DPM: Polls not reflection of GST support
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By Adrian Wong

The upcoming two by-elections results is not a indicator on whether the public accepts the Goods and Services Tax (GST), said Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yasin.

He was responding to Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Minister Hasan Malek reportedly said that by-election will show if GST is accepted.

"It (GST) is one of the issues and problems. I don't think Hasan said this is an indicator.

"If we win here, we can't say the people has endorsed GST, I don't want to be make such interpretation, this is not an accurate interpretation.

"If you asked this in Permatang Pauh (by-election), there is a different answer, so I don't think this is measure that is accurate," he told reporters in Felda Keratong 4, Rompin, while campaigning for BN candidate Hasan Arifin.

According to The Sun yesterday, Hasan said: "(GST) is a wise decision by the government and the rakyat have started to accept it. The polls will be a test to see whether they support or reject it".

Hasan said he was confident that the public, including the electorate in Rompin, have accepted GST will benefit them in the long run, following explanations from the government.

He made this conclusion after visiting villages in Bukit Ibam, Danglau and Pontian.

"If we explain to them sincerely, they will accept GST, including the businesses. We can see more development."

Ealier in his speech, Muhyiddin said he supports GST, but would not argue the issue with the audiences as he understand some of they are angry about it.

“It’s not me who took the money, not the PM nor Hishammuddin who took it. We collect it and will return it. Maybe increase Bantuan Rakyat 1Malaysia (BR1M), maybe other assistance.

“If the people ask for help but we don’t have money, then how? The World Bank can lend to us but we don’t want that, we can find the funds ourselves,” he said.

He also rebutted allegations posed by the opposition that Malaysia will be in bankruptcy soon.

“As long as BN rules the country, we will always ensure it to be developing and will not be bankrupt.

“If it was to be bankrupt, it would be bankrupt for a long time. Fifty seven years we have ruled and no bankruptcy,” he said, to applause from the audience.

Defence of BR1M

The Umno deputy president also defended the BR1M.

“There are people do not support BR1M, I do not want to mention the names. They said this is a waste, the recipient will not support (the government due to this) as well.

Apparently Muhyiddin was alluding to former prime minister Mahathir Mohamad, who is a strong critics against BR1M, PM Najib’s brainchild.

Muhyiddin said the government used the money saved from fuel subsidy to support BR1M.

“During Mahathir’s era, it was only RM2 billion, now it risen to RM24billion.

“We then changed it to floating method, and the money we saved, we used it for people who are eligible to get assistance, not all.

“Everyone, rich and poor, vehicle users and non-vehicle users, gets petrol subsidy. For BR1M, only targeted groups will get it.”

He then asked the audience if they would accept that the cabinet abolish BR1M, and the audience replied with “No”.

On a related note, Muhyiddin said PAS played the hudud card because the Islamic party is unable to answer other issues.

“They are campaigning for themselves. It’s up to the voters if they want to accept it.

“For the hudud issue, PAS knows many Chinese voters are against it and this may be an issue that can attract Malay voters. But I think the locals will know if this is a real issue or PAS has something else (hidden agenda).

“They cannot answer other issues, so they use hudud to attract voters,” he said.

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