

GST, public transport the top concerns

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PETALING JAYA — The Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the increase in public transport fees are among the main problems consumer groups hope to bring up with a high-level committee next month.

Malaysian Consumers Association secretary-general Datuk Amarjit Singh Gill said he hoped the government would consider reducing public transport fees.

“With global crude oil prices dropping,

the government should lower the price of public transport that has skyrocketed over the years,” he said.

“It will offset the rising cost of living burden especially for low-income earners.”

International crude oil futures benchmark Brent was trading at US\$37.58 (RM161) a barrel yesterday, compared with US\$57.33 (RM245) at the end of last year.

Amarjit said he lauded the government’s effort to set up the committee.

“The idea is good on paper but the implementation can be tricky. We will wait and see.”

He urged the committee to seriously consider the views of consumer groups when making or reversing policy decisions

to tackle rising cost of living issues.

Fomca president Datuk N. Marimuthu said a majority of Malaysians, especially those in urban areas, were suffering because of the increasing cost of living.

He said the committee was one way to ensure that the needs of consumers were taken care of.

“We will plan and work with everyone involved in the committee to ensure the welfare of the people is put first,” he said.

“We want to see prices of essential items come down, notably GST, public transport costs and housing.”

Marimuthu said there had been many plans by the government to address these issue but nothing had panned out so far.