

News Release
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52% give positive approval for Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim

PETALING JAYA - Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim recorded the highest approval rating at 52% compared to other political leaders in a survey released by Merdeka Center today.

Recently returned UMNO leader Khairy Jamaluddin followed closely with a 50% approval rating. Among opposition leaders listed in the survey, former Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin recorded 36% approval rating, outperforming newly appointed Perikatan Nasional chairman and Terengganu Menteri Besar Ahmad Samsuri Mokhtar at 28%.

PAS President Abdul Hadi Awang recorded 25% approval rating while UMNO President and Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi at 24%. Former Minister of Economy Rafizi Ramli, who recently left PKR to form Bersama, recorded 32% approval rating.

Despite growing international uncertainties and economic challenges, 42% of Malaysian voters continue to believe that the country is moving in the right direction, unchanged from the figures recorded in December 2025 and February 2026.

However, half of the respondents or 50% remain unconvinced, saying the country is heading in the wrong direction. Notably, this marks an improvement compared to the period between June and August 2025, when fewer than four in ten Malaysians felt the country was moving in the right direction.

Across ethnic groups, 39% of Malay respondents said the country is moving in the right direction, compared to 50% among Chinese respondents and 33% among Indian respondents. By age group, respondents aged between 21 and 30 recorded the highest positive sentiment at 57%, while those aged 51 to 60 were the least optimistic at just 32%.

When asked about the factors influencing their view of the country's wrong direction, 53% respondents cited economic concerns as their main reason. Key concerns included the overall state of the economy, the high cost of living and fuel prices. Similarly, when asked about the biggest issue facing the people of this country today, 73% of respondents identified economic-related issues, highlighting the central role of economic concerns in shaping public assessments of the country. This trend was consistent across all ethnic groups.

Meanwhile, 51% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction when asked on how the government handled the economy, slightly higher than the 46% who said they were satisfied. Nevertheless, compared to the overall trend throughout 2025, dissatisfaction with the government's economic management has declined significantly.

In terms of overall approval of the federal government, 50% of respondents expressed satisfaction, while 48% said they were dissatisfied. Across ethnic groups, both Muslim and Non-Muslim Bumiputera respondents from Sabah and Sarawak registered the highest satisfaction levels at 68%, followed by Chinese respondents at 53%. Satisfaction among Indian and Malay respondents stood at 46% and 44% respectively. By age group, satisfaction was highest among younger respondents aged 21 to 30, with 64% expressing approval of the federal government.

As the Pakatan Harapan-led government enters its fourth year in office since taking power in November 2022, attention has increasingly shifted toward whether it will be able to complete its political reform agenda before the next general election. Parliament is expected to vote on several constitutional amendments in the current session, including proposals to limit the Prime Minister's tenure to a maximum of two terms or ten years, as well as separating the roles of the Attorney General and Public Prosecutor.

Public support for these reforms remains strong. The survey found that 73% of respondents support limiting the Prime Minister's term, while support for separating the Attorney General and Public Prosecutor roles stood even higher at 84%. In addition, 58% of respondents supported the proposal for direct elections for the Mayor of Kuala Lumpur, while only 19% opposed it. It should be noted that the support for these political reforms showed little variation between Malay and non-Malay respondents, indicating that these proposals have gained broad cross-ethnic support.

The survey was carried out by the Merdeka Center between 12th March and 9th April 2026 to gauge voters' perceptions of current developments. 1,209 registered voters comprising 51% Malay, 27% Chinese, 8% Indian, 7% Muslim Bumiputra, 7% Non-Muslim Bumiputra, (from Sabah and Sarawak), reflective of the national electoral profile, were interviewed via fixed line and mobile telephones. Respondents were selected on the basis of random stratified sampling along age group, ethnicity, gender and state constituency. The poll was funded by Merdeka Center's internally generated financial resources.

About Merdeka Center

Merdeka Center was formally established in 2001 as an independent organization focused on public opinion research and socio-economic analysis. Merdeka Center'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

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