

Najib calls GST 'saviour of Malaysian economy'

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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 26 — The Goods and Services Tax (GST) has proven to be the saviour of Malaysia's economy even though there are claims it burdens the people, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

He said GST revenue could cover the shortfall in government income as a result of the drop in world crude oil prices.

"This scenario (fall in oil prices) is beyond our control but thankfully we could cover the loss in government revenue because we were bold enough to introduce the GST.

"Although people say the government should not have implemented GST or make life difficult for the people, the fact is the GST is the saviour of our economy," he said when opening the Nu Sentral shopping mall and Menara 1 Sentrum owned by Pelaburan Hartanah Berhad (PHB) at KL Sentral here today.

He said if the Malaysian economy slumped, the impact including higher borrowing costs would be burdensome on the people.

Najib said although the move (to introduce the GST) was not a popular one, it had to be done in the interest of the people and nation.

The Prime Minister said through Budget 2016, the government had introduced various initiatives to help the people including providing tax relief to children who look after their parents to the tune of RM1,500 per parent.

"This encourages love for parents so that they are not left at old folks homes," he said.

Meantime, Najib said PHB had achieved much success in developing the Bumiputera economy since it started operations in 2007.

He said the Nu Sentral mall and Menara 1 Sentrum office block would enable Bumiputera entrepreneurs to share the spillovers of national development.

"Its location is very strategic because thousands use the KL Sentral transportation hub," he said.

He said the government through PHB would also launch trust funds from time to time to give opportunities to Bumiputeras to invest in the property sector.

Earlier, Najib had spent some time mingling with tenants at the mall and also bought a pair of sports shoes. — Bernama

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