

'BILLIONS IN TAX REVENUE LOST'

Ismail Sabri says study must be done before GST can be considered

KUALA LUMPUR: The government has yet to decide if it will reintroduce the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said the matter would be discussed further in the cabinet.

"A study is needed before we

can consider it, whether or not it is the right decision to reimplement the GST.

"We have to also take into account that the country lost billions of ringgit in tax revenue after it was abolished," he told reporters after attending the World Environment Day celebration at

Taman Tugu yesterday.

While many businesses welcomed the revival of the GST, consumers and non-governmental organisations have urged the government to review the proposal, with some suggesting that the tax be lowered from the previous six per cent.

Ismail Sabri, in a recent interview with Nikkei, said the government was keen to reintroduce the GST, which was implemented in 2015 but scrapped three years later.

He said the government would target a GST rate that would not burden the people, but was not too low that it "defeats the purpose of expanding tax revenue".

Meanwhile, the prime minister was also asked about the date of the 15th General Election (GE15).

He said he couldn't preempt the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, as the king has the prerogative to dissolve Parliament to pave the

way for the polls.

The prime minister, he said, could only advise the king.

"No prime minister has ever openly announced the date of elections.

"Even (former prime minister Tun) Dr Mahathir (Mohamad) had, in the past, said '*belum dapat ilham*' (yet to get any inspiration) when he was asked about it."

Ismail Sabri said matters pertaining to GE15 would be discussed by Umno's top leadership before being brought to the party's supreme council. Later, it would be brought to the Barisan Nasional supreme council before being discussed in the cabinet.

The cabinet would then give him the mandate to seek an audience with the king, who has the final say on the dissolution of Parliament.

"I cannot give the exact date (of the election) as that would be disrespectful to the Yang di-Pertuan

Agong and against the Federal Constitution. I respect the king's decision and must not preempt him."

He described DAP's demands in seeking a timeline for GE15 as being disrespectful to the roles and powers of the king.

DAP secretary-general Anthony Loke had, on Saturday, asked the prime minister to be "more assertive and consistent" in his stance, instead of giving "flip flop" statements.

Meanwhile, Ismail Sabri said he had yet to meet Plantation, Industry and Commodities Minister Datuk Zuraida Kamaruddin to discuss her role in the cabinet following her departure from Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia to Parti Bangsa Malaysia.

He said Zuraida was still on leave following her return from an official visit to Turkey and Greece.

He said they had yet to set a date to discuss her resignation.

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PRAYER TIMES

	SUBUH (am)	SYURUK	ZUHUR	ASAR (pm)	MAGHRIB	ISYAK
Melaka	5:49	7:03	1:12	4:37	7:19	8:34
Penang	5:50	7:03	1:20	4:45	7:31	8:47
K. Lumpur	5:50	7:02	1:15	4:40	7:24	8:39
Johor Baru	5:44	6:58	1:06	4:31	7:12	8:26
Kuantan	5:44	6:58	1:09	4:34	7:17	8:32
Ipoh	5:50	7:00	1:17	4:43	7:28	8:43