



News Release

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Government's Approval Rating Declined Significantly while NLD is Expected to Secure Majority Votes

YANGON – A survey carried out between 14th and 31st October 2015, found that less than half (43 percent) of the respondents said that the union government is doing a good job. The approval rating dropped significantly from a survey done in February 2014 that recorded the approval rating at 89 percent; representing a huge decline of 46 percentage points. The low approval rating can be observed across all demographic variables.

The survey also found that overwhelming majority respondents were not happy with the performance of the government in several key areas. The government recorded moderate positive rating in the areas of fighting corruption and protecting religious freedom. While low positive rating in the areas of infrastructure development, gender equality, ethnic based equality, improving education, bringing peace process and democratic reforms. The government is perceived to perform badly (negative rating) in controlling inflation, environmental protection, fighting crime, providing housing, providing employment and delivering quality healthcare.

However, the approval rating of President Thein Sein remains high at 72 percent but it has also dropped very significantly compared to the February 2014 survey which recorded the approval rating at 91 percent; a drop of 19 percentage points.

Opposition Leader Aung San Suu Kyi's approval rating is also high at 70 percent but it is slightly lower than President's Thein Sein's rating. It is important to note that the number of non-response is quite significant (14 percent) for Suu Kyi. The non-response could represent those who approve the opposition leader but held reservations over revealing their responses.

Voting Intentions

In line with the declining popularity of the ruling party, the opposition parties especially NLD is set to lead the race to capture majority votes in the 2015 general elections. The survey found that 44.7 percent of the respondents said that they going to vote for NLD

while 30.1 percent indicated their intention to vote for USDP. A significant number (6.5 percent) of the respondents expressed their intention to vote for state parties and only 1 percent said they going to vote for other national parties. It is important to note that 12 percent of the respondents opted not to give their responses who might be inclined to vote for the opposition but too fearful to express their voting choices.

The voting patterns differ quite significantly between the region and ethnic states. More voters (49.8 percent) expressed their intention to vote for NLD as compared to USDP (28.8 percent) in the region. In the ethnic states, the popularity contest is very close with USDP slightly ahead at 33.5 percent while NLD at 31.2 percent. Ethnic parties are also very popular in the ethnic states with 22.2 percent respondents said that they are going to vote for ethnic parties.

The survey was commissioned by a consortium led by Mizzima Media Group while Merdeka Center for Opinion Research (Malaysia) acted as the technical advisor. 1,200 adult Myanmar citizens were sampled as respondents via face-to-face interviews. Respondents were selected on multi-stage random sampling. The interviews were administrated in Burmese while interpreters assisted in ethnic minority areas. The survey covered the whole of Myanmar except for Chin state flooding prevented interviews from taking place. The survey is weighted to reflect the national population.

About Mizzima

Mizzima was the first exile media to move back inside Myanmar in January 2012, after the country opened up for democratic changes. Mizzima Media Co. Ltd. produces daily newspaper in Myanmar, a weekly business magazine in English, television programs on business, sports, women and entertainment and websites in both Myanmar (www.mizzimaburmese.com) and English (www.mizzima.com). Additionally, Mizzima media products such as SMS, Radio News, Video News and Images are also available on various digital platforms and mobile phones in Myanmar. Mizzima also prides itself on our active cooperation with other national and international stakeholders in the media reform process in Myanmar.

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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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