

**Use world standards in election monitoring, EC told  
MalaysiaKini.com  
July 20, 2012**

The Election Commission (EC) must ensure that the process of election is on par with international standards, especially in the selection of and rules imposed on accredited observers.

In a joint statement, four NGOs selected as election observers by the EC called on the commission to implement the 'Declaration of global principles for non-partisan election observations and monitoring of citizen organisations' and the OSCE/ODIHR handbook for domestic election observers.

"In our meeting with EC chief Abdul Aziz, we called upon the EC to ensure all rules imposed on accredited observers, as well as the process of accrediting the observers, comply with these international standards," said the group.

"As a group, we look forward to the EC's responses to our requests. We look forward to working with the EC as well as with all our friends in civil society to ensure GE13 is free and fair.

The EC named five election observers - Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (Ideas) and Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute (Asli), Transparency International-Malaysia, Merdeka Centre, Promotion of Human Rights (Proham) and National Institute for Democracy and Electoral Integrity (NIEI).

Looking forward to EC's response

However, NIEI rejected the invitation last month, saying the EC had not outlined a mechanism to govern observers, while Proham said it lacked the experience, expertise, personnel and resources to carry out the task.

As a group, they said, they looked forward for the EC responding to their requests.

"We look forward to working with the EC as well as with all our friends in civil society to ensure GE13 is free and fair. We hope the cordial relationship that has been built with all parties will enable us to work together for the betterment of our nation," the statement says.

The Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (Bersih 2.0) has questioned the EC's appointment of five non-governmental organisations as observers and described it as a public relations exercise.

Bersih 2.0 said the observers appointed were also constrained by "ridiculous prohibitions", among them being prohibited from observing the ballot counting process, taking photographs of alleged fraud without the election officer's approval, being barred from talking to party agents and the media and staying at the same polling station throughout the day.

On June 29, the Asian Network for Free and Fair Elections (Anfrel) said it was vital for the EC to prove it was transparent in the accreditation of election observers.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd  
Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/204196>