

## **News Release**

February 27<sup>th</sup> 2015

### **PM's approval rating slips to 44%**

BANGI – A survey carried out between 21<sup>st</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> January 2015 found that 44% of Peninsular Malaysia voters approved of the Prime Minister's handling of his job. This figure reflects a decrease from the 48% approval rating recorded in an earlier survey carried out by Merdeka Center in late October 2014.

In the January 2015 survey, 46% of the respondents disapproved of the Prime Minister's handling of his job.

Correspondingly, the survey also found that 47% of voters felt that the country was “headed in the wrong direction” compared to 39% who felt it was “headed on the right direction”. The negative sentiments were largely driven by economic factors such as concerns over high cost of living, the general condition of the economy as well as concerns over the impact of the upcoming implementation of the Goods and Services Tax on the public.

Other reasons driving negative perceptions about the country's direction includes perceived poor administration and continued racial polarisation in the society. Those who felt the country was on positive track based their views on the prevailing sense of peace and security, favourable economic condition and infrastructure development and continued welfare assistance from the government.

### **Approval rating for the government declines**

Public satisfaction with the government also remains at the same level compared to the last survey released in October 2014, whereby 38% reported that they were “happy” with the government. At the January 2015 poll, 43% of the respondents found either “dissatisfied” or “angry” with the performance of the government. Again, we attribute this to public dissatisfaction as likely arising from pressure on rising cost of living, depressed commodity prices in rural areas as well as concerns on increased polarisation along communal and sectarian lines in the country.

### **Economy still the topmost concern of voters**

Economic concerns remain the top issue among voters in January 2015 at 62%. This is significantly lower compared to 71% at October 2014. The decrease of percentage for economic concerns as the top issue from October 2014 (71%) to January 2015 (62%) can be largely contributed by two main reasons: drop in fuel prices and increased attention on the massive floods in East coast and other parts of Malaysia during December 2014.

The survey was carried out by the Merdeka Center for Opinion Research between 21<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> January 2015. For this survey, 1,008 registered voters comprising 60% Malay, 30% Chinese and 10% 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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