

**Deputy minister: Fuel prices to drop come Jan 1**  
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Deputy Finance Minister Ahmad Maslan expects the prices of RON 97 and RON 95 petrol, as well as diesel, to go down come Jan 1, 2015.

However, Ahmad lamented that the problem was that the prices of goods would not reduce.

"Therefore, I ask traders and businesses to be responsible in this matter. Since costs are decreased, they are responsible to lower the prices of goods.

"In this way (lowered prices of fuel and goods), the happiness index will increase as well," he said at Malaysia Debt Ventures Bhd's launch of a new corporate strategy today.

Ahmad's announcement met with a resounding applause at the event today.

The rakyat's unhappiness over fuel subsidy removal is no secret.

The government has also been criticised by opposition leaders for removing the fuel subsidies for petrol and diesel.

Although the retail price for RON 95 and RON 97 was reduced by four sen and nine sen per litre respectively early this month, retail price of diesel has increased by three sen per litre.

'Gov't prefers not to discipline'

Meanwhile, in a press conference later, Ahmad said although the government preferred not to use the Price Control and Anti-Profiteering Act against traders and entrepreneurs, this measure will be used to "discipline" them.

"If it is needed, the Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Ministry can enforce this," he said.

Ahmad in his speech earlier had also confirmed that the goods and services tax (GST) will be implemented come April 1, 2015.

"It is confirmed, a 100 percent that it will be implemented. We won't go back on our plans to implement GST," he said.

This is because although the government had targeted 150,000 companies to be GST-registered.

He said yesterday alone saw 4,000 companies registering for GST.

Ahmad estimated that at least 224,000 companies will be GST-registered by Dec 31 this

year, the cut-off date given by the government.

"I can say that the economic prospect for 2015 is stable. So you can all go on holiday next week," he joked in his speech.

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