

Expect 'surprise' on Sept 16 : Anwar
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Opposition Leader Anwar Ibrahim insisted that his self-imposed Sept 16 deadline to form the new federal government is "very much" on track, although a large number of the BN MPs are abroad.

Met at the Jalan Duta court complex after a hearing related to the sodomy charge against him, he was asked to comment on his remarks that he would be deferring his plan, now that BN has sent 49 of its MPs to Taiwan on an agricultural study trip.

anwar sodomy 2 trial session court 100908 07Saying that the plan is on track, he however said he would deal with the details later. He also said there will be a "surprise" on Tuesday, but did not elaborate.

"I will fly to Taipei if needs be if they want to meet me. I am not joining them, but will talk to them," quipped the newly-elected Permatang Pauh MP, in response to a question.

Anwar, 61, had earlier said he had information that the MPs would not be allowed to return from Taiwan before Sept 16 in order to thwart his plans.

His Pakatan Rakyat alliance has 81 of the 222 seats in parliament. He had promised voters he would overturn BN's majority by inviting its MPs to defect to the Pakatan camp.

'Incitement of Umno leaders'

On the reported move by former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad to return to Umno, Anwar quipped: "Is he trying to help the ship sink faster?"

general abdul aziz zainalHe also said Armed Forces chief Jen Abdul Aziz Zainal's call for stern action by the government against those who stoke racial sentiments was a "timely" reminder.

"I think it is timely that the army reminds the government that they should act swiftly against perpetrators of racial hatred," Anwar said.

"However, I must caution that this issue is due to incitement by Umno leaders to cover up corruption, abuse of power and economic mismanagement pending imminent change in this country."

Anwar stressed, however, that he was not in favour of the use of draconian legislation such as the Internal Security Act and Sedition Act to handle such situations.

The army chief had warned yesterday that racial issues should not be raised as this has potential to create chaos and disorder.