

## **GST: Traders Taking Advantage Of Situation Worries Consumers**

**Bernama**

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KUALA LUMPUR, April 2 (Bernama) -- The action by some traders to arbitrarily raise prices, including on items which are exempted from the Goods and Services Tax (GST) is causing public concern over the implementation of the tax.

Malaysian Consumer Protection and Welfare Board president, Datuk Seri Prof Dr Saharuddin Awang Yahya said consumers were seen as not getting a clear impact of the GST but the brazen hiking of prices by traders was causing unease.

"As such, the government must increase monitoring and enforcement, especially at the outset of the implementation of GST to curb traders from taking advantage of the situation," he told Bernama.

He said supermarkets must also readily put up lists of goods which were taxable under GST to help consumers decide on the goods they intended to buy.

Saharuddin said consumers must view positively and back the GST which would bring good in the long term to the people and country, adding it was practised in developed nations.

Meanwhile, Muslim Consumers Association of Malaysia (PPIM) chief activist Datuk Nadzim Johan said what was currently happening was that consumers had been frightened by certain quarters on the GST implementation.

"The tax should not be seen as having a big impact on consumers. Prices of goods go up and down, especially during festive seasons, which we are used to experiencing.

"We don't know if the impact is positive or negative. But as consumers, we must adjust ourselves to the conditions and take the best from the current situation," he said.

He said the actual grouse of consumers was the greed of traders who deliberately raised the prices of goods, adding that as consumers, they should know their rights by lodging a report if they felt cheated.

Meanwhile, economic analyst Datuk Prof Mohd Yusof said consumers needed six months to a year to get used to the GST and absorb it in their daily lives.

Mohd Yusof, who is also Kolej Universiti Insaniah (Kuin) Rector, said consumers must take advantage of its implementation to change their way of spending by only buying the goods they needed.

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