

**No Rush To Implement GST, Says Idris**  
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KUALA LUMPUR -- Implementation of the goods and services tax (GST) may not be as rushed as presumed by the people, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Idris Jala said on Tuesday.

"Even if everyone agrees on the implementation of the GST, it would still need at least 18 months for it to be fully enforced," said Idris, who is also Performance Management and Delivery Unit (Pemandu) chief executive officer.

Although there are a lot of positive sides associated with the GST, he gave an assurance that the current focus was to engage and educate the people.

"(But), We don't have a timeline for the implementation, we are in the process of engaging with the public," he said, adding that 143 countries have implemented the GST.

Idris said the GST will not impact the low-income earners as most of the staple products like food, commodity items and services will be exempted or zero-rated.

At the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) seventh update today, Pemandu unveiled six Strategic Reform Initiatives (SRIs) of which GST falls into the Public Finance SRI.

Among other recommendations, Pemandu is suggesting to the government to tighten its expenditure in four areas, namely rationalising subsidies, procurements, travel expenses and transfer payments to statutory bodies.

In a bid to enhance transparency in the government procurement process, Idris said the government has reduced the threshold value for quotations and tenders via e-bidding from RM200,000 to RM50,000.

Accrual accounting will also be implemented to ensure a more efficient, transparent and effective fiscal management, which in turn will support the sustainability of the country's fiscal policies, he added.

(Bernama)