

Unable to handle GST, 68-year-old shuts up shop
The Malaysian Insider
March 18, 2015
By Looi Sue-Chern

Moey Kok Meng and his family are clearing out his sundry shop in Air Itam. His final day of operation is next Wednesday.

"I am shutting down because of the GST (goods and services tax). I don't think I can do business with the tax implemented," he said.

Moey, 68, said he made the decision to close his shop, which has been in operation for 48 years, before Chinese New Year last month.

He said one of his three daughters had asked him if he was able to deal with the GST, and the question made him realise that he could not.

"I don't know (how to operate) a computer. I don't understand the system... how it works. Even after reading it and getting others explain to me, I am still unsure of how to do my business with it.

"I am just running a small, simple business. It is all giving me a headache, so I surrender," he said.

Asked why he would not hire professional help to assist him with the GST, Moey said the cost would likely be too much for his business to bear, so he rather clear out.

"It would take a chunk from my earnings and savings. So I rather not go through with it.

"Some companies have agreed to take back their items that I have not sold. The rest I am selling off cheap. The neighbourhood here knows I am having a cheap sale and closing down," he said.

Moey said his family will discuss later what to do to the shop, and he was looking forward to a retiree's life.

"There is nothing to do but retire. My wife and I can now visit Penang Hill. We haven't been up there for ages," he told reporters.

Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng visited Moey and his wife Wong Ngan Hai, 68, earlier this afternoon and listened to their troubles with the GST.

He gave the couple two free season tickets to go up Penang Hill, which are valid for a month, as a token of appreciation for the couple's many years of service to the local community.

He said it was a shame that old businesses like Moey's were forced to close down because of the GST, adding that several sundry shops in Balik Pulau had also closed down recently.

"Moey told me he learned from the Customs Department that over 10 small businesses like hardware shops, traditional medicine shops and sundry shops had closed down.

"The Barisan Nasional (BN) government really does not understand the people. I hope non-governmental organisations (NGOs) will also take up this issue and speak up for the interest of the people," he said.

Lim said the state government would look into countermeasures such as increasing the revenue of the people to help cushion the effects of the GST.

"We will make the announcement on these measures later," he said, adding that the state would also collect data to see how many businesses were being negatively affected by the GST once it was implemented beginning April 1.

The Penang government had been criticising Putrajaya's move to implement the GST and had been calling for it to be postponed, if not cancelled.

Yesterday in Parliament, veteran BN lawmaker Tan Sri Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah also called for the new consumption tax to be deferred, arguing that now was not the right time to implement it in view of the critical state of the country's economy and financial situation. – March 18, 2015.

Copyright © 2015 Edge Insider Sdn Bhd

Source:

<http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/unable-to-handle-gst-68-year-old-shuts-up-shop>