Internet users ‘still turn to traditional media’ for GE news

SINGAPORE — Traditional mainstream media sources, online or otherwise, still appear to be the main sources for Singaporean Internet users seeking General Election (GE) news, a survey commissioned by TODAY has found.

The telephone survey with 606 respondents also found that 63.7 per cent of the respondents — who are allowed to pick multiple responses — said they opt for newspapers, followed by 57.9 per cent for television and 57.7 per cent for the Internet.

Yahoo! emerged as the source of choice for those who use the Internet, as indicated by 48 per cent of the respondents, followed by Channel NewsAsia (23.8 per cent) and Facebook (17.4 per cent).

The survey was conducted between late last month and this month with Singaporeans over the age of 21 who use the Internet daily.

Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) deputy director Arun Mahizhnan said it was no surprise that the mainstream media, especially newspapers and their electronic versions, remain the dominant sources of information, as they “provide the most comprehensive news and information about Singapore life”.

“IPS’ own research also confirms that those who search for alternative sources of information online continue to read mainstream media. This mitigates the fear that a lot of people only read alternative media and become ghetto-ised,” said Mr Mahizhnan, whose area of research includes the media.

Political risk analyst Azhar Ghani noted that Yahoo! aggregates news from both mainstream and alternative sources but, while mainstream sources have been setting the agenda, it could change during the GE campaign period, when bloggers and citizen journalists do their own “first-hand report-