

Najib Is Top Choice For PM, Says UM Study

THE MALAYSIAN INSIDER

06 Jan 2018

By MT Webmaster

(TMI) – Najib Razak is the preferred leader to be prime minister, according to an electoral survey carried out in 12 parliamentary seats by the University of Malaya between July and December.

Najib polled at 21% among voters, ahead of Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who received the nod of 18% of voters.

De facto opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim received 10%, ahead of the Defence Minister Hishammuddin Hussein (9%) and PAS President Abdul Hadi Awang (7%).

Chief researcher of the survey, Associate Professor Dr Awang Azman Awang Pawi, however, noted that Dr Mahathir's popularity may be higher today as the survey had begun when the Pakatan Harapan chairman had not yet been named as a possible prime minister candidate for the opposition.

"You must remember that the survey began in July when Dr Mahathir was out of the radar," the faculty member of UM's Academy of Malay Studies told The Malaysian Insight today.

At the time, PH had just announced its new leadership structure with Dr Mahathir as chairman, Anwar Ibrahim as PH de facto leader and Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail as coalition president.

UM's survey involved 1,550 respondents in 12 parliamentary seats nationwide, who were asked about a variety of electoral-related issues.

The seats were Jerlun, Permatang Pauh, Kuala Krai, Kuala Terengganu, Sepang, Bandar Tun Razak, Gelang Patah, Pasir Gudang, Penampang, Semporna, Petra Jaya and Bandar Kuching.

Of the 12 seats surveyed three were Barisan Nasional while the rest were opposition – PKR (2), Amanah (2), DAP (2), Warisan (1), PAS (1) and Independent (1).

Two seats were won on a PAS ticket in the 2013 GE whose MPs have now joined Amanah, while Semporna was won by Umno but whose lawmaker Shafie Apdal now heads opposition party Warisan.

The remaining seat Bandar Tun Razak was won on a PKR ticket but its lawmaker is now an independent.

Awang Azman said Dr Mahathir began getting higher responses in October and November.

“The survey shows that he is already quite popular, even before of talk of him becoming the PH candidate for prime minister,” he said.

The Bersatu chairman was proposed as PH’s candidate for prime minister during a retreat in December. Three out of the coalition’s four parties agreed. Dr Wan Azizah, who is also PKR president, was proposed as deputy prime minister.

Awang Azman said the university will present a detailed report on the survey in the next few weeks.

“We are still continuing with surveys. We are at the grassroots levels and we expect big changes in voter sentiments over the next three months,” he said.

He added that the university plans to get more voter opinion data from rural parliamentary seats.

The 14th general election must be held by August.