

**Don't Be Overzealous In Inviting Foreign Observers: EC
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KOTA BAHARU, Feb 8 (Bernama) -- The Election Commission (EC) has reminded opposition leaders not to become overzealous in inviting foreign observers to monitor the 13th general election.

Its deputy chairman Datuk Wira Wan Ahmad Wan Omar said these observers who may be representing certain non-governmental organisations, would have no understanding of the country's election laws and political culture as well as the sensitivities among the people.

"They come a week before the election and make assumptions and conclusions about the country's election process.

"Is this fair to the people of Malaysia? No, it's definitely not," he told reporters after briefing the state police as well as returning officers and their deputies, here today.

Wan Ahmad said observers from within the country would have a better view of the process as they understand the country's election laws, the sensitivities of the people and have an interest in the election because they are the people of the country.

"Don't be overzealous in wanting to invite foreign observers. Our own people would make a better observer," he said, pointing out that the EC would look into the matter and decide on who in the country could be appointed to play that role.

He pointed out that the election system and process in Malaysia suited the country well, stressing that improvements were made to the process from one election to another.

"These foreign observers would of course like to monitor our election process, more so with the activities of political parties which have been attracting attention abroad, like opposition leaders going abroad and giving talks.

"It's their right to do so but making disparaging remarks about our election process, I think, is unfair to the people and the EC.

"What interests have these foreign observers had in our country? If the country is in chaos, they will just observe from outside. It's the people who are bearing the consequences," he said.

Wan Ahmad added that the candidates' representatives at polling centres were the most effective election observers because they are monitoring the process on behalf of the candidates.

Meanwhile, he said, an election observer team would be formed in each state constituency nationwide, except for in Sarawak, which would be appointed according to parliamentary constituencies.

The team comprises EC officers, police, officers of local authorities and candidates'

representatives.

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