

Mufti's no GST for zakat contributors a personal view, says Fatwa council head

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The Federal Territories mufti's suggestion that zakat-paying Muslims be exempted from the goods and services tax (GST) is a personal view, National Fatwa Committee chairman Prof Emeritus Tan Sri Dr Abd Shukor Husin said today.

"I think it is his own personal view... it is not a decision. So what I can say is for us to give some time (for the GST implementation), because I also have my personal view.

"When I issue it, I don't want it (to be mistaken) as a fatwa," he said after attending the National Fatwa Committee Muzakarah in Putrajaya today.

Shukor was responding to reports that Datuk Zulkifli Mohamad had urged Putrajaya to exempt Muslims from paying GST if they have made the zakat (tithe) payment.

Zulkifli's proposal, which was put up on the Federal Territories mufti's Facebook page, also called on the federal government to reduce the tax from the current rate of 6%.

Shukor also reiterated the fatwa committee's stand that GST was considered as "harus" (advisable/neither forbidden nor recommended) as long as the government abided by six conditions.

"We need to give it a chance first, like a year or so, to really be able to see its advantages and disadvantages.

"It is 'harus' for the government to collect taxes, 'harus' with conditions that the government is committed to uphold Islamic teachings and the collection is for the country's development."

He also denied talks that the Fatwa Committee had simply come out with the 'hukum' (religious ruling), saying that they had consulted various stakeholders and carried out studies on the issue.

"I deny some quarters saying we simply come out with it. No, we carried out two studies and we looked into all views," he said, adding that Fatwa Committee would also be looking the matter of the GST matter from time-to-time.

When asked about the views of certain quarters that Islam allowed for tax based on need and not to cover leakages, he said all views had been taken into account and evaluated.

"Leakages are not our business, we give (the religious) views on the matter and that is also why, we suggested the need for it to be fair and assurance of no misuse." he

said. – April 20, 2015.

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