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Insurers urged to start AIDS cover policies

AWAITING PROGRESS:
Local insurers can take heed from their counterparts in the US and the UK, which have covered those with HIV virus

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THE Malaysian AIDS Council has approached insurance companies to start covers for HIV infection and AIDS illness (HIV/AIDS) in the near future.

Its president Tan Sri Zaman Khan Rahim Khan said there has not been any positive progress yet, but it is still working on it.

"Slowly, slowly we will catch the monkey," he said at a press conference after the Malaysian Business Consortium on HIV/AIDS Forum and roundtable discussion on Monday.

He said local insurers can take heed from their counterparts in the US and the UK, which have covered those inflicted by the virus.

Zaman Khan lauded the Employees Provident Fund for allowing those infected with the virus to withdraw from their second account for treatment.

He said the council has yet to conduct a comprehensive survey on how HIV/AIDS infected individuals have a direct impact on the country's economy in the future.

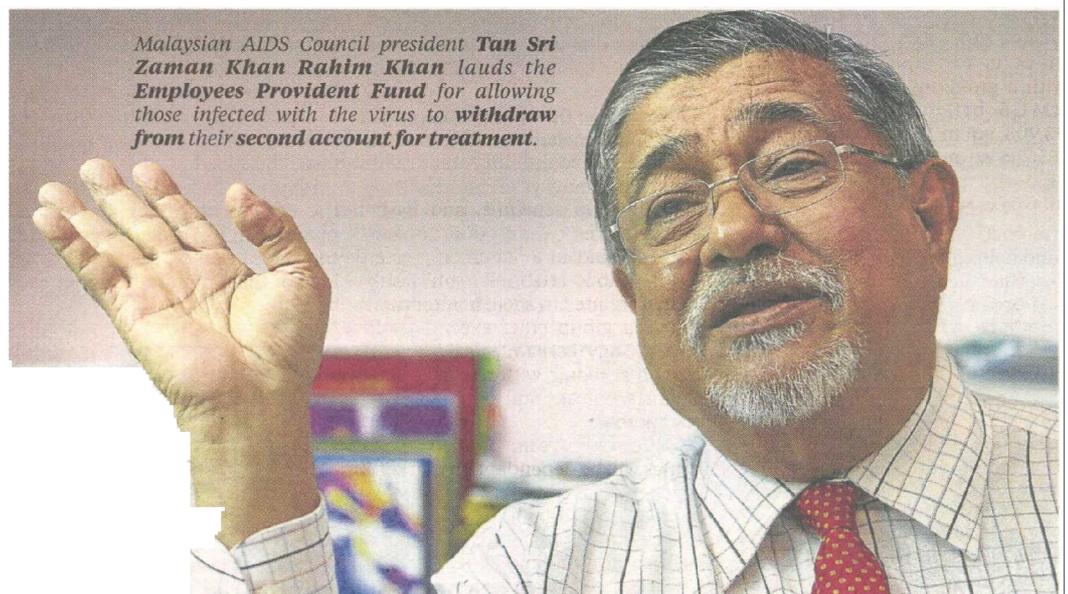
"In South Africa, the problem is severe and is eating into the country's economy because more than five million of its citizens have the virus," said Zaman Khan.

Currently, there are 91,362 Malaysians who are HIV positive, while the number of those with AIDS is 16,352.

He said the number of people contracting the virus through sexual relations was on the rise.

"The number one way HIV is spread in this country is still through infected drug users," he said.

Zaman Khan said the government should look into educating the public more on the preventive measures against the virus as it was way cheaper to contain the problem than dealing with those who had been infected by the virus.



Malaysian AIDS Council president **Tan Sri Zaman Khan Rahim Khan** lauds the **Employees Provident Fund** for allowing those infected with the virus to **withdraw from their second account for treatment.**