

Mydin accused of conflict of interest in sauce lab test
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Mydin cannot justify retaining the 1Malaysia Chilli Sauce - alleged to contain excessive heavy metals - in Kedai Rakyat 1Malaysia (KR1M) outlets based on the laboratory test provided by its suppliers as it is a conflict of interest.

In addition, Mydin as the KR1M operator cannot rely on its own test to verify the claim, argued Malaysian Association of Standards Users (Standards Users) chief executive officer DN Ratna.

"That would be your word against my word. It (the test) has to come from a competent authority.

"The authority is not me, not (Petaling Jaya MP) Tony Pua, not Mydin - it is the Food Safety and Quality Division under the Health Ministry," said Ratna when contacted yesterday.

She was responding the KR1M's statement that it would not withdraw the product as the supplier's laboratory report had shown that the chilli sauce complied with the law.

Mydin Mohamed Holdings Bhd managing director Ameer Ali Mydin had however said a product sample would be sent for independent testing as a precaution.

Standards Users had earlier this week in its comparative product research of an array of chilli sauces discovered the 1Malaysia brand contained heavy metals exceeding the permitted levels in the Food Regulation 1985.

'Sales cannot proceed until safety proven'

Ratna said that the 1Malaysia Chili Sauce should be removed from the shelves until its safety is ascertained by the Health Ministry.

"When it comes to consumer products, you should exercise the precautionary principle. If there are indications a product is unsafe, then it should be held back until there is proof that it is safe."

She expressed concern over the recent spate of revelations involving 1Malaysia products which compliance with food regulations are questionable.

"I have not seen any investigation from the Food Safety and Quality Division - maybe there are - but I have not seen any reports coming from them on these products yet. The onus is on the Health Ministry to dispel the rumours," said Ratna.

Aside from Standards Users' revelation, Pua has also alleged a series of 1Malaysia products which violated the law.

Mydin and its suppliers denied most of the allegations, but has withdrawn its 1Malaysia Oyster Sauce and 1Malaysia Growing Up Baby Formula as a result of the revelation.

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