

## **Overseas voting: Ball thrown to AG's Chambers**

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**By Kuek Ser Kuang Keng**

Despite pressure from some Malaysians overseas, the Election Commission (EC) is still waiting for the answer from the Attorney-General's Chambers on the proposal of granting postal voter status to citizens abroad.

"I don't dare to guarantee (the date), but very soon," replied EC chairperson Abdul Aziz Mohd Yusof when asked when the AG's Chambers will give its feedback.

During a press conference this morning at the EC headquarters in Putrajaya, Abdul Aziz explained that the AG's Chambers is studying whether amendment to the federal constitution, the election acts or election regulations are needed to enable all overseas Malaysians to become postal voters.

Abdul Aziz had, on Aug 25, 2011, announced that all Malaysians living overseas would be able to vote by post and the proposal was later recommended by the parliamentary select committee (PSC) on electoral reform in April 2012.

The PSC had given the EC three months, until July 3, to make the necessary arrangements with government departments to implement its recommendation.

During the press conference, the reporter pointed out the argument of pressure group MyOverseasVote (MOV) that the Elections (Postal Voting) Regulations 2003 gives the EC the power to gazette new categories of postal voters which it has done previously for spouses of police officers in the General Operations Force.

But Abdul Aziz insisted that the proposal has to go through the AG's Chambers.

He also called on overseas Malaysians who have not registered to first register themselves as ordinary voters with Malaysian foreign missions, because they have to be registered voters before they can apply to vote by post, if the proposal is implemented.

The EC chief again expressed his disappointment that so far only some 2,400 citizens abroad have registered.