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'INTRODUCING GST RIGHT THING TO DO'

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Other nations like Saudi Arabia, India want to emulate the tax system, says Najib

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MALAYSIA'S move to introduce the Goods and Services Tax (GST) is being emulated by other countries, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said.

He said Saudi Arabia and India were planning to impose the same tax system in their countries.

He said India planned to impose a GST of 23 per cent and this showed that Malaysia had made the right decision when introducing the tax system.

"It is a bold move. It is the right thing to do," he said at a programme to honour former employees of the Finance Ministry here yesterday.

Present were Second Finance Minister Datuk Johari Abdul Ghani and Treasury secretary-general Tan Sri Dr Mohd Irwan Serigar Abdullah.

Najib, who is also finance minister, said many people had advised him against introducing GST for fear that it would erode the people's support for the government.

"The landslide win (for Barisan Nasional) in Sarawak (the recent Tanjung Datu by-election) shows otherwise," he said.

The prime minister said the country must have structural reforms



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak with former employees of the Finance Ministry in Putrajaya yesterday. With him are Second Finance Minister Datuk Johari Abdul Ghani (seated, fifth from left), Deputy Finance Ministers Datuk Othman Aziz (seated, fifth from right) and Datuk Lee Chee Leong (seated, fourth from left), and Treasury secretary-general Tan Sri Dr Mohd Irwan Serigar Abdullah (seated, fourth from right). (Inset) Datuk Seri Najib Razak presenting a certificate of appreciation to Inland Revenue Board's former chief executive officer, Tan Sri Dr Mohd Shukor Mahfar. PIX BY FARIZ ISWADI ISMAIL



even if it had to make difficult decisions.

"Malaysia has the political will and courage to make structural reforms to resolve weaknesses," he said, stressing that his administration would continue to safeguard the economy and wellbeing of the people.

Najib said Malaysia would not be

able to register strong growth without being fundamentally strong and having the ability to plug leakages.

He said structural reforms, including the implementation of GST, had helped Malaysia weather global economic uncertainties.

Najib said the move to rationalise the country's subsidy system from

"bulk subsidy" to "targeted subsidy" produced good results.

Najib vowed that he and Johari would manage the ministry's core function—fiscal and financial policies—to their level best.

He thanked the retirees who had contributed to the ministry.

One of the ministry's retirees, for-

mer Treasury deputy secretary-general (management) Datuk Nozirah Bahari, said she had a pleasant time at the ministry.

"It feels like it was only yesterday that we reported for work.

"The ministry has many long-serving employees, including a few who have served for more than 40 years."