

Headline **More HIV from gay sex in China**
Date **02 Dec 2009**
MediaTitle **New Straits Times**
Section **World**
Journalist **N/A**
Frequency **Daily**
Circ / Read **139,763 / 330,000**

Language **English**
Page No **36**
Article Size **136 cm²**
Color **Black/white**
ADValue **1,883**
PRValue **5,649**



More HIV from gay sex in China

BELJING: China warned in a notice for World AIDS Day yesterday that homosexual transmission of the disease was gaining pace and called for health authorities nationwide to step up prevention work.

The statement by the Health Ministry came a day after President Hu Jintao called on the people not to discriminate against those with HIV.

"Sexual contact continues to be the main channel of transmission with the speed of homosexual transmission clearly increasing," the ministry said.

"This is a new situation that we need to pay attention to."

China has not been hit as hard by HIV/AIDS as many other nations.

The disease first gained hold in Chi-

na among illegal drug users, ethnic minorities, sex workers, and through unsanitary blood transfusions. But in

recent years, transmission avenues have expanded out from those traditionally high-risk groups.

"The AIDS epidemic has already spread from high-risk groups to ordinary people, dangerous elements of AIDS transmission are present everywhere," the ministry said, and urged stepped-up education efforts on safe sex and use of condoms.

By the end of October, China had 319,877 registered cases of HIV/AIDS, including 48,000 new cases this year, while nearly 50,000 people have died of AIDS, the ministry said.

The ministry has estimated that up to 740,000 people in China live with HIV, many of whom experience high levels of stigma and discrimination, a situation Hu addressed at an AIDS awareness activity here on Monday.

"We welcome the positive attitude

of Chinese leaders in the fight against AIDS," said prominent AIDS activist Wan Yanhai, who is director of the AIDS Action Project.

"But we would like to see the government open up to all non-governmental organisations. As our activities are still being restricted, we are unable to raise funds from inside China and we are still subject to (police) surveillance." — AFP