

## News Release

August 28<sup>st</sup> 2015

### Malaysian public split on BERSIH 4 Rally

BANGI – A survey carried out between 15<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>th</sup> August 2015 found that 43% of the respondents view the BERSIH4 favorably while 47% of the respondents unfavorable. The survey found that supporters of the rally were distinguished along gender, ethnicity, urban-rural as well as socio-economic lines.

Supporters of the rally were mostly drawn from among males (48% as opposed to 39% women), urban voters (51% favorable as opposed to 31% among rural voters) and those with mid-level income or above (57% favorable among those from households of RM3000/month as opposed to only 28% from those with less than RM3,000 monthly household incomes). Perhaps the most marked findings was that the rally was supported by 81% of the ethnic Chinese respondents and 51% of the ethnic Indian respondents but only favored by 23% of the ethnic Malay voters interviewed.

The details of the findings as follows:

		Favourable	Unfavourable	DK/NR
Overall		43%	47%	10%
Gender	Male	48%	44%	8%
	Female	39%	50%	11%
Setting	Urban	51%	41%	8%
	Rural	31%	57%	12%
Ethnicity	Malay	23%	70%	7%
	Chinese	81%	10%	9%
	Indian	51%	22%	27%
Internet	With Internet	48%	43%	9%
	Without Internet	29%	57%	14%
Media	Main stream	26%	66%	8%
	Alternative	64%	27%	9%
Age	Below 40	46%	46%	8%
	Above 40	41%	48%	11%
Income	Below RM 3k	28%	60%	12%
	Above RM 3k	57%	38%	5%

### Reasons for Supporting and Opposing the Rally

When asked via an open ended question about reasons why they supported the BERSIH 4 rally, respondents in the survey gave the following principal reasons:

1. Wanted to see improvements in institutions such as the electoral process, parliament (39%)
2. To express unhappiness with the government (25%)
3. To express dissatisfaction with the performance of PM Najib Razak (13%)
4. To express anger over the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (11%)

Those who responded that they did not support the rally articulated the following reasons:

1. Fear of violence and chaos (52%)
2. Does not think that BERSIH can achieve anything significant (22%)
3. Fear the Malay community will be marginalized if PM Najib is forced to step down (4%)

In our opinion, the survey reveals a Peninsular Malaysia electorate that is polarized along ethnic and socio-economic lines. While the BERSIH rally in Kuala Lumpur is likely going to attract a high level of participation in terms of crowd size, as indicated by the overwhelming sale of merchandise and donations received by the organizer, the survey suggests that participants will likely be drawn from urban, Internet-savvy and non-Bumiputera voters.

The survey was carried out by the Merdeka Center for Opinion Research between 15<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>th</sup> August 2015. For this survey, 1,010 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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