

Abdullah unperturbed by drop in popularity
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Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today described his drop in popularity as one which was common for all politicians.

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wanita umno pak lah meet rafidah shahrizat event 040808 07" That's the fate of all politicians everywhere. Up and down. What's important is what you do before you leave," he said when asked to comment on a massive plunge in his popularity rating as surveyed by a local polling organisation.

About 54 percent of those surveyed expressed dissatisfaction with the prime minister, while 42 percent said they felt otherwise - resulting in more Malaysians disapproved of him than approved.

The opinion poll - among 1,030 Malaysians - was conducted between July 4-16 by the independent Merdeka Center for Opinion Research and aimed at gauging voters' perceptions of current issues, the state of the economy and leadership.

The survey found that Abdullah's popularity plunged to below 50 percent for the very first time from a record high of 91 percent in late 2004 - months after he won his first term as prime minister.

His approval rating was at 61 percent just before the March 8 general elections. In April, it went down to 53 percent and currently it is at 42 percent.

Obsessed with Anwar factor

approval for pm pak lah plunges merdeka center survey 010808 The survey, which was conducted by telephone, targeted Malaysians throughout the peninsula who were randomly selected and structured along the national electorate profile to achieve proportional balance in terms of gender, ethnicity and state.

The survey's margin of error is estimated at plus or minus 3.1 percent.

Merdeka Center executive director Ibrahim Suffian told Malaysiakini last week the decline in Abdullah's approval ratings over the past few months was not only restricted to the widespread anger over rising food and fuel prices.

The continuing 'bickering' and political uncertainty - both within and outside Abdullah's Umno - has also been a source of concern, he said.

merdeka center survey 2008 abdullah ahmad badawi pak lah performance as prime minister Commenting on the premier's plunging approval rating, DAP leader Lim Kit Siang today said that Abdullah might go down in history as the worst Prime Minister of Malaysia despite his glorious electoral mandate in 2004.

Lim also added that the Abdullah administration was "terribly obsessed and mortally worried about the Anwar (Ibrahim) factor in Malaysian politics".

"Otherwise, why should Abdullah be dwelling on the subject of Anwar in the past two consecutive days, as if he has nothing more important to fret about," he asked in a statement.

"I call on Abdullah to take the bold and courageous step to drop Anwar's sodomy persecution as the first step to end the free-fall in public confidence in him as prime minister," he added.

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