



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim chatting with a father and his child at Sultanah Aminah Hospital in Johor Baru yesterday, PIC BY NUR AISYAH MAZALAN

Carpark among RM500m upgrades for HSA

JOHOR BARU: The government has approved RM500 million to upgrade Sultanah Aminah Hospital (HSA) here, including the construction of new blocks and a multi-storey carpark.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said during a visit to the hospital yesterday that Health Minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa had raised the overcrowding at HSA with the cabinet, adding that the first phase of the project would start this year.

"After Dr Zaliha raised the issue with the cabinet a few months ago, the Finance Ministry took

several preliminary measures.

"These included approving the construction of the multi-storey carpark, with the Johor government having taken steps to facilitate the public with the assistance of the Johor Baru City Council," said Anwar, who is also finance minister.

Anwar said work on the multi-storey carpark should not disrupt the construction of the new blocks there.

"According to the hospital director (Dr Sal Atan), HSA spans an area of almost 100 acres (40.46ha), if we look at the size in

the original plan, the land is sufficient (for the upgrade project).

"The plan now is to develop a complex of several high-rise buildings to accommodate patients' needs."

He said the overcrowding could no longer be contained, so the tender would be fast-tracked to allow the project to start soon.

Asked on plans to build another hospital in Johor, or HSA 2, Anwar said the government would expedite urgent projects.

"For the other (HSA 2), (we will include) in the mid-term review of the 12th Malaysia Plan."

Earlier, Sultan of Johor Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar granted an audience to the prime minister at Istana Bukit Pelangi, here.

Present was Tunku Mahkota Johor Tunku Ismail Sultan Ibrahim, according to a post on Sultan Ibrahim's Facebook page.

Menteri Besar Datuk Onn Hafiz Ghazi and State Secretary Tan Sri Dr Azmi Rohani were in attendance.

Anwar arrived at the palace at 11.20am and the audience lasted about an hour.