the same batches taken from Cadbury factory to ensure whether there was non-compliance with the certification requirements and to determine the root cause behind the product’s cross-contamination (Appendix 1). JAKIM has also decided that halal certification to the affected batches were suspended pending investigation.

Cadbury proactively recalled the affected batches from the shelves. In its official Facebook page (www.facebook.com/CadburyMalaysia), Cadbury published its undertaking to conduct a full review of the production line of its products to ensure all safety and quality standards were met. Cadbury also reassured that all chocolates manufactured in Malaysia are certified Halal by JAKIM (Appendix 2). Amid the product recalls and press releases, widespread fears of the tainted products and rumours among the public had escalated on Facebook and various social media platforms. Some called for nationwide boycott on the Cadbury’s products that all its factories should cease operation. Others even urged the product to go ‘into waste’ and wanted Cadbury to be responsible to wash away the tainted blood in their veins. Several non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were contemplating over the possibility of taking a joint lawsuit against Cadbury for RM100 million (see Picture 2).
Picture 2: Lawsuit against Cadbury by NGOs for RM100 Million

Cadbury Chocolate – Utter Chaos

Following the leaked photos of confidential report made by Ministry of Health’s laboratory on two batches of Cadbury’s Hazelnut and Roasted Almond chocolates tainted with porcine DNA on WhatsApp on 23th May 2014, over hundreds of overreactions to the report was found in the newspaper and various social media sites. However, the report was not verified by JAKIM. Sahabat Halal lodged a complaint to JAKIM against the dubious laboratory report. Through a first press release dated 24th May 2014, Ministry of Health confirmed the finding of the viral laboratory report. However, neither JAKIM nor Mondelēz representative was present. JAKIM suspended Halal certification to the affected batches with immediate effect and took other samples from Cadbury’s factory its products and the entire production line for further investigation and test, including the DNA analysis.

On 25th May 2014, an inter-agency meeting was held between JAKIM, the Ministry of Health, the Department of Chemistry and the Department of Standards Malaysia to discuss on the handling of Cadbury controversy. The Ministry of Health in another press release on 26th May 2016 stated that the Halal certification issue will be handed over to JAKIM. The Ministry also emphasised that its regulatory control over food products was confined to the safety and labelling aspects under the Food Act 1983 and Food Regulations 1985. Press releases, one after another, did not do much to reduce confusion and misperception of the public as to the Halal status of the alleged Cadbury’s tainted chocolates.
In fact, the Director of JAKIM urged a primary discussion between the MOH and JAKIM prior to the announcements (see Picture 3) since the announcement was further descended into more chaos when several other NGOs, like Allied Coordinating Committee of Islamic NGOs (ACCIN) and Jaringan Melayu Malaysia (JMM or Malaysia Malay Network). Following the announcement, the NGOs urged the Cadbury to pay the cost of ‘cleansing’ blood for Muslims who had consumed the chocolate before (Appendix 3). It was posted on 30th May 2014 when the Allied Coordinating Committee of Islamic NGOs demanded that Cadbury bear the cost of blood exchange transfusions for Muslims who had consumed the chocolate prior to the aforementioned exposure. In addition, there were those who suggested that they rinse their mouths with soil water (as an analogy to the cleansing practice decreed by a minority of scholars for the contact of human skin with pigs).

Mondelēz chose to remain silence whilst the matter was under investigation by the authorities. Raja Zalina at all times gave full cooperation to ensure the investigation was conducted in most transparent manner. Mondelēz had voluntarily recalled its products from shelves all over Malaysia after the traces of porcine DNA were found during a routine check for non-halal substances. Nonetheless, the recall failed to satisfy the consumers. Mondelēz continued to be the target of consumer boycotts nationwide, predominantly coming from leading Muslim non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The president of Muslim Consumers Association of Malaysia urged Cadbury to shut down its factories and beseeched Muslims to boycott its products (Appendix 4).
Some claims were also targeting the staff for their involvements in Haram business. As part of the company’s policy and regulatory compliance, Raja Zalina always ensure that the staffs, where 80% of them were Malay, work in a safe and healthy environment and continued to serve Mondelēz’s daily operation. Within ten days of chaos, the company’s worldwide market sales had dropped unexpectedly and lost around USD 37 million. Raja Zalina heard that the management was considering to relocate the factory to another country after having the persistent public condemnation at large against all Cadbury related products.

Mondelēz took the public sentiments seriously, but the heightened coverage by mainstream media and social media worried Raja Zalina most. Raja Zalina gave full cooperation to the authorities wherever necessary. “We cannot do much, Azmira. Let JAKIM do their work. We provide every information as much as we can to facilitate the investigation” said Raja Zalina to Azmira. Azmira agreed and understood how much Raja Zalina cared about the customers’ trust to Cadbury as the company’s global brand. Having over 100 years of visibility in confectionary market worldwide, Cadbury’s commitment is to never compromise on safety, compliance and quality of its Halal certified products. Azmira was contemplating to consult Ustaz Zainol, the officer in charge of Certification Department at Halal Hub Division, JAKIM. JAKIM must have a say on this issue.

Epilogue

At 5 p.m., 24th May 2014, Raja Zalina received a phone call from JAKIM. She asked her two executives to get all possible sources of information from the viral WhatsApp screenshot. Mondelēz made its best effort to assist JAKIM and the Ministry of Health to resolve the controversy in a professional manner. Raja Zalina was pondering what the next remedial measure are for Mondelēz looking to recover the financial, image and reputation damage. Raja Zalina stood up at the wall of her office looking out over to the bustling city of Damansara. “Ya Allah, what should I do.”
JAKIM suspends ‘halal’ certification of two Cadbury products
BY RAHMAH GHAZALI

PETALING JAYA: Malaysian Department of Islamic Development (JAKIM) has suspended the halal certification of two Cadbury chocolate products that were found to contain porcine DNA.

“We will conduct a thorough investigation to determine the cause behind the product’s contamination,” said JAKIM director-general Datuk Othman Mustapha in a statement Saturday.

Earlier Saturday, the Health Ministry had confirmed that porcine DNA was found in Cadbury Dairy Hazelnut and Cadbury Dairy Milk Roast Almond, following a rumour on social media alleging the products contained non-halal elements.

The samples from two types of chocolate out of three analysed tested positive for porcine DNA.

They were Cadbury Dairy Milk Hazelnut, with batch number 200813M01H I2 that expires on Nov 13, 2014 and Cadbury Dairy Milk Roast Almond, with batch number 221013N01R I1, that expires on Jan 15, 2015.

The third sample of Cadbury Dairy Milk Chocolate did not contain any non-halal element. However, Othman said the latest periodical checks on the product manufacturer on Feb 20 has shown that the products complied with halal's certification standard after going through a stringent procedure.

“We would like to emphasise that the halal certification process involves rigorous auditing and inspection which includes an assessment of the ingredients, processing methods and equipment used.

“This process is based on Malaysian Halal standards and Malaysian Halal certification manual procedures. After the halal certificate is released, the certificate holder is bound to these periodical checks,” he explained.

He also assured the public not to be too worried with the use of “halal” logo as the department conducts constant monitoring. “If there is any breach or non-compliance with the certification requirements, JAKIM will suspend or revoke their halal certification immediately,” said Othman.
KEMENTERIAN KESIHATAN MALAYSIA
KENYATAAN AKHBAR
PENGESANAN DNA PORCINE DALAM COKLAT SUSU DENGAN KACANG HAZEL – CADBURY DAIRY MILK

Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) ingin memaklumkan tindakan selanjutnya berhubung isu pengesan DNA khunor (porcine) dalam produk Coklat Susu dengan Kacang Hazel – Cadbury Dairy Milk Hazelnut dengan nomor kelompok (batch no) 200813MB1H (yang berlaku hingga 13 November 2014) dan Coklat Susu dengan Bush Badam - Cadbury Dairy Milk Road Almond dengan nomor kelompok (batch no) 221013N011 I1 yang berlaku hingga 15 Januari 2015 yang dilaporkan sebelum ini.

Dalam hal ini KKM ingin memaklumkan bahawa semua ususan yang berkaitan dengan penjualan halal akan tenas dijalankan oleh Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM). Manakala KKM akan tenas menjalankan pemantauan berdasarkan kepada kuasa di bawah Akta Makanan 1983 dan peraturan-peraturan di bawahnya.

Akta Makanan 1983 dan Peraturan-Peraturan Makanan 1985 adalah berlaku untuk melindungi orang awam daripada bahaya yang datang daripada perkara-perkara berbahaya yang tidak sesuai. Label makanan amat penting kepada pengguna kerana ia membolehkan pengguna membuat pemilihan makanan yang bermaklumat.

Peruntukan pelabelan yang berkaitan dengan perkara tersebut di bawah Peraturan-Peraturan Makanan 1985 adalah seperti berikut:

i) Peraturan 11(1)(c) menghendaki produk makanan yang mengandungi daging lumbu atau daging babi atau terbabitnya dibebaskan dalam bentuk seperti "MENGANDUNGI (nyatakan sama ada daging lumbu atau daging babi atau terbabitnya atau lemak babi atau mengikut mana yang berkhasiat)".

ii) Peraturan 11(3) menyebutkan nama biasa haiwan dibebaskan jika makanan tersebut mengandungi minyak makan atau lemak makan dari haiwan; dan

iii) Peraturan 11(3) memerlukan nama biasa haiwan dibebaskan jika ramuan makanan atau aditif makanan adalah dari sumber haiwan.

KKM ingin mengesahkan pihak industri dan juga penginput supaya bertanggungjawab untuk memastikan semua produk keluaran dan yang disimpan mematuhi Akta Makanan 1983 dan peraturan-peraturan di bawahnya.

KKM akan meningkatkan pemantauan dan penguatkuasaan terhadap penutupan dan pengawalan prodak dan pelabelan serta kebersihan makanan seperti mana yang diatur dalam Akta Makanan 1983 dan peraturan-peraturan di bawahnya.

Dalam hal ini, adalah menjadi tanggungjawab pengguna untuk membaca label makanan supaya dapat membuat pilihan yang berkhasiat. Sebaliknya orang awam mempunyai sebarang persoalan, boleh mengumumkannya kepada KKM melalui tanan web Bahagian Keselamatan dan Kualiti Makanan (BOKM)


DATUK SERI DR. S. SUBIRAMANIAM
MENTERI KESIHATAN MALAYSIA

26 Mei 2014

25th May 2014

We at Cadbury Malaysia understand that customers are disappointed to hear of the news on the recent test by the Ministry of Health on two of our products. We hear you and we value your comments and feedback over this issue.

We understand how important Halal is to the Muslim community. It is also of the highest importance to us here at Cadbury. Ensuring that all our products made here in Malaysia are Halal is something we take very seriously. Since our first learning of this, we have been actively engaging with the concerned authorities to investigate the issue with the highest urgency.

Meanwhile, we are withdrawing all impacted Cadbury Dairy Milk Hazelnut (with batch number 200813M01H I2 that expires on Nov 13, 2014) and Cadbury Dairy Milk Roast Almond (with batch number 221013N01R I1 that expires on Jan 15, 2015) immediately.

We would also like to reassure you that all other products made in Malaysia are not impacted by this test. We greatly appreciate your patience as we work through this matter.
Muslims Declare Jihad against Cadbury Over Pork In Its Chocolate, Demand Cadbury Pay for Blood Transfusions

By Pamela Geller - on May 30, 2014

When have we even seen Muslims explode (if you’ll pardon the expression) with this kind of rage over the jihad terrorists who supposedly twist and hijack their religion?


Lately, the Malaysian populace, specifically Muslim Malays, were taken aback by the detection of porcine DNA by the Ministry of Health in two products by the chocolate manufacturer Cadbury.

Following the incident, JAKIM (the supreme authority on Islamic affairs in the country) suspended with immediate effect the halal certificates for the chocolate bars Dairy Milk Hazelnut and Dairy Milk Roast Almond.

It has stirred anger amongst Malaysian Muslims, as they are of the perception that their trust in Cadbury to market halal products has been betrayed.

The widespread displeasure in the company has resulted in a multitude of criticisms and negative reactions. Most recently, an organisation claiming to collectively represent Islamic NGOs in Malaysia declared jihad against the company.

In a press conference in Kuala Lumpur, the president of Pertubuhan Kebajikan Darul Islah Malaysia (a welfare body) called for holy war against Cadbury for their alleged attempts to ‘weaken’ the Muslim community in Malaysia.

Meanwhile, the Allied Coordinating Committee of Islamic NGOs demanded that Cadbury bear the cost of blood exchange transfusions for Muslims who had consumed the chocolate prior to the aforementioned exposure.

In addition, there were those who suggested that they rinse their mouths with soil water (as an analogy to the cleansing practice decreed by a minority of scholars for the contact of human skin with pigs).

Furthermore, the president of Persatuan Pengguna Islam Malaysia (the Muslim Consumer Association of Malaysia) urged Cadbury to shut down its factories and beseeched Muslims to boycott its products. Even more extreme were those who proposed that the factories be burned down altogether.

It is most certainly decreed in Islam that pigs and products thereof are forbidden for consumption by Muslims; Cadbury Malaysia was clearly in the wrong to have used porcine elements in their confection, in light of this fact.
This move, which circumstantially involved false advertising, deservedly drew enormous surprise from the nation's adherents of the Islamic faith.

However, the over-reaction in this circumstance has made it appear as if Muslims are excessively sensitive in matters of accidental consumption, to the point that other, more pressing injustices (such as gambling, corruption, the imbibing of alcohol, adultery, and the throwing away of babies) have been overshadowed.

The effect is doubly sordid when common sense says that those who commit sin without knowing, surely cannot be blamed….

Below is background about the halal certification scam. Note how Muslim groups are shaking down Australian companies for money for unnecessary halal certification. Another concern is with halal meat entering the marketplace without having to be labelled as such. This is an issue for many groups, including those Christians who believe that the Christian Bible prohibits the consumption of meat sacrificed to idols; many Christians would view halal meat as meeting that definition, since in halal slaughter, an imam offers the animal up as a sacrifice to Allah. Others object to halal because of concern about the jihad links of some organizations that provide halal certification, such as the Hamas-linked Islamic Society of North America (ISNA).

According to Sikh teachings, it is a grave sin (out of 4 grave sins) to eat Halal food. So, according to my Sikh colleague Avneet, if a restaurant hides this then it is a violation for observing Sikhs. They should be given notice, at the very least.

Before Thanksgiving 2011, I broke the story that the turkeys Butterball were selling were halal but not labeled as such. Heads were exploding on the left, ‘Geller’s turkey jihad and such’ (e.g. here, here) — but I was right, sales plummeted, and Butterball stopped that practice by Thanksgiving the following year.

“CADBURY COPS A JIHAD,” The Pickering Post, May 29, 2014 (thanks to Kenneth):

It was first reported in the US this week that Cadbury is in real trouble with its export market. After having paid the Indonesian Halal Certification mob the correct protection money, the Malaysian Health Ministry has found traces of pork DNA in its products. All hell has broken loose.

Now I understand that porcine fat is used in many foods, including chocolate and ice cream, where a smooth “texture” is needed but poor Cadbury (which is very quiet about its certification) is copping it from all Islamic quarters. Cadbury has agreed to recall all pork “tainted” items from stores overseas, a massive undertaking amid cries of foul play. More than 20 Muslim groups have called for a boycott on all Cadbury’s products, saying that a holy war needs to be waged against the confectionary giant for attempting to “weaken” Muslims.

At a news conference called to announce the boycotts an hysterical Malay woman yelled, “Will Cadbury wash away the tainted blood in our veins? I want to wash away the tainted blood of my children who have consumed the chocolates… how will money even compensate for that?” Perkasa Selangor chief, Abu Bakar Yahya told reporters: “They (Cadbury) have betrayed us Muslims by putting ‘haram’ elements through the foods we consume in our body, to weaken us Muslims.

“That is why Muslims are weak, divided… because the person eats pork it is difficult to guide him to the right path. “When the day of judgement comes, that person will be wearing a pig-face because of what he has eaten. We need to unite, we must declare jihad!”
We could be in for some fun and games here because all Australian halal certified food manufacturers use pig fat in at least some items. Certifiers here and in Indonesia couldn’t give a damn about compliance, they are too busy warring over the lucrative halal scam estimated to be worth almost $1 trillion world-wide.

But Islamic consumers are now likely to turn on the certifiers who say they conduct a vigorous compliance regime on all food chains… they don’t, they never have. They just collect the money. The Indonesian Council of Ulama, MUI, (which also orders Fatwa rulings) is a Mafia style body that runs the certifying protection racket throughout much of Asia, forcing Australian companies to pay outrageous amounts (up to $30,000) to have their food certified as halal. But MUI has opposition, “Australian Halal Food Services” (AHFS) and this mob has been undercutting MUI. Now MUI is banning Australian export of all foods, including meat, from Australian companies found dealing with AHFS. As a result many Aussie companies have removed the halal logo from their products but still pay the protection money.

It’s almost impossible to get any company to discuss what’s going on, and for good reason. When asked to comment, the Dept of Trade said, “The Australian Government values our close relationship with MUI and will continue to work together with them to overcome issues that affect mutually beneficial trade…”. Hmmm.
Boikot semua produk Cadbury

MUHAMMAD SHAMSUL ABD GHANI
27 MEI 2014

Datuk Nadzim Johan bercakap pada sidang media di ibu negara, hari ini. - Foto Sinar Harian oleh YUSRIZAL YUSUF

KUALA LUMPUR - [VIDEO] Persatuan Pengguna Islam Malaysia (PPIM) hari ini menggesa seluruh pengguna supaya memboikot keseluruhan produk keluaran Cadbury Confectionery Malaysia Sdn Bhd bagi memberi pengajaran kepada syarikat tersebut.

Presidennya Datuk Nadzim Johan berkata, sudah terlalu lama pengguna di Malaysia tertipu dengan 'kehalalan' produk tersebut, oleh itu tindakan memboikot secara keras perlu dilakukan.

"Kita sebagai pengguna bukan sahaja perlu memboikot dua produk Cadbury tersebut, malah keseluruhan produk keluaran syarikat itu.

"Biar sejarah tercipta, supaya ianya dapat memberi pengajaran kepada syarikat lain, baru mereka tahu kuasa pengguna," katanya ketika sidang media yang diadakan di Villa Puteri, di ibu negara hari ini.

Menyentuh perkara yang sama, Nadzim turut menggesa supaya JAKIM bertindak lebih bertegas dalam soal yang melibatkan kemaslahatan pengguna.

"JAKIM jangan terlalu berlembut, biar nampak ketegasan dalam bertindak."
"Kita sudah terlalu lama berbaik dalam hal ini saya juga mencadangkan agar JAKIM membuat semakan sijil halal dua bulan sekali kepada semua syarikat yang telah mendapat sijil halal daripada JAKIM, ini supaya bagi memastikan supaya syarikat itu, menjaga status halal yang mereka perolehi," jelasnya.

Isu memboikot syarikat Cadbury ini timbul apabila dua sampel coklat keluaran syarikat itu dilaporkan mengandungi DNA khinzir ialah Cadbury Coklat Susu dengan Kacang Hazel (nomor kelompok 200813M01H12) dan Cadbury Coklat Susu dengan Buah Badam (nomor kelompok 221013N01RI1).

Selain itu semalam, Jaringan Melayu Malaysia (JMM) bersama 80 NGO akan bertindak memfailkan saman ke atas syarikat Cadbury.

Presiden JMM, Azwanddin Hamzah berkata, tindakan saman itu bagi menuntut kerugian dan penipuan yang dilakukan syarikat tersebut kepada pengguna Islam.

"Kami akan memfailkan saman ini dan menganggarkan jumlah tuntutan sebanyak RM100 juta," katanya.


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