

Police permits still needed for election ceramah

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By Hazlan Zakaria

Political parties will still have to apply for ceramah permits for the coming general election because the Peaceful Assembly Act will (PAA) not be applicable during the campaign period, the Election Commission says.

Section 1(3) of the PAA states that it will not apply to election campaigns under the Election Offences Act 1954.

Nevertheless, EC deputy chief Wan Ahmad Wan Omar gave his assurance that the commission would tell district police chiefs to allow all ceramah programmes, as long as they abide by the rules.

"You have to provide the location, the time and the organiser. No OCPD will block any political party from holding ceramahs as long as they follow those requirements."

While some OCPDs may ask for the name of those will speak at the ceramahs, Wan Ahmad stressed that this is unnecessary as anyone can speak and campaign for their respective parties.

This means that political parties will still have to get permits for ceramah from the local OCPDs, Wan Ahmad said when addressing representatives from political parties in the peninsula and the media in Putrajaya today.

Meanwhile, during his keynote speech earlier, EC chief Abdul Aziz Yusof lamented that most parties with information about electoral issues or problems did not approach them directly.

"If you have issues call us, not the media," he said, reasoning that if it was spread in the media they do not know the exact details and cannot act to rectify it.

He urged all parties to engage with the commission on all matters to make the next general election the best that it can be.

"The EC is neither a tiger nor a ghost. We can discuss matters."