

**GST unpopular but it saved economy, says Najib**  
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**By KC Nazari**

The government was brave to have introduced the goods and services tax (GST) as revenue collected from the consumption tax has saved the country's economy despite being unpopular, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said today.

Najib, who is also the finance minister, said Putrajaya made the move because the earnings from petroleum exports had fallen drastically following a drop in global oil prices.

"The situation was out of our control but we are thankful that we were able to accommodate the government's loss in revenue because we were brave enough to introduce the GST," he said when launching Menara 1Sentrum and the NuSentral mall in Kuala Lumpur today.

"And although the people said GST was not popular, the truth is, GST is the saviour of our country's economy.

"And if the economy deteriorates, the people will have to bear the pain because interest rates will go higher and each of us who borrows money for cars, houses and credit cards will have to pay higher costs."

Najib said people should understand the "real situation" and that an unpopular policy could well be the one that was most effective.

"If we were to merely take a glance, we would probably not realise that what is seen as unreasonable and troubling, is in fact the opposite.

"Today, it is proven that GST was a move that was accurate and right."

When tabling the Budget 2016 last Friday, Najib announced that the government had collected RM27 billion from GST so far and expected to obtain RM39 billion next year.  
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