

Voters' trust for Tsai surpasses Ma, poll shows

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Voters' confidence in Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) Chairperson Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) surpassed that of her Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) counterpart, President Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九), for the first time since the two took charge of their respective parties, a poll released yesterday by the Chinese-language Global Views magazine (全球觀點) showed.

Public trust in the DPP also surged to a new three-year high, the survey showed.

The poll, conducted by the Global Views Survey Research Center, put Tsai's trust index at 46.2 on a scale of 0 to 100, up 0.1 points from last month, while Ma's dropped 2.6 points from last month to 43.9 this month.

Tsai's trust index has risen to its highest level since she took over as DPP chairwoman in May last year. Ma became the KMT chairman last month.

DPP GAINS ON KMT

The level of trust in the DPP stood at 39.4 points, just below its record high of 39.5 set in August. The center began conducting the polls in June 2006.

The KMT's trust index was 41.5 this month, a drop of 0.6 points from last month and just 2.1 higher than that of the DPP.

Center director Lian Tai (連泰) said the improvement in Tsai and her party's trust indexes had a lot to do with the diminishing impact of former president Chen Shui-bian's (陳水扁) corruption trial and increasing public expectations for the country's largest opposition party.

Tai said it remained to be seen whether the drop in the KMT and Ma's trust indexes would be reflected in next Saturday's local elections.

While Premier Wu Den-yih (吳登益) had enjoyed more public trust than Ma over the past two months, Wu's trust index plummeted 7.7 points from last month to 43.7 this month.

Tai said that while this was not the sharpest drop in the confidence ratings this month, it was the main reason for the drop in the KMT's overall trust index.

Tai attributed Wu's decline in confidence to the negative impact of reports of the premier's association with a former convict, adding that it had also dealt a blow to the public's trust in Ma.

MOOD INDEX

The public mood index this month remained below 50 at a low of 40.7 points, a 1.8 point drop from last month.

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The public mood index consists of two indicators: the political confidence index (PCI) and the economic confidence index (ECI). The PCI fell 2.9 points from last month to 45.5 this month, while the ECI was 0.6 points lower this month at 35.9.

The political optimism index for next month dropped 1.8 points to 49.3, while the level of trust that the cross-strait detente will be maintained next month fell 0.8 points to 60.4, the lowest point since December last year.

Tai said the plunge might have something to do with public doubts about an economic cooperation framework agreement (ECFA) the Ma administration seeks to sign with Beijing.

The index for political stability next month also dived to 38.2 points from 41 last month, which Tai attributed to the DPP's displeasure with the government's decision to relax restrictions on US beef, the way the administration handled a financial memorandum of understanding with China as well as the tension caused by the local elections.

On the economic front, the current economic situation index was 26.8 points, a decrease of 0.6 points from last month.

The economic optimism index fell 0.6 points to 45 points. Next month's index for the improvement of the domestic economy fell by 0.3 points to 46.4, and that for the improvement for personal finances was down 0.9 points to 43.5.

The poll was conducted from Nov. 15 to Nov. 17 and 1,004 adults countrywide were surveyed.

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