

INSAP Pre-Election Analysis:

## **BARISAN NASIONAL STILL HOLDS A BETTER CHANCE IN WINNING DUN PELANGAI**

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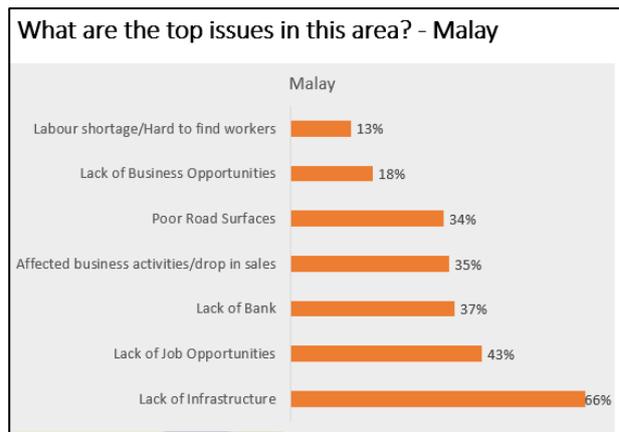
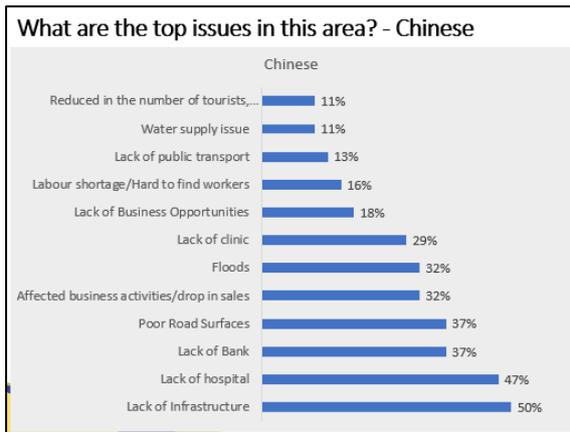
The Institute of Strategic Analysis and Policy Research (INSAP) recently conducted a series of interviews with voters of DUN Pelangai in Pahang who will be voting in the by-election on 7 October.

Our key findings indicate Barisan Nasional (BN) holds a better chance compared to Perikatan Nasional in this battle which was triggered by the passing of former ADUN, the late Datuk Seri Johari Harun. Overall response from the 120 people we spoke to said they (62.5%) preferred BN to win in DUN Pelangai noting the contributions of previous ADUNs including the late Datuk Seri Johari and Tan Sri Dato' Sri Haji Adnan Yaakob, who was also the former Menteri Besar of Pahang.

Interestingly, both Malay and Chinese respondents remember the late Datuk Seri Johari very fondly and said he was very close to the local community, and was in fact taking many initiatives to bring about progress to Pelangai until his untimely demise. However, they did lament also the lack of infrastructure and amenities such as banks and hospital, connectivity and job opportunities in the area – which they hope can be addressed as soon as possible by the BN-led state government.

Despite all the good vibes towards BN, there were rumblings among those living in FELDA settlements over their predicament after many promises by the government to resolve issues faced by them over the decades. FELDA settlers and workers said they had to live with low income amidst rising costs as the purchase prices of palm oil by FELDA is low. Like other respondents, those living in FELDA settlements also complained about the lack of common amenities such as automatic teller machines (ATM), banks, petrol stations or shops, and they had to travel to Bentong town which is about 45 minutes away.

On the approval rate of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's administration of the federal government, only 34% of Chinese and 12% of Malay respondents were satisfied with his leadership and administration – mainly due to the rising prices of goods and food items including rice, chicken and eggs, and overall lack of economic progress.



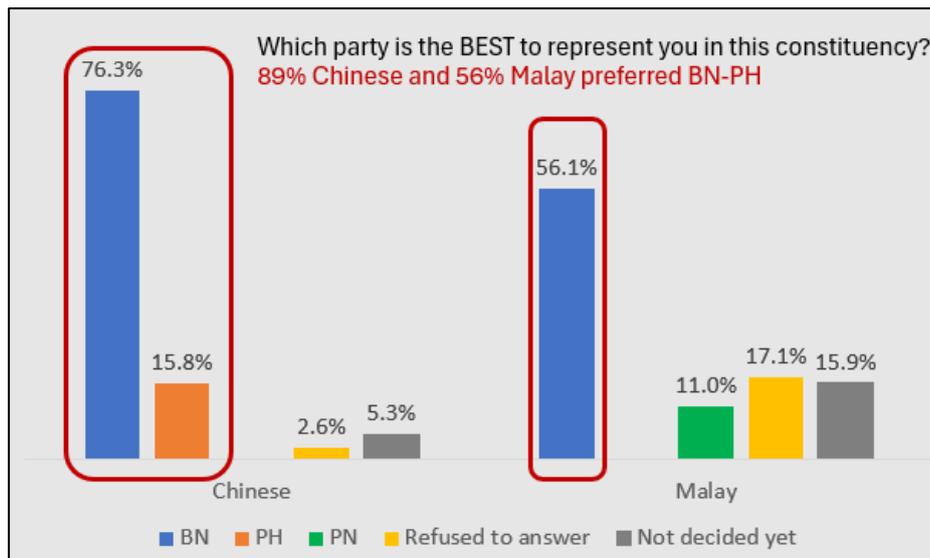
The respondents were also not pleased with the decision by the government to rationalise subsidies for petrol and electricity, fearing that removing subsidies even for the higher income group would cause a negative impact on pricing and affordability of goods and services in the future. That feeling were much stronger among the Malay respondents with 54.9% said they were not satisfied with that decision, 36.6% who said they were unsure. Only 8.5% of Malays felt comfortable with the subsidy rationalisation move.

On the other hand, respondents in Pelangai gave a resounding approval to the state administration under Dato' Sri Wan Rosdy Wan Ismail with 82% Malay and 66% Chinese that indicated their satisfaction over the state policies and directions.

### *Vote Transferability*

Opinion towards the working cooperation between Barisan Nasional and Pakatan Harapan (PH) in this by-election is split, with 37% Malays and 32% Chinese who thought it was good and 26.8% Malays and 34.2% Chinese who disagreed with the cooperation. However, despite the disagreement with the long-time rival coalitions working together including PH giving way to BN to contest in Pelangai, 63.4% of Malays and 84.2% of Chinese respondents said they would not likely vote for Perikatan Nasional.

Instead in a separate question, over 56% Malay respondents said they felt that BN was a better party / coalition to represent them in Pelangai while 89% Chinese respondents said they preferred a representative from BN-PH side. This means PH supporters are also highly expected to cast their vote for BN on 7 October, including Chinese supporters of PH who may have in the past favoured PH.



Despite these findings, INSAP expresses caution on the actual outcome as the positive responses towards BN would still need to be translated into votes by having the same group turning out on polling day to cast the ballot.

For Perikatan Nasional (PN), this battle is an uphill battle from the beginning with Pelangai being the hardcore base of BN since 1980s and had for nine terms the base of former Menteri Besar, Tan Sri Adnan Yaakob. As we have detected voices of dissatisfaction, especially among the Malays towards the current government and also 33% of Malay respondents who refused to answer or undecided on the question of which party best represent them, we could assume that there may still be room for PN to gain significant inroads in the Malay heartland or capture a bigger vote Malay vote share compared to previous elections.

The other factor that could influence the outcome of the Pelangai by-election is the turnout among younger voters who are mostly working or living outside Pelangai. Given the pattern of political lethargy in Malaysia, there is a high possibility of them not returning to vote and especially after a long weekend last week. Younger voters who are working or living out of town have in previous elections shown greater inclination towards PN due to their strong messaging and greater presence in social media.

Based on a simulation by INSAP, any coalition would need at least 52% Malay support to cross the 51% threshold to win this by-election, assuming the turnout rate is as low as 60% and support from non-Malays are spilt in half for BN-PH and PN.

5 October 2023  
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