

**Pua: Why is ministry mum on KR1M products?**

**Malaysiakini.com**

**November 21 ,2011**

**by S Pathmawathy**

The opposition has accused the Health Ministry of conspiring with the suppliers of products to Kedai Rakyat 1 Malaysia (KR1M), following the ministry's silence on several problematic low-cost products.

Referring to the expose on the nutrient overdose and deficiencies in the KR1M children's milk formula, DAP's national publicity chief Tony Pua said the ministry had yet to take a stand on the matter.

"There has been no statement whatsoever from the minister with regard to the action to be taken by the ministry, or what must be done by KR1M," rebuked Pua.

"The remarkable silence from the health minister smacks of a cover-up and collusion with the supplier to ensure that the '1Malaysia' brand is not negatively impacted," he charged.

Last week, KR1M announced through its website that the milk formula has been taken off the shelves pending investigations.

However, at a press conference in Parliament today, Pua said the announcement made on the website was not sufficient, and that KR1M should advertise the recall in all the mainstream newspapers.

"This announcement, which is only made on its website, falls far short of what is ethically required and global best practices to protect the interests of the people and consumers.

Price savings exaggerated

"The people who buy at KR1M are not the ones who normally check online for information. So the company should publish the recall in newspapers like Utusan Malaysia and Sinar Harian," he said.

Last week, Pua charged that the milk powder contained excessive Vitamin A while lacking in 15 essential nutrients.

It was the latest in his string of complaints against KR1M, including exaggerated price savings on the products and violations of the Food Act 1983 and Food Regulations 1985.

KR1M operator Mydin Mohamed Holdings Bhd and its suppliers had refuted many of these allegations, claiming that Pua had only offered half-truths.

Citing examples of other renowned food brands such as Kellogg, which recalled several of its cereals due to its odd smell, and Similac Abbott Laboratories for recalling about five million tins of its infant milk formula, Pua said: "KR1M has not only failed to make any announcement to recall the 1Malaysia product from those who have purchased them, it has even failed to make a public announcement to warn the people from further consuming the product."

Despite KR1M's shortcomings in managing the crisis, Pua said, the Health Ministry has also "failed" to take urgent action to ensure that children are protected.

“When the nutrients are clearly labelled on the milk formula’s packaging, there is no requirement for laboratory testing,” he said.

Previously, Pua revealed that KR1M’s fresh milk was contaminated with the Escherichia coli (E coli) bacteria.

A separate report by Malaysian Association of Standards Users exposed that the KR1M chilli sauce contained excessive heavy metals, which could lead to kidney damage.

The association’s chief executive DN Ratna had urged the Health Ministry to immediately halt the sale of the sauce.

Meanwhile, PAS Kuala Selangor MP Dzulkefly Ahmad said the opposition has done its duty to ensure “checks and balances”.

“As the federal opposition, we are performing our role... this has nothing to do with scoring brownie points.

“If they don’t withdraw the problematic products, all 1Malaysia branded products will get a bad name,” Dzulkefly added.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd  
<http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/181945>