

Ahmad Maslan: You blame traders, not GST

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Blame traders, not the goods and services tax (GST) if prices are high, Deputy Finance Minister Ahmad Maslan told the Dewan Rakyat today.

Ahmad said the prices of most taxed goods, including sanitary pads, diapers, and others, should be cheaper now as the GST is only six percent, compared with the 10 percent sales and services tax (SST).

"If the prices of goods have not gone down, blame the traders, not GST," he told the House.

Ahmad was responding to a question from Shamsul Anuar Nasarah (BN-Lenggong) on the GST's weaknesses.

However, Abdul Ghapur Salleh (BN-Kalabalakan) was not too happy with Ahmad's explanation, saying that the GST was burdening the people.

"Even soto is being charged GST! Where are the regular people going to complain? At the Customs Department?" Abdul Ghapur asked.

Ahmad rebutted by saying that all the ingredients for making soto, a soup dish of Indonesian origin, are GST free.

Booths for people to lodge complaints

He said he would consider setting up booths where the people can lodge complaints about GST profiteering.

Ahmad said GST would be more acceptable once prices have stabilised.

"When the prices are stable, the people won't be angry.

"When we catch (profiteers) and jail them, the prices will stabilise," he said.

Rafizi Ramli (PKR-Pandan, right) rebutted the deputy minister's explanations, saying Ahmad still did not understand GST.

"The (deputy) minister does not understand GST. When comparing GST with SST, he forgets that SST is collected at the factory, while GST is charged (on the entire supply chain)," he said.

Ahmad's response was that he did not need to be lectured on the GST as he often speaks on the matter.

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