

Disaster-ridden Malaysia can do without GST

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MP SPEAKS DAP urges the BN federal government to declare a state of emergency over the national flood disaster in affected areas in Peninsular Malaysia.

The federal government is behaving irresponsibly and mala fide by relying on ridiculous, invalid and baseless excuses that declaring a state of emergency would adversely affect those insured, by preventing the hundreds of thousands of flood victims from filing for insurance claims.

This is not true.

For a high water mark of 250,000 flood victims, the largest in Malaysian history evacuated from their homes, and financial losses of billions of ringgit certainly necessitate a state of emergency over the national floods disaster to expedite rescue, recovery and restoration works of damaged homes and infrastructure.

There is no reason why a state of emergency cannot be declared when a haze emergency was declared in parts of Malaysia on 2005 and 2013? Is haze a bigger threat than floods?

In the face of such natural disaster, the BN federal government should also avoid an economic disaster for the 14.1 million labour force (as of October 2014) by deferring the imposition of the 6% GST on April 1, 2015, which will result inflation and worsen the average standards of living.

Not the time for GST

For the 14.1 million labour workforce with 13.7 million employed and 378,000 unemployed, BN's claims that the mean monthly gross household income has increased by an annual rate of 8.4 percent to RM5,919 in 2014 from RM5,000 in 2012 is an empty and meaningless announcement.

A more accurate measure is that the median income for the bottom 40% of households increased 11.2% to RM2,312 in 2014 from RM1,847 in 2012.

For this reason, a deferment of the GST is important so as to reduce the financial burden of ordinary Malaysian families when even the data provided by the Performance Management Delivery Unit (Pemandu) reveal that about 80 percent of households in Malaysia are currently earning less than RM4,000 per month.

The problem is that the rise in income has not caught up with rising costs of living resulting in Malaysia recording the second highest personal household debt in Asia of 87 percent of GDP.

In politics of government, winning is not about winning elections but about generating good and creative ideas that can capture the imagination for a brighter future.

BN and Umno is about appealing to our primordial fears and hate that dehumanises minorities to not only steal our children's future, but even permits the most barbarous villainies in future.

Don't ape BN's primitive rule

Instead of aping BN's primitive rule that rewards bad behaviour, we must focus on moderation, generate prosperity by stressing on excellence and competence and ensure socio-economic justice.

We need to be an innovative society leveraging on the conditions of 3Ts of Talent, Technology and Tolerance of new ideas based on ideals of freedom. We must remember that innovation depends less on developing specific ideas than it does on creating broad spaces.

Autocracies can always mobilise their top 0.1 percent to accomplish excellence but what about the remaining 99.9 percent? Autocracies' only answer is to administer dictate, oppress, repress and suppress the people.

For this reason, Malaysians can celebrate the new year in a more meaningful manner by fighting to preserve the freedoms in our federal constitution born of equal opportunity where you can be the best you want to be, rule of law, transparency and sustainable development that can give a better future to our children.

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