

**Anwar: Sept 16 takeover plan still on
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Ten days to go and Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim said today he is on track to meet the Sept 16 deadline to recruit enough members of parliament to topple the government.

anwar pc permatang pauh 02 260808The opposition is confident it will secure the defection of at least 30 members from the ruling Barisan Nasional government - the number needed to unseat the government of Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi, Anwar said.

Anwar, speaking to reporters in Jakarta after meeting with a think tank, said he was "quite positive from the initial response from the members of parliament."

"We have seen some very positive signs, but we have also seen the desperate acts by the government, threats and using institutions to discourage them," he said.

Government attempts to compel members of parliament to travel overseas until after his pledged Sept 16 deadline to take power would not work, Anwar said.

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"The only issue now is that they are going to compel members of parliament to (travel to) China or overseas until after the 16th of September, so we'll have to deal with that.

"Probably we'll meet on the 17th because they'll come back on the 17th," he said.

The 61-year-old leader of the three-party Pakatan Rakyat coalition declined to name or give the number of lawmakers who have pledged to defect.

Asked if he had used his two-day trip to Jakarta to meet with potential government defectors, Anwar said: "I won't comment on that, but I will say it's a good visit."

Abdullah, who is facing calls from his party to quit amid plummeting popularity, has said Anwar's push to take power will fail.

The parties of Pakatan gained unprecedented ground against the Barisan Nasional coalition in the March general election, securing a third of parliamentary seats and five states.