Perspectives on Issues, the Economy, Leadership and Voting Intentions

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Contents

1 Methodology
2 Respondent Profile
3 Overview, National and Local Issues
4 Perceptions towards Various Factors
5 NCER and PGCC
6 Perceptions towards Elected Representatives
7 Perceptions towards State and National Leadership
8 Views towards Election
Methodology

• 1,221 randomly selected respondents aged 21+ were interviewed via telephone for the survey.

• Respondents were selected via random stratified sampling method along the lines of parliamentary district of residence, ethnicity, gender and age.

• Survey was carried out between 18th to 27th January 2008.

• Survey margin of error estimated at ±2.80%.
Respondent Profile

Gender:
- Male: 49%
- Female: 51%

Age:
- 21-30: 37%
- 31-40: 22%
- 41-50: 20%
- 51 above: 21%

Voting status:
- Every election: 77%
- Every other election: 9%
- Never voted before: 14%

Total of household income:
- < RM 1,500 per mth: 34%
- RM 1501-RM 3000: 17%
- RM 3001-RM 5000: 10%
- > RM 5,000 per mth: 10%
- Don’t know: 4%
- No response: 4%

Marital status:
- Single: 21%
- Married: 74%
- Divorced: 1%
- Widowed: 33%

Ethnicity:
- Malay: 33%
- Chinese: 56%
- Indian: 11%
Respondent Profile

Religion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinduism</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taoism</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed-private</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed-Govt</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own business</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homemaker</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parliamentary district

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kepala Batas</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasek Gelugor</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagan</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permatang Pauh</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukit Mertajam</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batu Kawan</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nibong Tebal</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukit Bendera</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanjong</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jelutong</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukit Gelugor</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayan Baru</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balik Pulau</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methodology

- 1,221 randomly selected respondents aged 21+ were interviewed via telephone for the survey.

- Respondents were selected via random stratified sampling method along the lines of parliamentary district of residence, ethnicity, gender and age.

- Survey was carried out between 18\textsuperscript{th} to 27\textsuperscript{th} January 2008.

- Survey margin of error estimated at \( \pm 2.80\% \).
National & Local Issues
Overview, National and Local Issues

- Overall large majority remain satisfied with conditions in Penang, findings over time note the stability of this sentiment.

- Likewise across ethnic groups, national issues appear to not have serious impact on life among the public in the state.

- However, top three issues are similar to that of national concerns and sit under the purview of federal bodies: rising prices, crime and ethnic issues (which have sprung into the foreground in the wake of the Hindraf demonstration).

- While inflation affects all communities, Indians were concerned over ethnic equality and the Chinese with rising crime, Malays with crime against children (Sharlinie case) and social problems among the youth.

- Public appeared satisfied only in response to authorities’ action on crimes toward children but remain dissatisfied on the top five issues.

- In their neighborhoods, voters are mostly concerned about crime, traffic and inflation.

- Majority however are not satisfied with local and state government performance on these matters.
Q1. Generally speaking, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way things are going in Penang at present?
Satisfaction with condition of state across time

- Nov 06 (820): 70%
- Mar 07 (1012): 75%
- Jul 07 (809): 71%
- Jan 08 (1221): 71%
Q2. What in your view, is the most important problem in the country today?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Price hike and inflation</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfavorable economic condition in general</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and public safety in general</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence against children</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug abuse</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral decline in general</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social problems among youth</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic congestion in general</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public transportation</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollution &amp; Environment</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uneven development across area</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic affairs &amp; racial inequality</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple demolition</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education system</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influx of illegal immigrants</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street demonstration</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q2. What in your view, is the most important problem in the country today?

- Price hike and inflation
- Unfavorable economic condition in general
- Violence against children
- Moral decline in general
- Traffic congestion in general
- Pollution & Environment (e.g: rubbish / cleanliness)
- Ethnic affairs & racial inequality
- Corruption in general (e.g: national leader / civil servants)
- Education system
- Street demonstration (e.g: Hindraf)
- None

Unemployment
- Crime and public safety in general
- Drug abuse
- Social problems among youth
- Public transportation (e.g: bad road system and conditions e.t.t)
- Uneven development across area
- Temple demolition
- Administration
- Influx of illegal immigrants
- Others
- Don't know

Chart 13
Top 5 national issues vs. Level of satisfaction for solution

- **Price hike and inflation**
  - Very satisfied: 9%
  - Somewhat satisfied: 28%
  - Somewhat dissatisfied: 44%
  - Very dissatisfied: 21%
  - Don't know: 4%

- **Crime and public safety in general**
  - Very satisfied: 2%
  - Somewhat satisfied: 28%
  - Somewhat dissatisfied: 55%
  - Very dissatisfied: 14%
  - Don't know: 1%

- **Ethnic affairs & racial inequality**
  - Very satisfied: 4%
  - Somewhat satisfied: 21%
  - Somewhat dissatisfied: 42%
  - Very dissatisfied: 29%
  - Don't know: 2%

- **Violence against children**
  - Very satisfied: 6%
  - Somewhat satisfied: 50%
  - Somewhat dissatisfied: 27%
  - Very dissatisfied: 10%
  - Don't know: 6%

- **Corruption in general**
  - Very satisfied: 2%
  - Somewhat satisfied: 16%
  - Somewhat dissatisfied: 41%
  - Very dissatisfied: 41%

Chart 14
Q4. What in your view, is the most important problem that needs solving in your area?

- Price hike and inflation: 8%
- Rising cost of living: 3%
- Unfavorable economic condition in general: 2%
- Crime and public safety: 21%
- Drug abuse: 3%
- Moral decline in general: 2%
- Social problems among youth: 3%
- Traffic congestion, road conditions & transportation: 10%
- Facilities problems & cleanliness: 3%
- Flood & Pollution: 2%
- Uneven development across areas: 2%
- Racial inequality: 3%
- Inefficiency within government: 1%
- Influx of illegal immigrants: 1%
- Others: 1%
- None: 33%
- Don't know: 2%

Chart 15
Top 5 local issues vs. Level of satisfaction with solution

- Crime and public safety: 30% Very satisfied, 51% Somewhat satisfied, 15% Very dissatisfied, 2% Don't know, 2% No response
- Traffic congestion, road conditions & transportation: 2% Very satisfied, 29% Somewhat satisfied, 48% Somewhat dissatisfied, 18% Very dissatisfied, 1% Don't know, 2% No response
- Price hike and inflation: 33% Very satisfied, 42% Somewhat satisfied, 23% Very dissatisfied, 2% Don't know, 2% No response
- Facilities problems & cleanliness: 2% Very satisfied, 32% Somewhat satisfied, 36% Somewhat dissatisfied, 24% Very dissatisfied, 3% Don't know, 3% No response
- Drug abuse: 11% Very satisfied, 39% Somewhat satisfied, 28% Somewhat dissatisfied, 20% Very dissatisfied, 3% Don't know, 3% No response

Chart 16
Q9. Recently there has been some media reports about the marginalization of Malays in Penang. In your view, who is mostly to blame for this problem?
Views on Malay marginalization across time

- Malay leaders
- The Malays themselves
- Don't know
- the Gerakan-led state government
- Malays are not marginalized
- No response
- The federal government
- Others

Nov 06 (802): 4% Malay leaders, 8% The Malays themselves, 9% Don't know, 35% the Gerakan-led state government, 17% Malays are not marginalized, 6% No response, 7% Others

Mar 07 (1012): 4% Malay leaders, 11% The Malays themselves, 8% Don't know, 32% the Gerakan-led state government, 17% Malays are not marginalized, 6% No response, 6% Others

Jan 07 (1221): 4% Malay leaders, 18% The Malays themselves, 6% Don't know, 37% the Gerakan-led state government, 11% Malays are not marginalized, 5% No response, 6% Others

Chart 18
The Economy and Other Factors
Perceptions across Various Factors

- 12 factors were tested: voter sentiments were positive on:
  - Education
  - Public transportation
  - Quality of national leadership

- But sentiments on other factors were moderate to adverse:
  - Personal income, The economy in general, Treatment by government, Traffic
  - Social problems, Affordable housing, Prices, Crime, Corruption

- Overall, public sentiments have been in downtrend over items like prices and affordable housing but sentiments over public transport have improved – thanks to the introduction of Rapid Penang

- Sentiments over the economy was also subdued, and favorable only amongst a majority of Malay voters

- But more worryingly, sentiments over personal income appeared increasingly adverse
Q7. Can you tell me how favourable or unfavourable are things with respect to the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Favourable</th>
<th>Unfavourable</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prices of consumer items and services</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The economy in general</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your personal income</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime rate</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public transportation</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate of social problems</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 21
Q7. Can you tell me how favourable or unfavourable are things with respect to the following:

- **Level of corruption**
  - Favourable: 21%
  - Unfavourable: 5%
  - Treatment of your race by the government: 4%
  - Quality of national leadership: 9%
  - Traffic conditions: 4%
  - Affordable housing: 7%

Chart 22
Favourability of prices of consumer items and services across time

- Nov 06 (820)
- Mar 07 (1012)
- Jul 07 (809)
- Jan 08 (1221)

- 37%
- 48%
- 39%
- 21%
Favourability of personal income across time

- November 06 (820) - 65%
- March 07 (1012) - 63%
- July 07 (809) - 54%
- January 08 (1221) - 47%

Chart 24
Favourability of property prices across time

- Nov 06 (820): 32%
- Mar 07 (1012): 39%
- Jan 08 (1221): 32%

Chart 26
Q8. How do you expect the economy to be one year from now? Would it...

- Strongly improve (29%)
- Somewhat improve (33%)
- Stay the same (9%)
- Somewhat decline (9%)
- Strongly decline (14%)
- Don't know (5%)
- No response (1%)

Chart 27
NCER & PGCC
NCER and PGCC

NCER

- Awareness of the NCER is moderate, only half of the public appears aware and mostly prevalent among Malays.

- Accordingly, perceptions that the developments under NCER will benefit them personally were prominent only among Malay voters and subdued among Chinese and Indian voters.

- Survey found that among Chinese who were aware, a larger proportion were inclined to feel that the NCER would not make a difference or would not benefit them than otherwise.

- Sentiments among Indian voters were split.

PGCC

- Awareness of PGCC was marginally higher at 54%, again, higher among Malay voters.

- Majority of Malay voters were positive on PGCC but plurality of Chinese and Indian voters were negative on the development project.
Q10. Do you know what is Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER)?

- Yes: 49%
- No/ Don't know: 51%
Q10. Do you know what is Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER)?
Q11. To what extent do you think development under NCER will benefit the standard of living and income of your family?
Q11. To what extent do you think development under NCER will benefit the standard of living and income of your family?
Q12. Some people say that the Penang Global City Center will worsen conditions in Georgetown while others say it will boost the local economy. Which one of the two views is closest to yours?
Q12. Some people say that the Penang Global City Center will worsen conditions in Georgetown while others say it will boost the local economy. Which one of the two views is closest to yours?
Perceptions of Elected Representatives

Chart 36
Q13. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the performance of the Member of Parliament in your area?
Satisfaction with performance of MP across time

* Worded as “approval rating of MP”
Perceptions on State and National Leadership

- Dr. Koh Tsu Koon’s approval rating appears stable over time

- But attitudes differ across ethnic groups – lower among Malays but higher among the Chinese

- Voters appeared uncertain on whether he should remain chief minister or enter federal politics
Q15. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of the way Dr. Koh Tsu Koon is performing his job as the chief minister of Penang?

- Strongly approve: 50%
- Somewhat approve: 23%
- Somewhat disapprove: 8%
- Strongly dissapprove: 7%
- Don’t know: 11%
- No response: 1%

Chart 40
Q15. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of the way Dr. Koh Tsu Koon is performing his job as the chief minister of Penang?
Dr. Koh Tsu Koon’s approval rating across time

- Nov 06 (820): 57%
- Mar 07 (1012): 64%
- Jul 07 (809): 65%
- Jan 08 (1221): 61%
Q16. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of the way Abdullah Ahmad Badawi is performing his job as the prime minister?
Q16. How strongly do you approve or disapprove of the way Abdullah Ahmad Badawi is performing his job as the prime minister?
Abdullah’s approval rating in Penang

Chart 45
Views towards Elections

- Issues pertaining to the economy appeared most important among voters
- Crime issues factored prominently among the Chinese
- While issues pertaining to ethnic equality again factored significantly among Indian voters
Q23. Which is most important to you in an election?

- How issues or problems are being addressed by leaders: 33%
- Capability of the party: 26%
- The quality of the candidates: 33%
- Don't know: 1%
- No response: 7%
Q6. Which one of the following is most important to you when voting during the next general elections?

- Economic related issues: 34%
- Crime and public safety: 26%
- Social problems: 11%
- Religious/ethnic issues: 10%
- Local issues: 12%
- Corruption: 4%
- Don't know: 2%
- No response: 4%