

Fifteen NGOs embark on anti-GST leafleting

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A coalition of 15 NGOs have started leafleting today to raise awareness about the effects of the proposed Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Jaringan Rakyat Tertindas (Jerit) national coordinator Parameiswary Elumalai said that thousands of leaflets were being distributed at 10 locations across Malaysia by the group, which includes Parti Sosialis Malaysia (PSM) and Komas.

NONEThe sites include Ipoh city in Perak, Brickfields in Kuala Lumpur, Malacca city, Skudai in Johor, Petaling Jaya and Shah Alam in Selangor, and Penang town.

Malaysiakini visited a leafleting site in Brickfields, where a member of Jerit who only wanted to be identified as Simon said that the group hoped to stop the implementation of GST in the upcoming October budget.

"I don't think many Malaysian know about the GST and how it will affect them, so that is why we are trying to raise awareness.

"Now is not the right time for the GST, less than 30 percent of Malaysians are even paying income-tax, so this GST will hit the poorest Malaysians," he added.

NONEThe leaflet titled 'GST - the rich get rich, the poor suffer' stated that for a family with an income of RM2,000 per month the cost of goods and services under the GST would cost them RM1,200 more annually.

It also outlined an example of how the cost of a basic item such as a T-shirt, would be taxed five percent at every level of production from the material to the factory, to the wholesaler and retailer.

Yesterday, Finance Ministry secretary-general Mohd Irwan Siregar Abdullah affirmed that the GST was a must and that the ministry hoped to include it in the upcoming budget.

Earlier this month, Petaling Jaya Utara MP Tony Pua said that it was unfair for the government to punish the people with a GST when it was fiscal mismanagement and cronyism that had led to the

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