

Government Should be More Aggressive in Holding GST Info Campaigns - NGOs

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KUALA LUMPUR (Bernama) -- With the Goods and Sales Tax (GST) scheduled to be implemented on April 1 next year, the government needs to be more aggressive in holding information campaigns on the matter to consumers.

Malaysian Muslim Consumers Association (PPIM) chief activist Datuk Nadzim Johan said so far the information dissemination programme on GST was seen as not being implemented extensively.

"In addition the GST issue is politicised by the opposition as a tax system that is a burden to the consumers and, hence, the relevant authorities must intensify efforts to provide indepth information to the community on its implementation," he told Bernama here Saturday.

He said PPIM was also organising information programmes concerning the new tax for consumers and hoped the community would not hear rumours or be influenced by the negative perception that was being brought up by irresponsible quarters.

The media reported that many of the participants who gathered at Dataran Merdeka to protest against the GST implementation on Thursday did not clearly know or understand it.

Many participants, when asked, said the GST implementation would only raise prices of goods and suppressed the low income group.

Meanwhile Federation of Malaysian Consumer Associations (FOMCA) Communications Director, Mohd Yusof Abdul Rahman said the government should issue a list of the goods and services that were charged with GST and those exempted as well as an accurate comparison on price changes before and after its implementation.

Mohd Yusof said during a seminar, organised by Fomca recently, participants were still confused on the goods that would be imposed with GST and the changes on price of goods after the implementation.

"Previously the GST information programme only emphasised on the advantage of the system on business while focus on the consumers were given less attention," he said.

According to Young Malay Generation Force (Agenda) president Mohamad Zaidan Abdul Rahim, the GST implementation was vital in the development of the country, which was currently moving towards achieving developed nation status by 2020.

"If this matter is being continued to be politicised by the opposition, which is trying to fish in murky waters, it will cause the people to be confused and give rise to other problems.

"Even though the GST implementation is viewed by the people as a less popular move by the government, it must be insistent and respond to every allegations by the opposition on the matter," he said.

As such, he said a comprehensive information needed to be implemented in stages to give a better understanding to the people nationwide.

"We will support every campaign that is conducted by the government relating to this GST implementation," he said.

Kelantan Graduates Assembly (Himsak) President Mohd Faizal Daud said Himsak would be holding several roadshows to provide information to students at public and private institutions of learning on GST.

"We will down to the grassroot level, especially among the students to provide information that is easily understood to them on this GST," he said.

He said Himsak would try not to emphasise on the technical aspects of the GSP implementation during these ongoing programmes.

When presenting the 2014 Budget in October last year Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak announced a rate of six percent for the GST to replace the existing Sales and Services Tax with an overall rate of 16 per cent.

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