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Burger King apologises to Hindus for offensive ad

Press Trust of India, Thursday July 9, 2009, Washington

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Burger King, which runs a global chain of hamburger fast food restaurants in more than 70 countries, has apologised for running an advertisement in Spain that offended the Hindus.

"We are apologising because it wasn't our intent to offend anyone," Denise T Wilson, spokesman of Burger King said in an email when asked about the demand of the Hindu community that the company need to apologise for running an advertisement which its leaders said were offensive to their religion.

"Burger King Corporation (BKC) values and respects all of its guests as well as the communities we serve. This in-store advertisement was running to support only local promotion for three restaurants in Spain and was not intended to offend anyone," Wilson said.

"Out of respect for the Hindu community, the limited-time advertisement has been removed from the restaurants," Wilson said a day after the Hindu American Foundation (HAF) in a statement asked Burger King to remove the offensive advertisement.

The Foundation in a statement said on Wednesday that the Burger King is running a print advertisement in Spain that depicts an image of the Hindu Goddess, Lakshmi, seated atop a meat sandwich, other foodstuffs with a catch phrase, "A snack that's sacred", written in Spanish.

"An advertisement knowingly and intentionally using sacred symbols, especially those of another religious tradition, for purely commercial purposes can be offensive," said Suhag Shukla, managing director and legal counsel for the Foundation.

Even though the Hindu American Foundation has not received any information in this regard from Burger King, Shukla said: "This is welcome news."

HAF in its letter to Burger King did allude to the company's positive track record of quickly removing and apologising for previous offensive ad campaigns, she noted.

"Of course we would hope that such misjudgment did not occur in the first place, but we are indeed pleased to hear of Burger King's move," Shukla said.

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Posted by **Sanjith** on Jul 09, 2009

I welcome the move of BKC of rendering an apology immediately upon realizing the blunder committed. No caste or creed or community is Low class perse. Adequate care has to be exercised by brands and Corporates before they go overboard with these kind of less thought campaigns. If an apology is extended it should be with a commitment not to repeat in future.

Posted by **mouli** on Jul 09, 2009

well well. Had the offensive ad been in India I am sure that the secularists would have insisted on the rights of the advertiser and mocked at the right wing hindu thugs who were demanding an appology. This is what happened in the case of MF Hussain. Lets learn from them. Offensive comments on any religion (not only islam and christianity)

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