

Ignorance Of GST Leads To Manipulation, Losses - PPIM

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KUALA LUMPUR, March 4 (Bernama) -- Ignorance of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) will only lead to consumers being easily cheated and manipulated by irresponsible quarters, according to the Malaysian Muslim Consumers Association (PPIM) chief activist Datuk Nadzim Johan.

With less than a month to go before the scheduled implementation of GST on April 1, he said the level of public understanding about the new system was still low despite various briefings and information programmes had been carried out.

Nadzim said the PPIM estimated only four in every 10 individuals clearly understood the role of GST, while the rest were still confused and in the dark about the new tax system.

"It's not like they do not know, they just refuse to learn more about it. It seems like a culture in our society to reject something that we dislike and to remain ignorant even though a lot of information on the matter have been made available," he told BERNAMA when contacted in Kuala Lumpur, Wednesday.

As such, Nadzim said he hoped that the society would change the attitude so as not to fall victims to certain quarters trying to manipulate them.

Nadzim said PPIM had a group of experts entrusted to monitor the price of goods after the implementation of GST to prevent traders from raising the prices at their whims and fancy.

Meanwhile, GST information officer Abdul Halim Tuah Rahmat said the government had adopted five methods in each briefing session to disseminate information on the tax system since last year.

The five methods were using alternative media such as flyers and bunting; public talks; print media; digital media; and the electronic media.

He said the government would continue to be proactive in providing information on GST to prevent spread of incorrect information.

Customs Department GST director Datuk Subromaniam Tholasy said as at Feb 28, 345,376 companies had registered for the GST.

"The department is working hard to ensure that the transition to the new tax regime will run smoothly.

"The system is ready, but my main concern is the readiness of business community because failure to understand the GST guidelines will cause problems, especially in the early stage

of the implementation," he said.

In this context, Subromaniam advised business owners to study and understand the guidelines regarding GST.

Meanwhile, Malay Contractors Association of Malaysia (PKMM) assistant secretary-general Jamaludin Non said almost half of its members had registered for the GST.

"We have almost 20,000 members nationwide," he said.

He said an increase of between three and four per cent in house prices might occur following the implementation of GST due to the higher prices of construction materials such as sand, cement and gravel.

Kulitkraf Sdn Bhd Business Development manager Muzafar Shah Mustafa said the company had made thorough preparations for the implementation of GST and had registered for the new system last year.

"The inventories are all okay, the software system are well updated and prices are all adjusted for GST.

"Now, we just wait for the GST to be implemented. Let's hope it will run smoothly" he added.

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