



News Release

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2 months after GE15: PM's approval rating at 68%, Government at 54%

BANGI – Over two-thirds of Malaysian voters gave 10th prime minister Anwar Ibrahim positive ratings in a survey carried out in the second month following the 15th general election.

It should be noted that the ratings were attained on the support of 73% ethnic Chinese, 91% ethnic Indian, about 70% of Sabah and Sarawak bumiputera, and 60% Malay voters. Only 20% of voters report dissatisfaction with his performance at that moment in time.

The same survey also saw 54% voters reporting as satisfied towards the performance of the new unity federal government, while 25% report dissatisfaction. The federal government obtained positive responses from 67% ethnic Indians, 65% ethnic Chinese, 42% non-Muslim Bumiputeras, 39% Muslim Bumiputeras, and 48% Malay voters, nationwide. It should be noted that nearly one-quarter of voters refrained from giving their views, indicative of cautiousness after four years of tumultuous political developments that had gripped the country.

Although the sense of cautiousness appear to prevail, there is also some optimism in many indicators as noted below:

- 48% of voters believe that the country is now headed in the right direction, compared to just 20% October 2022;
- 43% of voters expressed optimism about the national economy in the coming year, up from 23% in October 2022;
- 38% of voters were optimistic about their personal financial prospects compared to 26% in October 2022.

The strong “wait-and-see” attitude is likely underpinned by strong voter concerns about economic growth and cost of living, which was mentioned by nearly 20%, and 19% respectively in the survey as issues the new government should focus on. This was followed by increasing investment in the economy (12%), fighting corruption (10%), and improving the quality of education (9%).

The survey also found that a vast majority, 79% of voters welcomed the results of the election. Additionally voters were also asked to rate their views on a number of developments surrounding the formation of the new unity government as follows:

- 83% accepted the King's appointment of Anwar Ibrahim as the 10th prime minister;
- 77% believed that the unity government can bring about stability and inclusiveness in the country's politics;
- 75% accept Perikatan Nasional's decision to remain as opposition; and
- 66% accepted Barisan Nasional's decision to join the Pakatan Harapan-led unity government.

In our opinion, the survey results show a Malaysian electorate that is keen to put the instability that had mired the country's politics in the past, and move on to provide room for the new leadership to prove themselves. While many accept the unity government, the public is also reserving their assessment on the new government. A key factor in determining public satisfaction will be how well it can address the long standing problem of tepid economic growth and rising cost of living. Reception towards the revamped 2023 national budget due to be tabled in the coming weeks will be an important milestone that will drive public response towards the new administration.

The survey was carried out by the Merdeka Center for Opinion Research between 26th December 2022 to 15th January 2023 to gauge voters' perceptions of current developments. 1,209 registered voters comprising 52% Malay, 29% Chinese, 7% Indian, 6% Muslim Bumiputra, 6% 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 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

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