

## **PAS says Hasan Malek should be a comedian**

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PAS believes Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Minister Hasan Malek should be a 'comedian' for his "shocking statement" that that people already understand and accept the goods and services tax (GST).

"I am astonished with the statement made by the minister, for this is self-gratification (syok sendiri) and denies the harsh reality that is being faced by the people.

"If the minister is interested in making such statements, I suggest he resigns and joins as a 'Maharaja Lawak Mega' contestant, so that the people can be entertained with his antics on stage," PAS information chief Mahfuz Omar said in a statement today.

Maharaja Lawak Mega is a reality television series on Astro, in which comedians from Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia compete to win the region's best comedian title.

Mahfuz (right), who is the MP for Pokok Sena, said it was ironic of Hasan to make such a statement when news reports and complaints on social media about the negative effects of GST can be seen, every day.

Mahfuz also said it was pointless for Hasan to use the number of complaints received to be an indicator on the acceptance of GST, as many people found it pointless to lodge a complaint.

"The fact is that the people are sickened and they have realised that the government is failing to take appropriate action on complaints made and would in fact side with the traders," he said.

### **'A huge burden on senior citizens'**

Meanwhile, Lembah Pantai MP Nurul Izzah Anwar said the implementation of the GST has become a huge burden to senior citizens, especially when it comes to living costs.

"The price hikes have caused the buying power of the people to reduce drastically. I am worried about the effects on the reduction of buying power on senior citizens when they don't have a fixed income and cannot work to sustain their lives anymore," Nurul Izzah said in a statement today.

The PKR lawmaker added that the lives of senior citizens were made even more perilous with the increase in the prices of medicines, even though the government has zero-rated some of the drugs.

"Even though the government has increased the number of zero-rated medicines, in reality there are still many medications for diseases, like high blood pressure, being charged GST.

“This will bring about an ill effect, where diseases are spread and the health and life quality levels of senior citizens go out of control as they will focus on buying daily necessities, instead of medicines,” Nurul Izzah said.

Putrajaya introduced the GST on April 1, and has received a lot of brickbats over its implementation. Among the recent issues that arose from the execution of this tax is the overcharging on mobile phone prepaid top-ups.

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