

**BN's Rompin candidate calls minister 'stupid' for linking polls to GST**  
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**By Mohd Farhan Darwis**

The Barisan Nasional (BN) candidate in the Rompin by-election today said minister Datuk Hasan Malek is "stupid" for saying that the poll to be held tomorrow will show whether voters are supportive of the goods and services tax (GST), while Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin has also rejected Hasan Malek's statement.

"When did he make the statement? It was a statement by a stupid minister," the BN candidate Datuk Hasan Arifin said to reporters today after attending an event at Felda Keratong 4, Pahang.

Hasan Malek, who is Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism minister had said during an event with traders in the parliamentary constituency yesterday that he believed voters in Rompin accept the GST and the by-election tomorrow would show that they supported the consumption tax.

The minister had said that he was troubled by rumours that people were against the GST but found that they were untrue when he came to Rompin to help in the BN's campaign.

"When we explained, they accepted the GST and were confident that it will help them in conducting business as well as giving long-term impact to the country," he had said when officiating a ceremony with bazaar Ramadan traders in Rompin yesterday.

"It is a wise decision made by the government and the rakyat have started to accept it. The polls will be a test to see whether they support or reject it," the minister had said.

However, Muhyiddin, who was present with the candidate Hasan Arifin today, said that the minister's statement should not be taken as a gauge of voter support in Rompin.

"It (GST) is one of many issues and problems, I don't think what Hasan said can be taken as an indicator. God-willing, we will win, but if we win, I would not make such an interpretation," Muhyiddin told the press today.

Muhyiddin also said it was important for BN to obtain feedback on the implementation of the consumption tax and its impact on people.

"I think I can say that many people don't agree. I understand, the feelings of anger. These are the factors we are facing, so I think we cannot say that it will be an indicator as there is also opposition to it," Muhyiddin said of GST, which was enforced from April 1.

Hasan Malek was yesterday quoted by The Sun as saying that he was confident that

people are beginning to accept the GST after efforts by his ministry to explain the tax's implementation.

"If we explain to them sincerely, they will accept GST, including the businesses. We can see more developments," he had said. – May 4, 2015.

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