

News Release

December 18, 2013

PM's approval rating slides on increasing economic worries

BANGI –A survey carried among voters in Peninsular Malaysia found that the Prime Minister's approval rating had declined significantly to 52% in December 2013 from 62% in August 2013 with all segments having recorded significant declines over the period under review. These can be seen in the table below:

Table 1: PM's Approval Rating

Segment	December 2013	August 2013	Variance
Malay	66%	73%	-7%
Chinese	21%	36%	-15%
Indian	57%	76%	-19%
Voters w Internet	42%	54%	-12%
Voters w/o Internet	70%	75%	-5%
Voters under 40years old	45%	57%	-12%
Household income under RM1,500/month	68%	80%	-12%

The timing of this poll took place after the reduction of fuel subsidies in September 2013, tabling of the 2014 national budget during which the government announced the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax or GST (to be implemented in 2015), as well as additional statements on the increase of electricity tariff rates slated for January 2014.

Concern over the economy, particularly in the form of rising costs and inflation rose to its highest ever recorded level of up to 67% of all respondents.

This survey also found that 55% of Peninsular Malaysia voters reporting that they do not quite understand how the Goods and Services Tax will work and affect them. Additionally, 54% of respondents report that they do not believe in government leaders' statements about the country's economic situation.

Correspondingly, the number of respondents expressing "happiness" with the government has also declined to 38% compared to 50% in August 2013. The survey records significant reduction in positive attitudes from across major ethnic groups and other segments as follows:

Table 2: Perception Towards Government

Segment	December 2013	August 2013	Variance
Malay	52%	67%	-15%
Chinese	10%	15%	-5%
Indian	40%	52%	-12%
Voters w Internet	31%	40%	-9%
Voters w/o Internet	51%	67%	-16%
Voters under 40 years old	36%	45%	-9%
Household income under RM1,500/month	54%	69%	-15%

The survey was carried out by the Merdeka Center for Opinion Research between 4th and 12th December 2013 and thus partly coincided with the UMNO general assembly. In addition, Merdeka Center is also including data from previously unreleased opinion surveys conducted in June 2013 and August 2013.

For the December 2013 survey, 1,005 registered voters comprising 60% Malay, 31% Chinese and 9% 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. The June 2013 survey comprised 1006 respondents and the August 2013 survey comprised 1008 respondents - both these surveys were conducted in the same manner as the December 2013 survey.

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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