

## **More Light Should Be Shed On The GST Debatre**

**Bernama**

**Mei 22, 2014**

**By Nur Aimidiyana Zuher**

KUALA LUMPUR (Bernama) -- The proposed implementation of Goods and Services Tax (GST) was announced in the 2014 Budget last October. Public feedback have been mixed ever since, with mostly being negative.

The GST will be implemented on April 1, 2015 at a rate of six percent, replacing the Sales and Services Tax that reaches up to 16 percent. Many believe the GST will contribute to an increase in the prices of goods and services.

Nonetheless the implementation of GST will open up avenues to increase government revenue, subsequently ensuring systematic development of the nation and benefiting the rakyat.

### **ACCURATE INFORMATION ON GST**

So what is the best mechanism to help the rakyat understand the new taxation system?

Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) Advertising Communication lecturer Assoc Prof Abdul Rahim Saleh said it was vital for the mass media to disseminate accurate information on the consumption tax.

This was to ensure that the people were not be easily swayed by the arguments of the opposition and the profusion of information on the Internet.

He said the mass media also has to provide interactive channels for the people to voice their views and opinions on GST.

This at the same time would enable the government to evaluate the rakyat s level of acceptance and understanding on GST.

"Many have yet to realise that the tax would benefit the people. Therefore, there has to be more discussions on the GST in the print and electronic media," he said.

Although the government has held campaigns explaining the importance and benefits of the new taxation system, it was not publicised widely enough.

Equipping the people with ample information on the GST and providing feedback on their queries could help them understand and subsequently support the move by the government.

This would also render the issue a useless political fodder for the opposition, as the opposition has been objecting the GST to the point of organising rallies such as the one on May 1.

## **POLITICAL AGENDA**

A lecturer at the School of Social Sciences in Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Prof Dr Ahmad Atory Hussain, described the opposition's move to politicise the GST as predictable.

"They have used the GST to undermine the support for Barisan Nasional, describing the tax system as burdensome to the rakyat, he said.

He claimed that many of the objections on the GST sprouted from the propaganda spread by the opposition.

He also claimed that the opposition actually understood the need for the GST but wanted to deny the rakyat of the same understanding.

Ahmad Atory proposed that the government implement the GST for a trial period to assess the rakyat's acceptance and understanding of the tax system.

## **FOR THE PEOPLE**

Meanwhile, the President of the Indian Muslim Congress, Senator Datuk Seri Syed Ibrahim Kader said the misinformation on GST occurred because the opposition had been manipulating the facts over the tax system.

"The people who join the rallies objecting the implementation of tax are themselves "illiterate" when it comes to the GST. So they swallow whole the information provided by the opposition, he said.

He said the government has already informed the people that the tax would help them with their daily expenditures, as the GST is an efficient taxation system.

The implementation of the GST comes alongside a social package that exempts a number of basic necessities and selected services.

Among the items that will not be imposed GST are rice, sugar, flour, cooking oil, spices, cured fish and dhal.

Government services exempted from the tax are the issuance of passports and licenses, health services, education, public transport services and highway tolls.

-- BERNAMA

Copyright © 2014 BERNAMA

Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v7/newsindex.php?id=1040451>