

# 69PC HAPPY WITH PM

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Bread-and-butter issues remain the focus of most survey respondents

PETALING JAYA

SIXTY-NINE per cent of Malaysian voters are satisfied with Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin's performance as prime minister, according to a survey by Merdeka Centre for Opinion Research completed on Aug 10.

"The survey found some significant ethnic variances, where nine out of 10 Malays and Bumiputeras from Sabah and Sarawak gave the prime minister the thumbs up, while 65 per cent of Indians and 33 per cent of Chinese were satisfied with him.

"The prime minister's approval rating continues to be in a comfortable, positive territory considering that he has held the position since March 2020. Similar tendencies were also found in the public evaluation of the federal government.

"Fifty-eight per cent of voters are happy with the performance of the Perikatan Nasional government led by the prime minister,

while 28 per cent were dissatisfied and angry," Merdeka Centre co-founder and programmes director Ibrahim Suffian said yesterday.

He said the income gap was one of the indicators on who approved or disapproved of the performance of the government.

He said about three-quarters of respondents with a household income of less than RM2,000 per month were positive about the federal government, but only 40 per cent of respondents with a household income of higher than RM7,000 per month were positive.

He said 51 per cent of respondents felt the country was headed in the right direction. The number, he added, was slightly lower than the one recorded in May, but it was significantly higher than the last six months.

"Between July 2019 and February 2020, only a quarter of Malaysians thought the country was moving on the right track. For those who thought the country was in the right direction, 26 per cent of them attributed it to the good administration of the government, while 21 per cent were happy with the leadership.



The survey by Merdeka Centre for Opinion Research found that 93 per cent of Malaysian voters are satisfied with how the government managed the Covid-19 pandemic. FILE PIC

"Meanwhile, 34 per cent of respondents feel that the country is on the wrong track. Almost one-third (31 per cent) are frustrated because of perceived political instability, and 17 per cent complained about economic problems, such as unemployment and an adverse business climate."

The poll showed that bread-and-butter issues remained a focus among Malaysians, with six out of 10 respondents being concerned about the economy.

"Affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, health and wellness were the second largest issue voters were concerned about (10.1 per cent). Only 3.5 per cent and 2.6 per cent thought race relations and political issues were the country's main problem, respectively."

The survey also found that 93 per cent of respondents were satisfied with how the government managed the Covid-19 pandemic.

Besides that, 68 per cent and 61 per cent agreed the government was helpful to those in need and managed the economy well, respectively.

At the same time, perception of the government's performance in fighting corruption dropped five per cent within the three-month period, from 43 to 38 per cent.

The survey also gauged public approval of the government's performance in May and August in managing the Covid-19 pandemic (which saw a two per cent increase in August from 91 per cent in May), helping those in need (three per cent drop from 71 per cent to 68 per cent), managing the economy (three per cent drop from 64 per cent to 61 per cent), establishing the rule of law (53 per cent in May, while August's figure is unavailable), creating job opportunities (one per cent drop from 42 per cent to 41 per cent), fighting corruption (five per cent drop from 43 per cent to 38 per cent).

The findings for public approval, Ibrahim said, were based on a poll done between July and August.

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Merdeka Centre said Perikatan Nasional enjoyed "the highest positive perception from the voters today" among contemporary coalitions and political parties in Malaysia.

More than half, or 51 per cent, of respondents view it positively and only 27 per cent negatively.

"On the other hand, only 37 per cent had a positive view of Muafakat Nasional, and the number is slightly lower than its component parties — Barisan Nasional (40 per cent) and Pas (39 per cent).

"Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia, which has expressed interest in joining MN recently, only scored a 28 per cent positive view and 39 per cent is negative."

The survey found that Pakatan Harapan scored the highest negative rating at 52 per cent, and only 25 per cent of respondents were happy with the coalition comprising PKR, DAP, and Amanah.

The survey also found that 60 per cent of Malay voters supported Bersatu's decision to join Muafakat Nasional, the coalition formed by Umno and Pas last year.