

## NEGOTIATIONS UNDERWAY

# Anwar: BNM still in talks over insurance rate hike

**PUTRAJAYA:** The process to increase medical insurance premiums next year is still under negotiation, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Anwar, who is also the finance minister, said Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) would only finalise the premium rates after holding further discussions with the relevant parties.

“BNM’s report actually indicates its intention to finalise the (insurance premiums) only after renegotiating (with the insurers).

“Now, the process is still being renegotiated,” he said after Friday prayers at Presint 14 here.

Last Thursday, Bank Negara Malaysia had directed insurers and takaful operators (ITOs) to reassess their repricing strategies for medical health insurance and takaful (MHIT) products.

In a statement, the central bank



*Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim exchanging greetings with school pupils after Friday prayers at Presint 14 Putrajaya. NSTP PIC BY MOHD FADLI HAMZAH*

said this included managing increases in premiums and contributions over time, taking into account the impact on policy owners and takaful participants.

It said ITOs were required to offer viable options for policy

owners and takaful participants, who were significantly impacted by the higher premiums or contributions to continue having health coverage.

Bank Negara also added that details on the options would be

announced by the insurance and takaful industry soon.

The central bank also said it remained committed to ensuring that the public could continue having access to suitable insurance and takaful products.

It also acknowledged public concerns about the repricing of MHIT products and premiums by ITOs, which could affect their affordability among policy owners and takaful participants.

Bank Negara said over the years, the cost of healthcare had risen significantly due to medical cost inflation and increased utilisation of medical services and procedures.

Therefore, it said comprehensive and coordinated reforms to contain medical cost inflation would be critical to preserve continued access to appropriate MHIT protection.