

POLITICS

Public want economic lift, survey finds

POST REPORTERS

An improved economy in 2018 is what most Thais want as a New Year's gift from Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, according to an opinion survey released yesterday by Bangkok Poll.

The poll, conducted by Bangkok University, questioned 1,154 people in Bangkok and its surrounding provinces between Dec 9-12.

Respondents were asked what they intended to do in the coming New Year, what they would like to give as New Year's gifts to the prime minister and what gifts they hoped for from him.

Asked about New Year's gifts they wanted from Gen Prayut, just over 38% said they wanted the premier to improve the economy while nearly 21% wanted an election to take place soon.

Another 16.6% called on the premier to ensure continuity in national development and foster peace in society.

About 7% urged Gen Prayut to crack down on corruption while a similar proportion called for increases in salaries, wages and monthly allowance payments for the elderly.

Asked what they would give to the prime minister as New Year's gifts, 38.5% of respondents said they would give him smiles and moral support, while just under 25% said they hoped to become good citizens and work harder.

In a separate development, Gen Prayut yesterday said various government measures will be expedited to benefit the public from New Year onward. The focus will be on addressing income disparities by providing more help to middle- and low-income earners, he said.

Addressing reporters at Government House, the prime minister also stressed the need to press ahead with the government's Pracharath people-state partnership project as well as the Eastern Economic Corridor to drive economic growth.