

## **News Release**

16 July 2014

### **Majority believe Malaysia not ready for hudud**

BANGI –A survey carried among voters in Peninsular Malaysia found that 58% of Malay respondents report that the country is not ready to implement Islamic penal code (hudud laws) along with 59% and 61% Chinese and Indian respondents respectively.

Overall 59% of the respondents believe that the country is not ready to implement hudud laws. The survey found that only 25% of the total respondents and 30% of Malay respondents believe that the country is ready for hudud laws implementation at this time.

The same survey also found that based on what respondents perceived “the capacity of the judicial institutions and capability of the enforcement agencies” only 32% believe that hudud laws can be implemented fairly at the present time. Malay responses to this question found the community split: 44% believing that hudud laws implementation would be “fair” while 43% thought otherwise. Among other communities, perceptions were clearly in the negative with only 11% of Chinese and 17% of Indians responding positively to the question.

With respect to support for hudud, the survey found a small majority (53%) of the respondents stated that they support hudud laws. This number comprised 71% Malay respondents and both 26% of Chinese and Indian respondents respectively.

It should be noted that 20% of Malay respondents opposed hudud laws along with 65% and 69% Chinese and Indian respondents respectively. However, Malay voters under the age of 30 years old registered the highest level of support at 83% compared to other older age groups, consistent with Merdeka Center’s earlier findings in the 2011 study of Muslim youth sentiments.

Overall, only 56% of respondents reported “understanding what hudud” was about. This figure comprised 67% Malay, 38% Chinese and 51% Indian respondents.

Among Malay respondents, the survey found high support for hudud and yet at the same time low level of readiness to see it implemented. In our opinion this possibly reflects their desire to conform to established norms about the primacy of the Sharia laws at a personal level but at the same time indicate hesitation to see it fully implemented publicly.

The survey was carried out by the Merdeka Center for Opinion Research between 12<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> April 2014. For this survey, 1,009 registered voters comprising 60% Malay, 31% Chinese and 9% Indian respondents were interviewed by telephone. Respondents were selected on the basis of random stratified sampling along ethnicity, gender and state of residence. The interviews were carried out in the preferred language of the respondents.

## **About Merdeka Center for Opinion Research**

Merdeka Center for Opinion Research was formally established in 2001 as an independent organization focused on public opinion research and socio-economic analysis. Merdeka's mission is to act as a bridge between ordinary Malaysians and other stakeholders with the leading members of the nation – by collecting public opinion studies and expressing them through survey results, analysis and position papers. For details, visit: [www.merdeka.org](http://www.merdeka.org)

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