

1Malaysia stores 'temporarily' closed

Malaysiakini

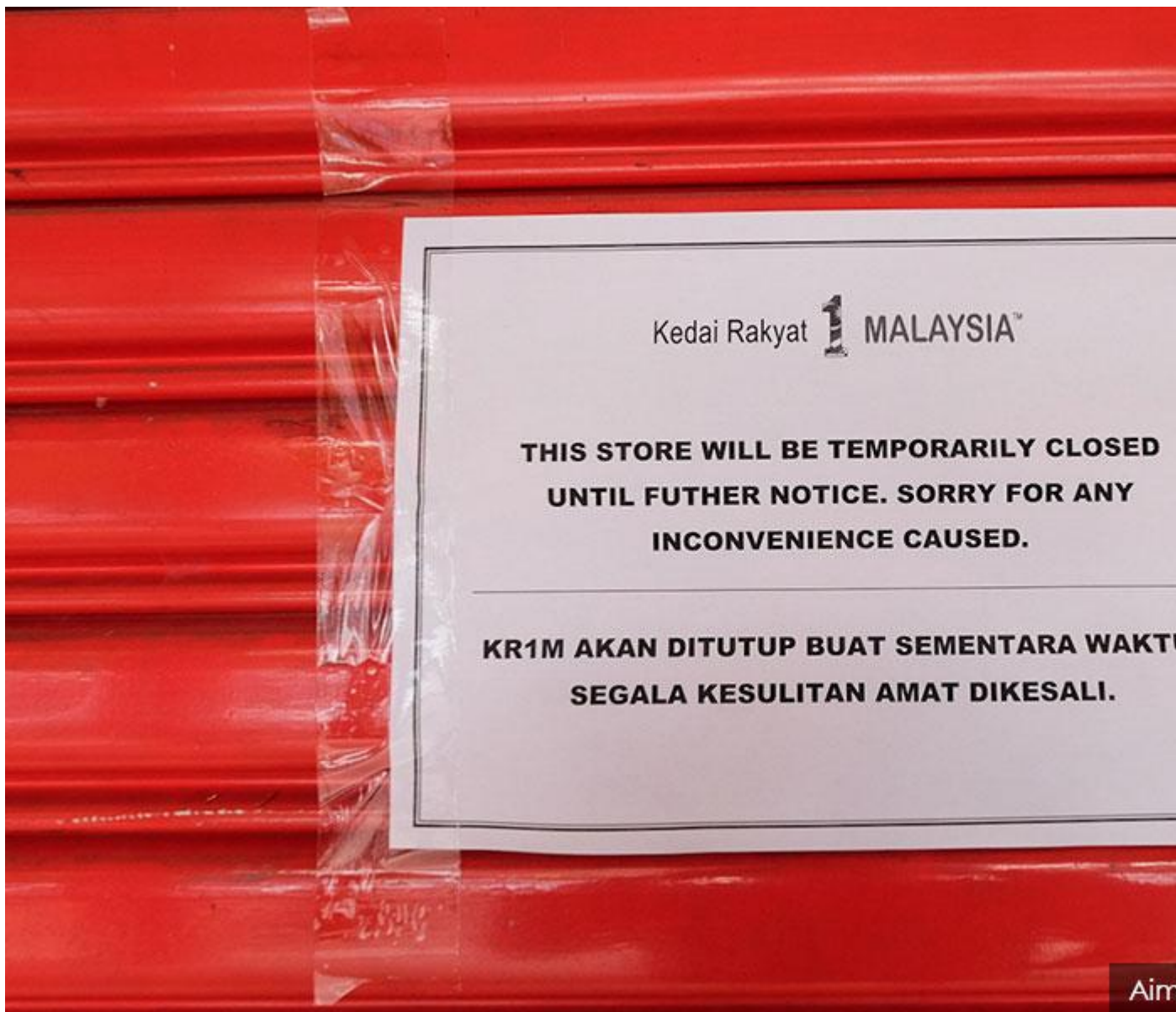
20 September 2017

By Shakira Buang & Annabelle Lee

The Kedai Rakyat 1Malaysia (KR1M), which was set up to provide basic necessities at affordable prices, will no longer be open to the public, albeit "temporarily".

A check by *Malaysiakini* at multiple KR1Ms in Kuala Lumpur, Petaling Jaya and Kelantan, found that all were shuttered down, with notices informing of the closure, attached.

"This store will be temporarily closed, until further notice. Sorry for any inconvenience caused," it read.



Despite the closure, uniformed workers were seen moving goods and clearing shelves inside the stores.

A worker of the store at the Kelana Jaya-Damansara Light Rail Transit (LRT) station, who declined to be named, said he was unsure when the store would re-open.

He claimed that a new management could be taking over from the existing operator - Mydin Mohamed Holdings Berhad.

Workers at the Wangsa Maju outlet also echoed similar remarks and explained they had been "clearing the stock" since closing the store, two weeks ago.

In Kelantan, a worker at the Pengkalan Chepa KR1M told *Malaysiakini* that they have stopped selling items since two weeks ago, and added that they are clearing the stock while awaiting a new management.

"I was told the same is also happening at KR1Ms in Terengganu and Pahang," said the man, who also refused to be identified.

Malaysiakini is unable to independently confirm these claims and have made attempts to contact Mydin Mohamed Holdings, as well as the ministry in charge - the Domestic Trade, Cooperative and Consumerism Ministry (KDPNKK) - for comments.

Mydin Mohamed Holdings, the company that operates the popular chain of Mydin wholesale supermarkets, started operating KR1M stores in partnership with the government in 2011, as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme.

A brainchild of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak, the stores were meant to appeal to urban Malaysians with low-income levels, by selling basic necessities like rice, cooking oil, milk powder and diapers at prices, 30 to 50 percent lower than at other supermarkets.

All items are branded with a generic "Kedai Rakyat 1Malaysia" logo.

After six years of operating the stores, Mydin managing director Ameer Ali Mydin admitted in July this year that KR1M was in fact, a "massive loss-making CSR project" and it had only continued operating to benefit Malaysians.

He said this after Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi accused Mydin of selling goods above market prices and thus, profiteering from operating the stores.

Zahid later instructed KPDNKK to terminate its contract with Mydin over KR1M, according to *Bernama*.

Meanwhile, *Bernama* also reported today, KPDNKK confirming that a KR1M outlet in Miri, Sarawak, has been shut down for "economic reasons".

It quoted the ministry's Miri branch chief Joe Azmi Jamil as saying that the outlet in Tudan suffered losses as it could not compete with supermarkets and hyper malls in the city.

According to him, the operator of another outlet in Pujut, which is still operational, was also facing similar problems, but the situation "under control".

He said the situation could get back to normal once the new operator of KR1M takes over the operation.

Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.

Source: <https://www.malysiakini.com/news/395792>