

## **Health Ministry admits to problems with KR1M goods**

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**by Hazlan Zakaria**

Health Ministry officers today admitted that there are problems with several products sold by Kedai Rakyat 1Malaysia (KR1M), despite assurances given by the minister, Liow Tiong Lai.

Liow had said at a press conference at Parliament lobby recently that nothing was wrong with the sundry goods sold in the nationwide store chain, except for the low protein content of its 1Malaysia oyster sauce.

"Minister Liow had said only the oyster sauce was a problem, and the others are perfectly OK.

"We have proven otherwise," DAP's Petaling Jaya Utara MP Tony Pua said in a Tweet after meeting with ministry officers in Putrajaya today.

Pua was at the Health Ministry with Lembah Pantai MP Nurul Izzah Anwar to meet with a contingent of officers there on their complaints about the products sold at KR1M outlets.

Liow was not present at the meeting.

The Pakatan duo's visit to the ministry followed an invitation from Liow to meet with him and ministry officers face-to-face to discuss their allegations of substandard sundry goods being sold to the rakyat at the KR1M outlets operated by local retail giant Mydin Mohamed Holdings Bhd.

Confirming with Malaysiakini via a text message that he had met the officials, Pua, on microblog site Twitter, listed down the problems with several 1Malaysia branded products sold at the discount chain store that the Health Ministry officers admitted to.

Wrong labels, high sugar among problems

According to him, issues with the 1Malaysia products admitted to by the ministry include:

- \* Frozen confection wrongly labelled as ice-cream and are still being sold as such. The ministry has ordered the retail outlet to rename the product as frozen confection;

- \* Tests by the ministry confirm that the 1Malaysia brand sweetened condensed creamer exceeds the maximum 76 percent sugar content;

- \* Evaporated creamer is wrongly sold as "evaporated milk" and the ministry will take the necessary action;

- \* Samples of 155gm sardine tins tested showed that three out of five did not meet the 55 percent nett fish weight requirement;

- \* Tinned chicken curry is inadequately labelled and fails to comply with Clauses 147 and 151 of the Food Regulations;

- \* Conflict in Growing Up Milk ingredient label between "susu pepejal rendah lemak" or "instant whole milk powder";

- \* Curiously, both "follow up milk" and "growing up milk" are for children aged one to three years, but the ministry said it is covered under a different law; and

- \* The 1Malaysia labelled Growing Up Milk formula serves 3888IU of Vitamin A per day, exceeding the limit of 1800IU for children under three. The ministry has "advised" the supplier to cut the excessive

Vitamin A and to top up on other nutrients.

Responding to a snipe from a visitor on his Twitter page that most of his 'discoveries' were more of mislabelling issues than actual health risks, Pua said such practices too reeked of improper practices.

"Yes, selling inferior products with a superior product label. I think there's a word to describe this..." Pua hit back.

Liow had, at his press conference in Parliament House recently, declared that there was no truth in the claims of substandard goods, except for the low protein content of the 1Malaysia oyster sauce.

He went on to accuse Pua of trying to gain political mileage by misleading the people.

Pua is spearheading a concerted campaign, alongside fellow MPs from Pakatan Rakyat, including Nurul Izzah, questioning the quality of the cheap goods being supplied to the rakyat through the high profile 1Malaysia initiative.

He and the other MPs have held several press conferences, carrying bags of products with the 1Malaysia label that they claimed have serious defects.

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