

Najib upset with those who moan over price hike but silent on BR1M
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By Hasbullah Awang Chik

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said he is disappointed with people who complained about price hike following the introduction of the good and services tax (GST) but kept quiet when receiving cash aid from the government.

Najib, who also holds the finance portfolio, said it was not the government's intention to burden the people, adding that the introduction of 1Malaysia People's Aid (BR1M) was meant to offset the price hike after the GST implementation.

"We introduced GST but at the same time, increased BR1M by RM300 this year.

"Unfortunately, when receiving the money, many just kept quiet. And then when prices started to go up a bit, they complain.

"The government has realised that there will be slight increase in prices and that was why there is a counter measure via BR1M, reduction in personal income tax of between 1% and 3%, lowering of corporate tax, etc."

Najib said this during a meeting with civil servants during the Finance Ministry's monthly assembly in Putrajaya this morning.

He said the government acknowledged that there were legitimate concerns regarding GST and would conduct surveys to prevent profiteering activities by certain parties taking advantage of the situation.

"I admit that some of these complaints come from people who do not understand the implementation. With this, we need to monitor the situation to identify the exact problem and resolve them.

"At the same time, we will also know if the complaint has any basis or simply because certain quarters are trying to take advantage.

"For example, if an item was previously subjected to the sales and service tax (SST), when the SST is abolished and replaced with the GST, they (sellers) should reduce their prices and then impose 6% (GST).

"But many maintained their prices and impose the 6% (on top of the SST)," he said.

Najib said he had asked the relevant authorities to pay attention to such cases and continue to implement a comprehensive and continuous enforcement.

He said people should understand that the GST was a reform of the tax system and would make it more efficient and effective. – May 19, 2015.

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