

**Voter Turnout Proves Confidence In Electoral Process - Mohamed Nazri
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KOTA BAHARU, Jan 13 (Bernama) -- The average voter turnout of 70 per cent in the country's elections shows that people are confident of the country's polling process, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz said.

He said the electors were free to vote based on their preference and not because they were forced to do so.

"It is we who are casting our own votes, and we are not forced to do so; we are voting based on our preference and our own free will," he said at a discourse, themed "Free and Fair Elections: Reality or Illusion" at Kelantan Trade Centre, here last night.

Two other panellists at the discourse event, which was moderated by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Center for History, Politics and Strategic Studies lecturer Assoc Prof Datuk Mohammad Agus Yusof, were PAS vice-president PAS Datuk Husam Musa and former Election Commission (EC) chairman Tan Sri Abdul Rashid Abdul Rahman.

Mohamed Nazri said the setting up of the Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) on Electoral Reform was to address the concern among the people over the issues raised by certain quarters such as the allegation of double voting.

"The issues being raised had never happened but we want to give assurance to the people that this will not happen," he said.

Abdul Rashid, meanwhile, said the EC should be given full power to carry out the election process based on what can be said as clean and fair.

"There are many things which are beyond the control of the EC," he said. "The commission is asked to carry out free and fair elections but if there are many things which are not spelled out in the law, then the law should be amended to incorporate them, because elections are run based on the law."

He also expressed support for the use of indelible ink in the 13th general election and called on the PSC to continue looking into areas to improve the electoral process.

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